



Improving lives together

Impact Report 2023

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We are Cygnet Group, a leading provider of social care, complex mental health, learning disability and autism services in the UK. Established in 1988, our 36-year history has seen us build a reputation for delivering pioneering services and outstanding outcomes for children, young people, adults and older people.

Our Purpose

is to make a positive difference to the lives of the individuals we care for, their loved ones and all those who work with us.

Our Vision

is to provide high quality, sustainable specialist services that: Ensure service users and residents feel safe and supported, staff are proud of, commissioners and service users and residents select, and stakeholders trust.

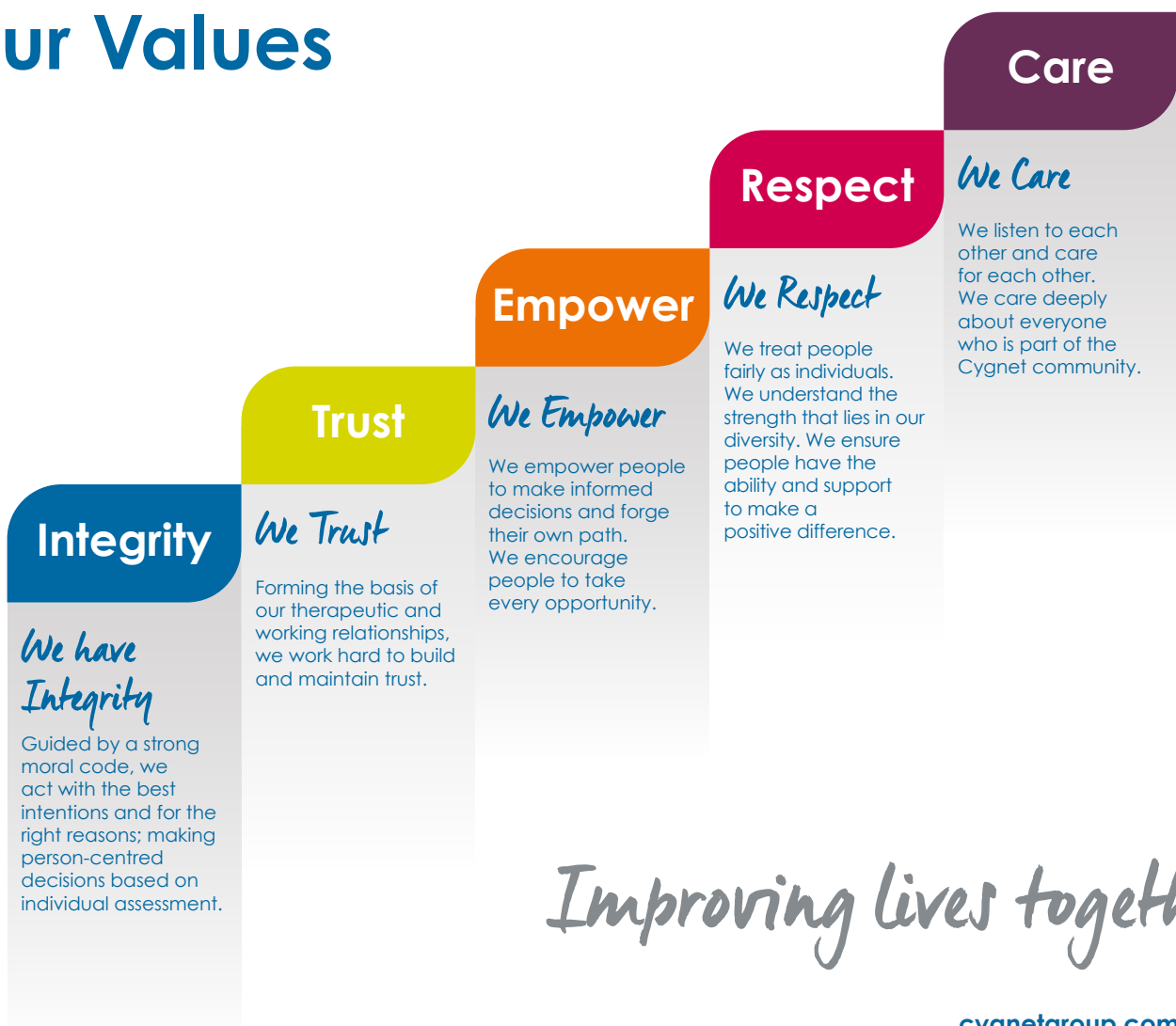
Our Mission

is to work together in a positive culture of openness, honesty and inclusivity, where we deliver safe, compassionate care for our service users and staff enjoy a fulfilling, rewarding environment in which to work.

Our Values

are to care for our service users, staff and visitors, to respect them, to ensure a bond of trust is built among us, to at all times empower those we look after as well as our staff, to deliver quality services with integrity.

Our Values



Improving lives together



Message from our CEO, Dr Tony Romero

I am proud to look back on our many achievements in 2023, which marked Cygnet's 35th anniversary year.

From the number of people we supported, improving our environmental credentials, maintaining our quality with our regulators and investing in our staff, 2023 was a successful year for Cygnet.

We helped many thousands of people across the country who, without our services, may not have got the care and support they desperately needed. I am able to reflect on the outstanding work our staff delivered to make a positive difference to the lives of 7,500 individuals who we cared for last year. Our staff give our service users hope of a brighter future and constantly strive to provide high quality, safe, person-centred care.

Our focus on quality has strengthened our reputation and for the second year running, we have outperformed the national average in regulatory ratings. Along with our regulators, the people who commission our services recognise our quality and in the last year we provided care to a record number of people.

This helps to demonstrate how we are a trusted partner to the National Health Service and Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. It indicates that the care we provide is valued and it drives us to constantly meet the high standards that we all expect and that those in our care rightfully deserve. Sadly we know that demand is rising, which is why we remain committed to working together to provide the right care, at the right time, in settings that best meet individual needs.

This also extends to how we support the friends and families of our service users. In 2023 we gave more focus to the carers of our service users by launching the Cygnet Carer Network. We also became the first independent provider of health and social care services to achieve Triangle of Care accreditation.

We continued to invest heavily in our staff with 85% of people saying they enjoy working for Cygnet. Our three existing staff networks thrived in 2023 and we also launched a new Disability Network for our staff in October. In 2023 we achieved a reduction in staff turnover, we used fewer agency workers than ever and we enhanced the retention of our workforce. We want our future leadership positions to be taken by people who are already working with us. We want to develop more of our talent in-house and provide opportunities for our staff to progress with us.

Looking ahead, our number one priority will be to maintain the quality of our services. We also plan to open six new hospitals and completely modernise existing facilities as part of an extensive investment programme.

With the expansion of our facilities, we will generate employment in our local communities and we are aiming to recruit up to one thousand more people into our workforce around the country.

We will also be advancing our ambitious digital transformation programme, which includes creating our own Electronic Care Record system and introducing a world-leading leading HR platform. We will also be accelerating our environmental initiatives to ensure we are meeting our targets and commitments to contribute to a greener society.

We believe that by investing in technology and sustainability we can enhance our workforce, reduce our environmental impact and, most importantly, ensure the smooth delivery of our services.

We are proud to be one of the country's largest and leading providers of complex mental health, autism learning disability and social care services in the UK. It is a huge responsibility but one we are privileged to take on every day in the delivery of safe, person-centred care.



What We Do

We provide services in England, Scotland and Wales and our expert and highly dedicated care team of 11,600 employees support 7,500 individuals each year across 150 services to consistently make a positive difference to their lives.

We maintain a good relationship with our quality regulators and undergo regular inspections, with 81% of our health care services rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.

Through our values of Integrity, Trust, Empower, Respect and Care we take pride in the services we offer and the outcomes we enable individuals in our care to achieve.

Cygnnet provides a broad coverage of the behavioural health spectrum from Secure, PICU / Acute, Mental Health Rehabilitation and Recovery, Personality Disorder, Children and Adolescents, Eating Disorder, Learning Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Neuropsychiatric, Older Adults, Mental Health & Specialist Deaf.

Our Clinical Vision

Our aim is to provide the highest quality care to our Service Users and Residents at all times, regardless of where they are in their care pathway.

We are committed to doing this through our highly trained and motivated staff working in partnership with service users, residents, their friends and relatives, our commissioners, and regulatory bodies.

Testimonials

"She has made such incredible progress at Cygnet Hospital Hexham since her admission. Her rapid progress has been due to the great support, care, love, attention and help she has received on the Franklin Ward. We cannot thank the team enough for this!"

Family member



"Being admitted to Cygnet Alders Clinic was the first time I felt truly safe. They made it easy for me to do the hard work and they put plans in place for me to reach the goals I had for myself. With their help, I achieved something which seemed so far out of reach; independent living. In my eyes, it is the place that built me up to be the best version of myself that I am today. It was life-changing for me."

Expert by Experience



"One of the reasons I love my job is that every day is different. So often we take things for granted, but working in this role really opens your eyes to the support we give every day. It really does make a massive impact in people's lives."

Staff member



"I came to my Cygnet service in September 2022 desperate for a chance to improve my life. Little did I know that Cygnet Acer Clinic would not only improve my life massively but also help me to make changes that made my life a life I wanted to live, a feeling I hadn't felt for nearly 10 years."

Service user





“The staff are very caring and have a great rapport with everyone. There is an overwhelming feeling of friendship and camaraderie between the staff and residents. I really cannot praise and thank the staff enough for caring for both of my parents.”

Family member

“I truly felt like I was treated as a person, an individual, with my own hopes and dreams. I wasn't just a diagnosis. From the start the team saw me as so much more than that.”

Service user



“The amount I have learnt about myself and my ability to cope with difficult things during my time at Cygnet Acer Clinic has really set me up for a life in the community and I'm so incredibly grateful to the whole team. And now I'm ready to take on the rest of my life! A life that truly is worth living.”

Service user

“The team never once gave up on me, they believed in me even when I didn't believe in myself. Their faith in my ability to turn my life around gave me faith in my own capabilities and slowly I got on track.”

Service user

Expert by Experience Case Study

Experts by Experience are people who have lived experience of using or caring for someone who has used health and / or social care services. In many cases, our Experts by Experience are people who used to be Cygnet service users.

We have long championed and valued co-production across our services, using the voices, views and insight from service users to provide the very highest standards of care.

In 2018, Cygnet became the first independent provider of health care services to invest in a full-time Expert by Experience Lead. We work with Experts by Experience to help ensure the opinions of service users are heard and considered across the organisation and that feedback is acted upon to improve our services.

Former service user and Expert by Experience Natasha Lowe has shared her story and what she hopes to bring to the role to ensure service users have a positive experience with Cygnet services.





I was an inpatient at Cygnet Alders Clinic after I was officially diagnosed with personality disorder. One of the most powerful things I'm able to do as an Expert by Experience is help someone that is in the same place that I once was by saying 'I understand, because I felt that way too.'

I was first admitted to a mental health service when I was 13 years old, spending time at different services before I was transferred to Cygnet Alders Clinic when I was aged 18.

Being admitted to Cygnet Alders Clinic was the first time I felt truly safe. They made it easy for me to do the hard work and they put plans in place for me to reach the goals I had for myself.

With their help, I achieved something which seemed so far out of reach; independent living. In my eyes, it is the place that built me up to be the best version of myself that I am today. It was life-changing for me.

I felt it was right to give something back. I want to spread this hope and help other people recognise that no matter how bad your situation may be, there's a light at the end of your tunnel. Things can, and will, get better if you accept the help at hand.

When you're in a mental health service, sometimes you just don't have the strength in yourself to speak up about what you need. I've been there and I know what helps and what hinders. I want to share that expertise to help get others into a good place.

I can't change anything bad that happened to me or that has happened in the past for anyone else. But what I can change is the future and improve other people's experiences. I want to create an environment where people feel safe to talk to me and have the confidence to know I will listen non-judgementally and with a sense of empathy, having walked in their shoes.

I can relate to service user experiences on a deeper level and that makes sure the trust is there, and I can get better responses out of them.

No one struggles in the same way but I'm definitely able to empathise a lot more. I'm able to guide them through their difficulties and create a clearer path for the future.

Things have turned around for me, and it can for everyone else. I want to show that to them and prove that life doesn't have to be a cycle of mental health getting better and then worse again. There's so much more to live for.



Who We Are

Cygnnet in Numbers

We treated **7,761 unique service users** (excluding readmissions and day services) during 2023

This includes **2,477** already in our care on 1 January 2023 and **5,284 unique admissions**



National Service User Awards proudly sponsored by Cygnnet:

62 nominations

24 NHS & Independent providers

24 finalists

6 winners



We cared for **85 day service users**



Cygnnet invests most of its operating profit in its facilities across the country

In 2022 we invested **£35.6m** in estates, facilities, IT and developments

An additional **£65m** was invested in 2023



Held our first ever **Freedom to Speak Up** celebration event which recognised **190 FTSU Ambassadors** and was attended by the NHSE's National Guardian's Office



Regular contributor to the **DHSC's blog** with **90,000 subscribers**

Across our 150 services in England, Wales and Scotland, more than **11,500 staff** care for approximately **7,500 patients** each year (6,000 of whom are NHS mental health patients). These services include:

78 mental health hospitals with **2,039 beds**

69 residential settings with **788 places**



Staff Vacancies reduced by **46%**



Staff Turnover reduced by **20%**



Agency usage reduced from **18% to 9%**



4,400 new staff recruited



Journal Contributions and Research (22/23): **28 proposals for review, 9 publications, 6 clinical conference presentations**



27 external award nominations and finalists in numerous health and social care awards across the sector



Marketing support and attendance at **33 conferences nationwide**, including NAPICU, UKABIF, Neuro Network, Safeguarding and Provider Collaborative events



More than **1,000 media articles** mentioned Cygnet in 2023 with a **positive sentiment of 86%**



Our social media platforms have continued to grow with more than **45,000 followers** across our channels

Our three existing staff networks thrived in 2023 with our new staff network, **Disability Network**, launched in October



100% education services rated **Good** or **Outstanding**



81% services rated **Good** or **Outstanding** by regulators

Published our first **Carer, Family and Friend Strategy**, co-produced with family, carers, friends, individuals who use our services and professionals



In 2023, we worked with 354 commissioning bodies; **199 NHS** and **155 Local Authorities**

6 Cygnet Hospitals rolled out the **Triangle of Care** (Carers Trust)



Cygnet are the first independent provider accepted into the Triangle of Care Membership programme

24 sites now have **solar power** installed



Waste **recycling** across the organisation increased from 31% in 2022 to **38% in 2023**





Our Culture

Service User Satisfaction 2023

87%

of patients say they felt safe during their time within Cygnet services



86%

of patients say after their stay at Cygnet they feel better and feel they had improved



75%

of patients say they would recommend Cygnet to a member of their friends or family

Feedback from Carers, Family & Friends 2023

Rated
4.4
Stars

“How satisfied are you that you were identified as a relevant person with an important caring role for your friend or family member?”

Rated
4.6
Stars

“How satisfied are you that staff are polite and approachable when you phone or visit?”

Rated
4.4
Stars

“How satisfied are you that you know who to contact to express any concern you may have about your friend or family member?”

Rated
4.4
Stars

“How satisfied are you that the service is well maintained, clean and in good repair?”



Commissioner Satisfaction

<p>In 2023, we worked with 354 commissioning bodies; 199 NHS and 155 Local Authorities</p> 	<p>We work with Provider Collaboratives and Integrated Care Boards to provide services that are needed and in demand</p> 	<p>With a growing demand for mental health and social care, we are part of the solution to alleviate the pressure on the NHS</p> 
<p>We can bring our insight and expertise to help inform decisions locally and discussions nationally</p> 	<p>We occupy a relatively unique position by having a view of both health and social care provision and the challenges they face</p> 	

Staff Satisfaction

<p>71% of our employees completed the survey [+5% on 2022], a high response in our sector</p> 	<p>85% of people enjoy working for Cygnet +4%</p> 
<p>74% would recommend Cygnet as a great place to work +6%</p> 	<p>76% believe that Cygnet recognises the challenges and inequalities faced by individuals in relation to protected characteristics</p> 
<p>84% feel “my line manager supports me and motivates me to do my job well” +2%</p> 	<p>89% believe their line manager treats them with respect</p> 
<p>83% say their line manager values their work</p> 	<p>86% agree “I receive the training and support to help me deliver a better service user experience” +5%</p> 

Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU)



At Cygnets, speaking up is viewed as a positive action, and one that is encouraged and supported. We appointed our first dedicated Freedom to Speak Up Guardian in 2020 who established a network of Speak Up Ambassadors around the organisation to embed an open culture.

The FTSU team now includes a full-time Deputy Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and a network of more than 190 ambassadors.

The role of the FTSU Guardian is to help improve staff experience of raising concerns and speaking up, to protect service user safety and quality of care, as well as ensure the promotion of learning and improvement.

The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian

<p>Operates independently, impartially and objectively whilst also working in partnership alongside individuals and groups throughout the organisation</p> 	<p>Seeks guidance and where appropriate escalates matters to bodies outside of the organisation</p> 	
<p>Has open, honest conversations with leaders in Cygnets to promote change</p> 	<p>Supports staff who speak up and agree next steps with them collaboratively</p> 	<p>Works closely with freedom to Speak Up Ambassadors at sites, supporting them to influence change</p> 
<p>Supports the right to confidentiality wherever possible, whilst also taking concerns forward</p> 		

In 2023, we received recognition and support from the National Guardian's Office (NHSE) who joined our celebration event during FTSU Week. Cygnets was praised for the resource, focus and importance we've placed on speaking up over the last three years.

Our Staff Survey also highlighted staff awareness of this important topic with 94% saying they were aware of Cygnets's Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.

Story: Why I Became a FTSU Ambassador

The manager of a school for young people who have been admitted into hospital due to their mental health has spoken about why she felt compelled to become an Ambassador for speaking up and create an open environment where people felt safe and encouraged to air concerns. Jayne Rowlands is the manager of Excel & Exceed, the school based within Cygnet Hospital Bury which serves four Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services wards.

On why she chose to be an Ambassador, she said: **“For me it was about doing something that could make a difference and drive change.**

Too often we hear ‘rumblings’ about things people are not happy about or things they think are not working in the best way. All too often no action was taken and I felt this was often driven by a fear of speaking out. The small stuff was quickly becoming the big stuff if it wasn’t dealt with.”

Jayne said that whilst staff are generally confident in reporting safeguarding issues, often lower level concerns were going unreported.

She explained: **“When I have heard people complaining and questioned whether they have raised it, the response would often be ‘what is the point?’ or ‘I’m worried it will affect my relationship with my manager.’**

From my perspective it is about saying there is a point, and change is driven from the bottom up. Being an Ambassador meant I would be able to get the message out there that it is a positive not a negative; that it is safe and non-judgemental and ultimately it is for the greater good for service users and for employees.”

On the skills needed to be an effective Ambassador, Jayne commented: **“It is important to have no preconceptions and to view the situation with a beginner’s mind-set.**

What is vital though is how I make the person feel. I cannot expect people to speak up if they don’t trust me or the process and crucial to this is providing a safe space to speak; ensuring the person knows their conversation will be treated confidentiality; that they will retain autonomy and that consent is sought before sharing any information with the Guardian (with the caveat of safeguarding).

There may be sensitive or contentious issues discussed and it is imperative that I remain impartial and emotionally detached to be able to fully support the person and deal with the concern effectively. No bias or judgement at any point.”



Like all Freedom to Speak Up Ambassadors at Cygnet Group, Jayne received full training on what the barriers to open conversations may be and how to overcome these.

“Since taking on the role I have been approached by several members of staff for a variety of reasons,” she added.

“Dealing with relatively small issues at a local level means that we don’t have a bigger issue to deal with later down the line.

I feel the impact of this upon patient and staff wellbeing cannot be underestimated. Better staff wellbeing ultimately leads to better patient care.”

One incident Jayne dealt with concerned a member of staff who was repeatedly mis-gendering a service user despite reminders from colleagues and other professionals. The matter was dealt with and the outcome was positive. Yet from there, further improvements were able to be embedded at the service.

Jayne explained: **“Reflecting upon this incident of speaking up resulted in myself and the school thinking about how we could support in ensuring a better understanding of LGBTQ+ and the negative impact of using the wrong gender / pronouns / names upon mental health.**

We worked with students in school to create training which was delivered to both students and support staff. This training looked at unconscious bias and the need to challenge this and it is envisaged that giving people a better understanding will improve outcomes for service users and create more inclusive working environments for our staff.

All of this transpired from one conversation whereby a member of staff felt confident enough to trust our process and to speak up.”



Learning and Development

We understand the importance of continuous learning and development.

Cygnets Nursing Pathway Apprentice Programme is helping to address an industry-wide shortage of nurses, as recruitment and retention of staff remains a key concern for the sector.

- > Over 1,000 staff have taken advantage of our Apprenticeship pathways in the last five years
- > We currently have 238 live apprentices on programme in a range of apprenticeship specialities
- > 459 have completed different programmes since the levy was implemented in various specialisms

Our Aspiring Managers Programme is training future leaders and we want to develop more of our talent in-house and provide opportunities for our staff to progress and professionalise the health and care workforce.

Apprenticeship Story

Two staff from Cygnets Hospital Kewstoke have spoken of their appreciation for an apprenticeship programme which is furthering their career and enabling them to better support men and women with mental health difficulties.

Billy Chadwick and Charlotte McGlynn both work at Cygnets Hospital Kewstoke, near Weston-super-Mare. The hospital provides emergency admissions services for men and women, as well as a specialist service for personality disorder.

Billy has worked at Cygnets Hospital Kewstoke for nearly three years and is currently a senior support worker. He will soon begin his Cygnets Health Care-funded Nursing Apprenticeship. The pathway consists of three stages: Assistant Practitioner, Nursing Associate and Registered Nurse.

He said: **“I find working in mental health very rewarding, and I feel gratified to help individuals with their mental health journey leading to discharge. I, along with the team, work hard by being committed in leaving a lasting impression on our service users.**

I want to be in a position where I am able to ensure people who are arguably going through the worst time of their lives, have a positive experience here at Cygnets Hospital Kewstoke and recognise that with the support we provide, they can recover and go on to lead fulfilling lives.



Billy Chadwick (left) and Charlotte McGlynn (right)

This apprenticeship programme will give me that knowledge and skillset to really make a positive difference and I am incredibly grateful that I have this opportunity."

Supporting the career development of support workers, the Cygnet Health Care Nursing Pathway Apprentice Programme addresses an industry-wide shortage of nurses, as recruitment and retention of staff remains a key concern for the sector. Cygnet, a leading provider of services for individuals with mental health needs, learning disabilities and autism, is leading the sector on the employment of nurse associates and the development of nurse apprenticeships to help overcome these challenges.

Billy added: **"The national shortage of nurses, in particular mental health nurses, is well documented, which is why it is so important Cygnet is able to offer an apprenticeship programme for staff who want to pursue a nursing career.**

It's not just about addressing shortage however. It's about consistency of care. Like me, apprentices are already embedded in our services, they know the values and how the hospital operates."

Cygnet offers opportunities ranging from nursing, healthcare, management, HR, IT and finance to help people grow their skills and embrace new challenges.

Charlotte is also a beneficiary of the Cygnet Health Care apprenticeship programme and is currently in her second year of the Nursing Associate apprenticeship with University College Birmingham.

She hopes to be fully qualified by 2024/5 and her future aspiration is to provide high quality care as a Nurse with hopes to progress into management in the future.

Charlotte, who is currently a mental health support worker, has worked at Cygnet Hospital Kewstoke since 2015. She said: **"The apprenticeship programme is an amazing opportunity. Getting real life experience in an actual work environment and learning from experts in their field is invaluable.**

The managers at Kewstoke have been very helpful, and I'm part of a really supportive team. I'm getting the opportunity to work with and learn from people who are really experienced at what they do."

"The apprenticeship programme is an incredible initiative, not least because it makes you feel valued and invested in, but also empowers you to be a better version of yourself. I will be indebted to Cygnet for the rest of my career as without them, nursing would not have been possible for me."

"The programme has definitely developed my practical skills and has given me a greater understanding of inpatient care. Mental health as a sector has not always had a good physical health knowledge base and by introducing the role of Nurse Associate we are now able to monitor, care and support physical health for our service users where we may have had to hand this over to an outside professional."

Carers

Throughout 2023, Cygnet demonstrated our ongoing commitment to improve the experience of those looking after individuals with mental health needs and learning disabilities.

We launched the Cygnet Carer, Family and Friends Charter, making our pledge to support carers in the best way possible. The pledge, co-produced by members of the Cygnet Carers Network and the Cygnet Senior Management Team, sets out four main priorities on how we will work with carers moving forwards. These are:

- > Identify Carers
- > Recognise Carers
- > Inform and Involve Carers
- > Guide and Support Carers

We held monthly Carers, Family and Friends Virtual Drop-in sessions via Zoom. This is an opportunity to share feedback and suggestions and are open to any carers, family or friends of individuals being supported by Cygnet.

We launched our new Carers, Families and Friends Handbook, which provides useful information about having a loved one admitted into our care at Cygnet. We understand a hospital admission can be stressful and we recognise it is a difficult time, which is why we put together a booklet to help guide families and carers through the process. We co-produced these with representatives from our Carers Network and are grateful for their invaluable input.

A number of Cygnet Health Care services were recognised by the Carers Trust Triangle of Care programme, making us the first independent providers of health and social care services to be accredited.

We partnered with Black Belt Advocacy to provide a new innovative service to support carers with access to an independent advocate. This is available to any carer who has a loved one within a Cygnet service. An advocate will help the carer to express their views and make sure their voice, opinions and experiences are properly heard.

Awards

We have some amazing staff and teams who have been honoured with some incredible awards. Here is a list of our 2023 award wins and shortlistings:



Housing with Care Awards

Care Team of the Year –
Chaseways (Finalist)



Design in Mental Health Awards

Art Installation of the Year (Finalist)



National Service User Awards 2023

- Hope and Positivity Award – **Cygnnet Elms** (Winner)
- Celebrating Diversity Award – **Cygnnet Hospital Bury** (Finalist)
- Lived Experience Leader Award – **Cygnnet Elms** (Finalist)
- Lived Experience Leader Award – **Cygnnet Hospital Kewstoke** (Finalist)
- Community and Collaboration Award – **Cygnnet Elms** (Finalist)



National Learning Disabilities and Autism Awards 2023

- Breaking Down Barriers Award – **Cygnnet Manor** (Finalist)
- Employer Award – **Cygnnet Manor** (Finalist)
- Positive Risk Taking Award – **Cygnnet Manor** (Finalist)
- Complex Support Worker – **Cygnnet Manor** (Finalist)



Great British Care Awards 2023

- Outstanding Contribution to Social Care – **Joshua Tapp, Hospital Manager, Cygnnet Hospital Kewstoke** (Finalist)
- Co-Production Award – **Raf Hamaizia, Expert by Experience Lead** (Finalist)



Care Home Group Awards 2023

- Top 20 Rated Small Care Home Group in the UK – **Tabley House Nursing Home and Tupwood Gate Nursing Home**



HSJ Partnership Awards 2023

- Environmental Sustainability Project of the Year (Finalist)



Nursing Times Workforce Summit Awards 2023

- Manager of the Year – **David Wilmott, Director of Nursing** (Finalist)
- Best Employer for Diversity and Inclusion – **Cygnnet Multicultural Network** (Finalist)



HealthInvestor Awards 2023

- Complex Care Provider of the Year (Finalist)
- IT Innovator of the Year (Finalist)

Staff Networks

At Cygnet we are committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

We are incredibly proud of our globally diverse team, all working together to help improve the lives of the people in our care every single day. We celebrate diversity because different people, with different perspectives make Cygnet a better health and social care provider.

Our staff networks thrived in 2023 and they are an important mechanism to allow colleagues to discuss their experiences, offering a safe space, and help us to shape our organisational culture to create fairer and inclusive work environments for all.

Cygnet Women's Network

The mission of the Network is to engage and empower women, and their allies across Cygnet, enabling them to connect with and support each other in a safe and non-judgemental environment.

Over
11,600 staff,
Over
110 nationalities,
1 amazing team

LGBTQ+ Network Update

Cygnet's LGBTQ+ Network is as colourful, creative, honest and open as its members. The network aims to collaboratively promote understanding and inclusivity within the workplace, alongside providing a safe space for all LGBTQ+ people to discuss their unique experiences and share ideas of how we can support emotional wellness at work.

Our Multicultural Network

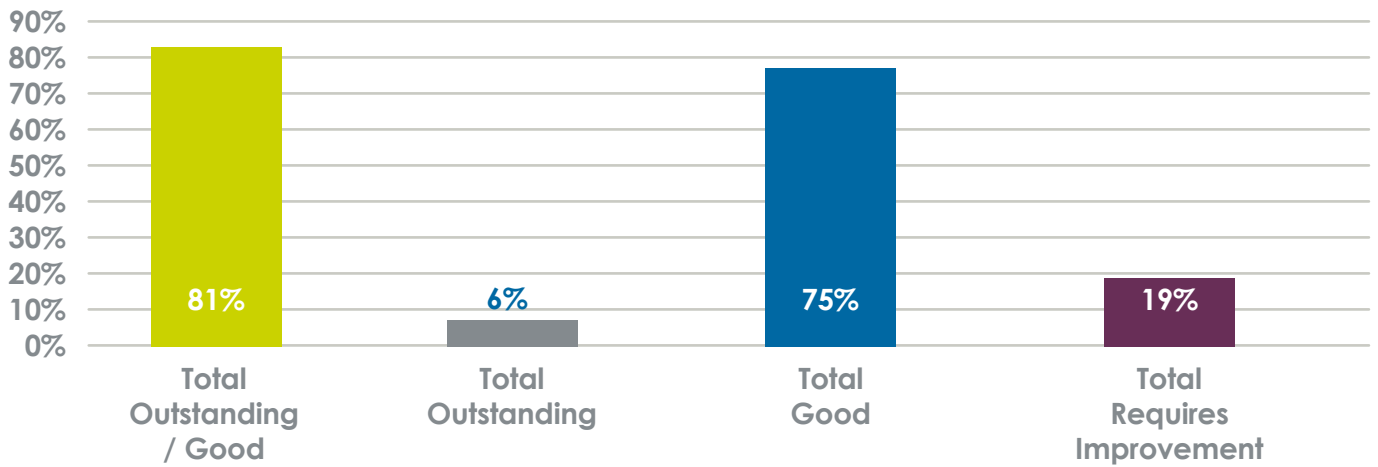
The Network aims to enhance the experience of ethnic minority colleagues by creating an environment of openness and fairness, promoting excellence, delivering person-centred care, and ensuring opportunities for all staff to be their best.

Cygnet Disability Network

We launched Cygnet's Disability Network in October 2023. The Network looks at Hidden Disability and Known Disability affecting colleagues in Cygnet, those who are caring for someone with a disability at home, and the impact of disability on your working life. It was set up following results from our 2023 Staff Survey and feedback from colleagues who have said they would welcome this Network and the opportunity to address issues about disability and the impact it has on people's work and their lives at home. The aim is to provide a safe forum, a place where people can raise issues of disability in a safe way, but also to celebrate positives and the achievements of people living with disability.

Our Quality

Regulatory Ratings*



*Cygnet Regulatory Ratings (Health and Social Care combined) as at December 2023

In 2023, 81% of our services across health or social care are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by our quality regulators – outperforming the national average (as represented in the above graph)



100% of our schools in Child and Adolescent (CAMHs) facilities are rated 'Good' by OFSTED

As of December 2023, we had 119 services under CQC inspection. We have three services that are currently rated outstanding for patient safety and in our overall regulatory ratings throughout 2023, we were encouraged that we are outperforming the national average.



Quality Improvement

In 2021 the Cygnet Quality Improvement Team was established and our three-year Cygnet QI Launch Strategy was created. Over the last three years the QI Team have worked tirelessly to develop a culture of continuous improvement across Cygnet. They have achieved this by building an assistive framework to support our teams, developing comprehensive training packages and supporting documents to guide sites through their QI project journeys.

“I have been delighted to lead this important work and develop improvement capability and capacity across the group. The positive impact Quality Improvement has delivered across the business is testament to the collective efforts of our team and the enthusiasm and drive from our local services to work collaboratively to deliver improvement using our Quality Improvement Framework.”

Dan King, Head of Quality Improvement, Cygnet



Co-Production

Co-production has transformed the way health and social care providers operate, and the importance of involving the voice of the people we support at every level of the organisation is something that has been embraced at Cygnet over the last decade.

“Co-production is what defines our values as an organisation, it is about care, respect, empowerment, trust and integrity... it is about working together as equal partners and we have seen a transformation in culture as a result.”

Dr Tony Romero, Group Chief Executive Officer, Cygnet

“Our People’s Councils and the Experts by Experience team have really set the tone on our journey and have demonstrated the importance and benefits of co-production. It is now time to take things to another level and really embed co-production in everything we do at every level of the organisation.”

David Wilmott, Director of Nursing and Patient Experience, Cygnet

The strategic drive around creating a culture in which co-production can thrive has enabled equal partnerships working to shape and drive quality improvement across services.



People’s Council

The People’s Council aims to share power and give a voice to service users, residents and family carers at every level of the organisation. The People’s Council has been recognised as good practice by the Care Quality Commission, Royal College of Psychiatrists and NHS England.

It continued to flourish with meetings being harnessed for supporting strategic and group wide projects and initiatives in addition to the historical local co-production agenda the organisation continues to benefit from.

The People’s Council has and continues to pioneer exciting projects for the organisation with Music 2 Empower, Smoke Aware and Co-Sustain to name just a few.



Experts by Experience

Experts by Experience visits continued to grow and included general quality checking, capturing feedback, co-chairing People’s Council meetings as well as supporting a variety of local and group wide initiatives.

The Experts by Experience programme also diversified the range of lived experience to extend to young people’s services, this has included regular visits and strategic input. Experts by Experience are also able to give feedback, share best practice and lessons learned directly to the Group CEO and Group Director of Nursing via the Lived Experience Advisory Board.



Recovery Oriented Practice

Music 2 Empower launched in October 2019 and aims to bring the positive effects of music across the group.

The Music 2 Empower project has now been able to cover nearly every service line within the organisation and music rooms as well as access to music therapy and instruments are becoming increasingly common.



Accessible Information and Updates

The second version of Cygnet’s Yellow Book was co-produced to include creative contributions of artwork, poetry and music from service users across the organisation and is a celebration of how creativity can support positive mental health.

It is also a wellbeing resource which signposts the reader to different organisations and charities who can support wellbeing and good mental health. It includes simple practices to build healthy habits, such as mindfulness and other self-regulation practices.

The Cygnet Yellow Book is available in all Cygnet services for service users, residents, staff, families, carers and visitors to all benefit from the inspiring works and messages.

Service User Case Study

A former service user at Cygnet Oaks has praised staff for their “profound impact” on his life after their care and support enabled him to achieve a university degree.

Despite his mental health battles, Dominic, 49, proudly celebrated achieving a degree in Criminology and Law from the Open University last year.

He began his degree whilst he was a service user at the Barnsley-based service, a 35 bed hospital specialising in high dependency inpatient rehabilitation for men.

Dominic, who was admitted to Cygnet Oaks on 31 August 2018, said he couldn't have envisaged completing a degree when he was first transferred to the service.

“When I initially arrived at Oaks Lodge, it was like walking into the abyss,” he explained. **“I am six foot four inches, but I was still scared, it's the unknown, an alien environment. I was not in control and was on a downward spiral with no goals or future aspirations in life. My thoughts and emotions were all over the place.**

It's a strange feeling. You can be surrounded by lots of people, but you can still be very lonely inside.”

Alongside his time with a psychologist, Dominic immersed himself in all the activities offered by the Occupational Therapy team, his favourites being walks in the countryside and trips to the seaside.

“I found my psychology exercises extremely hard,” he explained. **“From my own experiences, I grew up not trusting people, and especially those in authority. My very experienced Psychologist persevered and eventually managed to chip away at my shutters.”**

As he began to recover and learn the tools to help him manage his condition, Dominic turned his attention to his hopes for the future. Realising he had a passion for law, the team at Cygnet Oaks offered their support and he started studying for a BA (Honours) degree in Criminology and Law with the Open University.

His hard work paid off and in 2023, he learnt he had achieved a second class honours degree.

He said: **“I have the deepest gratitude and appreciation for the exceptional care and support that I received from the Cygnet Oaks team.**

As a student, I faced many challenges and struggles along the way, but with their help, I was able to overcome them and achieve my academic goals.

The Oaks provided me with a safe and supportive environment where I could receive the necessary treatment and care for my mental health issues. The doctors, nurses, therapists, and other staff members were all highly professional, compassionate, and understanding. They listened to me, understood my needs, and provided me with personalised care that helped me manage my condition effectively.”

Dominic added that the staff team helped him to stay motivated and focused on his studies. The therapy sessions helped him develop coping mechanisms that allowed him to deal with stress and anxiety in a healthy manner and the medication he was prescribed helped him to manage symptoms without affecting academic performance.

He said that, without the hospital's help, he would not have been able to complete his degree.

“The support that I received gave me the strength and courage to face my challenges head-on and emerge victorious,” he explained.

“To the Oaks team, I want to say thank you for everything you have done for me. Cygnet Oaks has made a profound impact on my life, and I will always be grateful for your care and support.

That person, who first entered Cygnet Oaks, has a positive outlook on life, is looking forward to a bright future and is embracing the challenges ahead. I will be forever indebted to all the hard work and perseverance of all the staff.”



Our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Successes

Cygnnet is committed to making our business more environmentally and socially sustainable.

Environmental

Our aim is to achieve:

★ Net zero carbon for our direct and indirect emissions by 2035

★ Net zero carbon emissions in our supply chain by 2040

From the installation of solar panels, to the reduction of CO2 emissions across our vehicle fleet and waste management solutions at our services, we are making great strides in our environmental commitments.



We have started to install LEDs across our top electricity usage sites.

Waste recycling

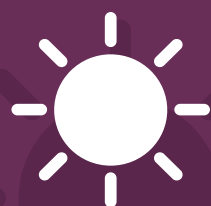
across the organisation increased from 31% in 2022 to 38% in 2023



Our vehicle tracking device, 'Lightfoot' has reduced CO2 emissions by 164 tonnes across our vehicle fleet, the equivalent of:

- 602,000 washing machine cycles
- 7,810 trees
- The weight of 257 polar bears

In 2023, Cygnnet generated 817,263 kWh of electricity across the sites with solar systems. This amounts to £110,331.00 kWh generated.



24

sites now have solar systems installed



Social

Cygnets values good relationships with people in the local communities where we have services. We have more than 35 years of experience in helping and caring for people in communities across the UK and we have built strong relationships with our neighbours. We are proud to contribute meaningfully to the communities we are privileged to serve.

<p>Where possible we use local produce, resources and suppliers at our facilities to support the local economy and community infrastructure</p> 	<p>Support our staff in their local community endeavours including building relationships with local MPs, councillors, businesses, schools, charities, community groups and other services</p> 
<p>Contribute and collaborate with our local communities and are proud supporters and sponsors of numerous community initiatives, clubs and groups including Taunton FC and Bearsted FC</p> 	<p>Value our workforce through training, development, compassionate leadership and supporting individual wellbeing needs</p> 
<p>Work with our sector partners to forge strong relationships and continue to be regarded as a trusted provider of quality care</p> 	
<p>Continue to champion diversity and inclusion in our workforce</p> 	<p>Work in the spirit of co-production to put our service user first</p> 

Governance

Cygnets is committed to providing high quality care through a robust governance framework that is transparent, accountable and inclusive.

<p>Constantly monitor and review our services through our internal Quality Assurance, Safeguarding, Compliance and specialist teams</p> 	<p>Use data to measure our progress and assess our quality</p> 
<p>Listen to service user and staff experiences to inform our practice and strive to achieve the best possible outcomes for those in our care</p> 	<p>Operate openly and transparently with our external regulators and stakeholders to constantly improve, progress and innovate</p> 



Expert by Experience Case Study

An 18-year-old who was hospitalised for severe mental health difficulties is now working for us to help other young people struggling with their mental health.

Less than a year ago, Thomas, 18, of Coventry, was still an inpatient at Cygnet Hospital Joyce Parker after suffering with his mental health since he was 16 years old. He has since been diagnosed with Complex PTSD, ADHD and Autism.

He has now begun working for the Lived Experience Network as an Expert by Experience – someone who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses health, mental health and/or social care. He will be supporting young people hospitalised due to their mental health at Cygnet Health Care services.

He was first hospitalised at the age of 16 and spent time at other services before he was transferred to the Coventry-based hospital. He completed nine months of treatment at Cygnet Joyce Parker Hospital and upon discharge in early 2023, he knew immediately that he wanted to help others.

His Occupational Therapist encouraged him to become an Expert by Experience and now he uses his experience to talk with current young service users and report any feedback back to senior staff so that necessary changes can be made to ensure the service provides the best care to those who need it.

He said: **“I want to speak up for people who don’t have a voice. When you’re in a mental health service, sometimes you just don’t have the strength in yourself to speak up about what you need. I’ve been there and I know what can help and what hinders. I want to share that expertise to help get others into a good place.”**

Cygnet Joyce Parker Hospital is a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service based on Lansdowne Street, Coventry. The service supports young people aged between 12 and 18 with mental health needs in low secure, psychiatric intensive care and acute environments. The aim of the service is to help young people stabilise and return home as soon as possible. Thomas will balance his role with his other part time job in a local supermarket.

He praised Cygnet Joyce Parker Hospital for the role it played in helping him recover.

He explained: **“Without Cygnet Joyce Parker Hospital, I genuinely wouldn’t be where I am today. The treatment was so person-centred, they really cared and wanted me to be the best person I could be. It is the place I felt safest and most understood and the staff were just incredibly compassionate. This is a chance for me to give back.”**





Talking about the importance of his role, Thomas said it was crucial to have people who could empathise with what the young people are going through. He said: **“I hope I can be an inspiration for young people who are still struggling. It is important to give them hope for the future, and help them realise that things can and do get better.”**

The Expert by Experience role opens up a new door for inpatients and gives them a new pathway of communication. They know we are non-judgemental so they open up a lot more. They know we understand what they are going through. Also, it sends a strong message to the young people still in treatment that it can be done. They can see there is opportunities for them out in the community and it gives them extra motivation to commit to their treatment and get well. You can say `I got through it` and it's possible for other people to do the same.”

Thomas said one of the first priorities for him will be assessing the environmental surroundings of the hospitals and ensuring facilities are suitable for those with sensory needs.

He added: **“Being an Expert by Experience helped me in the final stage of my recovery. It's shed light on my treatment and it gave me a lot of acceptance and understanding. It has put it into perspective how far I've come. Now I can use that as a starting block to help others.”**

“I want to actively listen to what the young people need and relay that accurately to those that have the power and the means to do something about it.”



Service User Story

Two residents of Cygnet Social Care services spoke about their experiences during Learning Disabilities Week 2023.

Deanna has a diagnosis of mild learning disability and ADHD and has been a resident at Ducks Halt since 2020.

"I absolutely love it here at Ducks Halt," Deanna said. **"The staff are amazing and they really help and support me.**

They organise so many fun activities for us to do including days out like going to the zoo or going bowling. I'm really happy this is my home.

I do feel that people misjudge me a little bit. Despite my learning disability my life is good and I do a lot of fun stuff. I enjoy cooking and arts and crafts and going outside to parks and listening to music.

I feel that some people think I don't have a proper life like 'normal' people. I like being happy and doing stuff I want to do, just like everybody else.

I do enjoy my life, people shouldn't bring themselves down. You can achieve anything."

Deanna said her hopes for the future is to have a job and live independently.

"I'm trying my best", she said. **"The most important thing for me is being happy."**

Chris Bowman, 30, is a resident at Yorkshire Supported Living where each week he attends the Education Project at Oxley Woodhouse. Run by Cygnet Social Care, the project offers a diverse range of activities at different learning levels. Residents are able to interact with a number of different resources to aide their learning, within a safe and relaxing environment.

Chris, who has mild learning disability was also diagnosed with epilepsy at 15 years old. He has been a resident with Cygnet Social Care since 2021.

He said: **"I think people may believe that those of us with a learning disability can't live independently.**

But they can. I'm in supported living and doing everything independently and that makes me feel so happy. I can go to the shops on my own, go to the café by myself and generally just look after myself."

Chris added: **"The staff here keep me safe and they support me, helping me when I need it. But I enjoy doing things on my own, there's no better feeling than being independent."**

"It makes me proud to know how far I've come in terms of my independent living."

Through the Education Project, Chris is in the process of achieving an AQA qualification as part of its Unit Award Scheme (UAS) which allows all students to engage with learning and have their achievements formally recognised.

Students are rewarded with a certificate each time they successfully complete a unit of learning. They can build up a portfolio of certificates to evidence their skills, knowledge and experience. The scheme boosts confidence, increases engagement and improves motivation, helping students to make progress on their lifelong learning journey.

He is studying Maths and English as well as topics such as understanding money, food safety and hygiene and personal care.

"Everything I am learning through the Education Project is helping me with my goal of living on my own," he explained. **"I'm learning to cook, how to do my own washing and laundry and it is building my confidence every day.**

I'm learning new things all the time."



Future Prospects

In 2024, we will open six new hospitals and completely modernise five existing facilities as part of an extensive improvement programme.

Providing **200** new beds



Recruiting up to **1,000** new staff

With the expansion of our facilities, we will:

Generate employment in our local communities

Utilise local supply chains

Bring investment to the local community and social causes

Over the next five years we will:

01 Continue to maintain and enhance **high quality, safe services for children, young people, adults and older people**. We want all our services to deliver to the level of our absolute best and provide person-centred care

02 Further expand our provision of **mental health and social care services**, ensuring we continue to grow and evolve, meeting the demands and needs of service users, their families and those who commission our services. Any extension of our services will be financially sustainable, in line with national policy and supported by a clear operational framework

03 Use data intelligently to **drive improvement and foster a culture of continual learning**

04 Recognise our staff are our most important asset in the delivery of **safe, quality care** and create a culture which **promotes excellence** and provides a fulfilling place for staff to pursue their careers

05 Demonstrate how we value our workforce through training, development, compassionate leadership, recognition, and responding to their own wellbeing needs

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Improving lives together

