

Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust Annual Report 2023/24



Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust

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*From Woodrow Phoenix
Chair, Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust*

This annual report marks the forty-fifth year that the Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust has been in operation since its official opening in 1979. It's actually at least 46 years, given the logistics; once the two buildings of 90 and 92 Tressillian were converted from separate houses into one combined structure, rooms were altered and many changes were made to make the new premises work as a home of multiple occupancy. I don't know how long it took for policies and procedures to be devised, staff recruited and residents arrived to occupy these spaces, and teething problems were worked out before it was up to speed. But all of that would have had to be done before the big day. So that is my excuse for not heading up any big celebration activities, not yet anyway.

Forty-five years is a remarkable milestone and I am very proud of all the people who have helped us get there, even if I am conflicted in some ways by the paradox of social care; we work very hard to provide a fix for a problem while wishing there was no need for services like ours. If society was fairer and made more sense, we could all do something else. But since it seems things will never make sense, we will continue trying to correct the small corner of our world where we can do something about it. Thank you for supporting us in these efforts. Our funders and partners, our neighbours and friends are a vital part of our mission.

I am sad to note that in October of this year, Lord Herman Ouseley died. Herman was a great friend to Sybil Phoenix both personally and professionally. Their relationship dates back over five decades. They worked alongside each other for many years, on furthering and deepening community relations in Lambeth and Lewisham. Herman was a strong supporter of the work of this Trust. He was patron of the Friends of Marsha Phoenix, a sister charity that was the fund-raising arm of the Trust. After he was made a Peer in 2001, sitting as a crossbencher in the House of Lords, he sponsored a yearly afternoon tea event at the Palace of Westminster which was a key part of the Friends' fund-raising activities. When the Friends charity was closed, he continued to sponsor the teas for MPMT directly. The photograph on the front cover of this Annual Report was taken in Westminster at one of these sponsored teas in 2007. We will miss him.





Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to empower young women to realise their fullest potential, fostering a community where their voices are valued, their ambitions supported, and their unique strengths celebrated. We are dedicated to providing opportunities for growth, education, and leadership, enabling young women to navigate the world with confidence, purpose, and resilience. By investing in their future, we aim to build a more inclusive and equitable society where young women lead with courage and inspire others.

Equality and Diversity Policy Declaration

Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust is committed to equal opportunities in its provision of services, employment practices and management of the project.

As an organisation in a multi-cultural and diverse area of the inner city, the Trust seeks to actively oppose all forms of discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, colour, nationality, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, transgender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy, class and any situation where people are disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justified. This includes all protected characteristics as detailed in the Equality and Human Rights Act 2010. Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust declares that we are taking positive steps towards promoting equality and combatting all direct and indirect discrimination.

Statement on Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust's approach to risk management

Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust regularly reviews the organisational and financial risks which it may face as a small independent charity. This includes regular reporting and assessment of potential risks, having in place or action planning to mitigate/eliminate those risks, and reviewing those risks ensuring a high standard of service is maintained. Relevant policies and procedures are in place and are reviewed regularly, and training of key personnel is kept up to date.

Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust is a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee

Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust 2023/24

Voluntary Board / Executive Committee

Chair Woodrow Phoenix

Treasurer & Company Secretary Jane Chandler

Executive Committee Members

Jenny Berbeck

Caroline Ellis

Danny Gray

Jo Mackie

Derrick Martin

Carol Smith

Esther Stanford Xosei

London Borough of Lewisham co-optee:

Laura Cunningham

Key Partners

Commissioner, London Borough of Lewisham Supporting People Team:

Jonathan Scarth

Liaison Officer, London and Quadrant Housing Trust:

Gemma Carpenter

Staff Team

Chief Executive Officer Harriet Thomas

Senior Operational Manager Donna Lewis

Project Manager Jackie Doyley

Deputy Project Manager/Resettlement Worker Samantha King

Project Manager, Erlanger Road Adebimpe Oputa

Facilities Manager Loraine Phoenix

Health and Safety Officers Adebimpe Oputa, Loraine Phoenix

Project Worker Jennifer Rose (to Summer 2024)

Project Worker Vanesa Gomez Garcia

Project Worker Chinyere Akpoefafe

Cook Malvia Walters

Sessional, Saturday & Sunday Staff Rosemarie Cameron (to Summer 2024), Rosaline Mensah, Veronica Roberts, Malvia Walters, Ore

Williams-Kofoworade

Casual Staff Julia Arrindell, Panchita Golding, Jameela Landell

Volunteers

Good Gym volunteer group

Gardening Suriya Pieris, Sue Luxton

Fair Share Tesco collection supporter Kris Hibbert

Website development David Alliet

INFORM database partners: Salesforce

Cleaning by Theresa Fleming and Team



Laura Cunningham @LauraLewisham · 1d
Come and visit Marsha Phoenix Trust fundraising stall @Broc_Soc Hilly Fields Fayre today 12- 5pm.



MarshaPhoenixTrust



Fundraising report

We are grateful to still receive regular donations to our *Just Giving* page, and to be supported by donations from our neighbours. These play an important part in securing the future of the service. The Trust benefits where a donor is in a position to Gift Aid a donation. Please enquire if you think this may be a possibility.

www.justgiving.com/mpmt/donate

This year the trustees, led by Jo Mackie, decided we should take part in the annual Midsummer Fayre organised by the Brockley Society. It is held on Hilly Fields every summer on the Saturday closest to June 21st and includes stalls selling crafts, clothing, food, and all the usual things you might expect to find at a market. We took two tables to sell clothes, bric-a-brac and sunflowers. The sunflowers were a very big hit, and with some powerful sales expertise from Councillor Laura Cunningham we managed to sell every one of the 70 or 80 flowers donated to us!

Woodrow spoke to many Brockley residents who didn't know there was a supported housing project in Tressilian Road. Some knew about MPMT but thought it had closed its doors long ago, some weren't aware of us at all. So our tables raised money for us and our presence was also worthwhile for raising our profile with local people.



From Jane Chandler, Treasurer

The summarised financial statement included in this Annual Report is for the financial year ending March 2024.

The Treasurer's report is given verbally at the AGM, with reference to the Management Letter, full Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report .

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MARSHA PHOENIX MEMORIAL TRUST

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of financial activities, the Balance sheet, the Statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

BASIS FOR OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's

ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue. Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Trustees' report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for

assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

AUDITORS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

We have been appointed as auditor under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

[Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud.]

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities.

This description forms part of our Auditors' report.

USE OF OUR REPORT

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Hedley Dunk Limited
Chartered Accountants Trinity House
3 Bullace Lane Dartford
Kent DA11BB

28 October 2024

Hedley Dunk Limited are eligible to act as auditors in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

* * * * *

***Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust
is a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee***

***Registered Charity number 1063698
Registered Company number 2552186***

***Auditor
Hedley Dunk Chartered Accountants,
Trinity House, Bullace Lane
Dartford, DA11BB***

***Bankers
HSBC Bank,
85 Lewisham High Street, SE13 6BE***

MARSHA PHOENIX MEMORIAL TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	-	2,297	2,297	2,501
Charitable activities	4	-	574,999	574,999	577,835
Investments	5	-	8,820	8,820	3,542
Total income		-	586,116	586,116	583,878
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	4,390	620,919	625,309	545,633
Total expenditure		4,390	620,919	625,309	545,633
Net (expenditure)/income		(4,390)	(34,803)	(39,193)	38,245
Transfers between funds	14	-	-	-	(1,920)
Net movement in funds		(4,390)	(34,803)	(39,193)	36,325
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		145,562	837,544	983,106	946,781
Net movement in funds		(4,390)	(34,803)	(39,193)	36,325
Total funds carried forward		141,172	802,741	943,913	983,106

The Statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 12 to 23 form part of these financial statements.

MARSHA PHOENIX MEMORIAL TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 02552186

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	11	326,003	322,430
		326,003	322,430
Current assets			
Debtors	12	20,978	32,702
Cash at bank and in hand		632,316	641,689
		653,294	674,391
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(35,383)	(13,715)
Net current assets		617,911	660,676
Total assets less current liabilities		943,914	983,106
Total net assets		943,914	983,106
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	14	141,172	145,562
Unrestricted funds	14	802,742	837,544
Total funds		943,914	983,106

The entity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the entity to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

However, an audit is required in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Woodrow Phoenix



Date: 28 October 2024

The notes on pages 12 to 23 form part of these financial statements.



From Harriet Thomas, Chief Executive Officer

This is my first Annual Report as CEO of Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust, and it's an absolute privilege for me to be in this role. I've had the pleasure of being part of MPMT in the past, under the leadership of my friend and co-chair of the Lewisham Homelessness Forum (LHF), Rebecca Long. She has certainly left a legacy behind her after 20 years, and what a legacy it is! MPMT remains the only facility for young women between the ages of 16 and 25 within Lewisham and the surrounding boroughs.

I've joined a great team and hit the ground running! Some of my achievements this year have been:

1. Upgrading the door entry system, ensuring safe entrance to the house even when the Team are away from the front desk.
2. Upgrading our IT systems, which has been a steep learning curve, but ensures we are cyber secure.
3. Creating an additional room, so we can provide more young people with housing.
4. Increasing our CCTV coverage, again, ensuring the safety of both staff and residents.
5. Upgrading our WiFi coverage, in response to feedback from our residents and staff.

6. Updating and introducing new policies to reflect our practices as they are and as they ought to be.
7. Introducing full Team meetings, allowing all staff concerns and comments to be heard.
8. Regularising meetings with the Management Team, to enhance our operation.
9. Increasing training in relevant areas of practice for the Team, so they have the knowledge needed to execute their role with excellence.
10. Regularising house meetings with residents, allowing them a voice in the service we provide and how we make provision for them.
11. Adjusting staffing so we have sufficient workers at key times during the night.
12. Introducing Reflective Practice for the Team and Reflective Coaching for the managers.

AND, most importantly, reintroducing the celebration of our birthdays!

I would like to say a HUGE THANK YOU, to Jane Chandler (our Treasurer), as my line manager, whose guidance has been invaluable; Donna Lewis and the whole MPMT (including the Board) for their commitment to supporting the growth of the service; to Jen Rose and Rosemarie Cameron, who have now moved on from MPMT, and have left their own mark on the service; Delia Julien-Edwards, our Clinical Supervisor; our suppliers, NetMatters, Community Fibre, Work Nest, AFS Security; my school, UMS, for their behind-the-scenes support and guidance; partners in Lewisham and co-Chairs, Tom Neumark, CEO of the 999 Club and Ellie Egthedar Head of Housing Needs and Refugee Services at LBL; David Alliet, who built and maintains our website. If I've missed anyone, I apologise. I know there are a number of people who the Team, particularly our Senior Operations Manager, will thank on behalf of the service. This short list only represents those I have regularly interacted with in the last six months.

Finally, I'd like to thank Sybil Phoenix, without whom we would not have a service. May her legacy continue on for many, many years to come.

Likewise, I'd like to acknowledge this year as the fiftieth anniversary of Marsha Phoenix's passing. Her passing has brought so much life. We are forever grateful, and we will never forget!

I look forward to continuing with MPMT into this new season of our provision and hope for more opportunities to share my gratitude.



From Donna Lewis, Senior Operational Manager

Our vision at Marsha Phoenix Memorial trust is to give every young person that comes through our doors a new beginning, a fresh start at building the life that they desire. Our goal is to help them to believe in themselves, inspire them to understand that knowledge is the key to a better life. With knowledge comes power over their own destiny. This is their opportunity to accept the care and support which will elevate their lives to be the best that they can be. Understanding that there is nothing that they can't achieve.

Yes, we understand that many of our young people come to us with traumatic backgrounds—psychologically, physically, mentally, sexually—which have shaped the person we see. As a team we work diligently to support our young people to understand that the past does not have to define them. They can create a new life for themselves with the support of the staff team to break every chain that is holding them back.

My ambition to work in the social care field stems from my longing to help people at their most vulnerable, wanting to feel safe, when they seek not only answers but also understanding, and compassion. At Marsha Phoenix Memorial trust we strive to build empathetic relationships with our service users. It really is the most humbling experience, every small goal achieved is a positive. You really get that parental feeling of pride when they work hard to change the course of their lives.

Team

I would like to welcome Harriet Thomas, our new CEO to Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust. Since Harriet started she has been like a whirlwind, she reminds me of those old spinning tops you wrap the cord around and let go! Since starting she has made some great changes like me, we both believe in growth. She is infectious and dare I say, a workaholic :) May I take the opportunity to thank the board for a great selection and for their dedication to Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust. She comes with that drive to make changes, to build upon existing provisions, promoting and uplifting the team. As for my role as the Operational Manager I would just like to say I deeply appreciate every member of our team for showing relentless effort for the service, it gives me a great sense of pride to be one of the leaders of this team.

Your hard work and dedication, how you continue to inspire our service users is most appreciated. In reading this paragraph you more than likely think I am just talking about the support workers, but no: for this service to run it takes every worker that comes through those doors; from the support worker that provides support, night staff who ensure the safety of our service at night, the cook who provides the service users with healthy meals that feed the brain, the cleaners that work hard at providing a clean and liveable, healthy environment. The facilities manager who ensures the health and safety of the building, our deputy manager/resettlement worker for your dedication to supporting our service users around move-on and the 3-6 support of the ex-service users, our service manager for her dedication over the years and last but in no way least, the Erlanger Road manager for our second step-down-stage-to-independence service.

Changes

Over the last year we have had many changes within the service to ensure that we are moving with the times. We have engaged a new IT Company, Net Matters to support the team with all our IT systems. We have engaged Delia Edward who supports the staff team around reflective practice, giving them the ability to reflect on actions taken and use this as a continuous learning process, and giving them time to learn from each other and voice their opinions. The Bright HR system allows the service to track our leave, sickness, book extra shifts and it also includes training for the staff team. The service changed the cleaning contractor. The new cleaners are more efficient, and the service environment is more inviting for staff and service users alike. Building works: major works have taken place in the building which have been completed. We look forward to making many great memories for the service users and our staff team.

Conclusion

I can not finish this without making reference to the founder of Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust. What can I say that I have not said already? She is a formidable woman who had the wherewithal and the drive to raise this service from the ground up. She started off by fostering in 1965 in Lewisham, she became a community worker providing support to unwanted children, for all her hard work protecting young people she was given the MBE which was truly deserved. If I was to put in print everything this wonderful woman achieved for young people I would never finish! But what I can say, her passion and drive continues through the staff team at Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust.

From Jackie Doyley, Project Manager

First and foremost, I would like to say thank you to all the staff at Marsha Phoenix for all the hard work and support you have put in over the last year.

In the last year we have encountered a number of changes, one of them being whereby we have said farewell to Denise Ifield, our former Director. But as one door closes another opens and we have welcomed Harriet Thomas our new CEO, who has already started to bring MPMT into the 21st century by introducing/installing Bright HR to name but one.

We have also said goodbye to Jen Rose one of our longstanding keyworkers, wishing her all the best as she enters a next chapter and thank you for your service over the last 12 years. As a result of Jen leaving, we are now looking forward to welcoming a new member of staff to the team.

It is one of MPMT's duties to keep each and every young lady that comes through our doors safe and secure. We have all been up-skilling our knowledge with the necessary safeguarding training accordingly.

We are constantly inspiring our girls with inspirational daily messages to positively encourage them by letting them know that they are smart enough, strong enough and good enough to pursue their goals and dreams.

Our annual Believe and Achieve Award (in memory of our dearly departed colleague) was awarded to Fartun Ali – well done Fartun! And as stated by you, you will continue to work hard.

Before I go, I would like to welcome Ore Williams-Kofoworade (waking night staff) who has come on board joining our team. I would also like to thank Anrapheal Care agency who have helped us out immensely, thank you for being there at short notice. Your service and staff is most appreciated.

Great Teamwork All!



From Samantha King, Resettlement Officer and Deputy Project Manager

The main parts to my role as resettlement officer are to help support the residents for either move through or move on. Tressillian Road is classed as a first-stage hostel, where there is 24-hour staffing to offer the extra support for the residents. What I do is to assess the residents for the best route for their next stage in their housing journey. This could be a move through to a second stage hostel, which is a more independent hostel like Erlanger Road. The second stage hostel can be anywhere within the Borough of Lewisham. The staffing levels are much lower, but the resident would still have support. The second stage hostels are a good stepping stone for residents that need more independent living but are not ready to live solely on their own with minimal or no support.

If the resident is ready for fully independent living, then they would be working towards a move on, to their own permanent accommodation. Then an application to Lewisham Borough housing department would take place, to get the residents a bidding number. The residents at Erlanger Road have two nominations a year with L&Q that would allow the resident to move out of Lewisham borough. For residents to be put forward for their move on, they need to show that they have their

independent life skills in place e.g. cooking, cleaning and budgeting, with a good six month's rent account as well as savings towards their property. They need to show that they can take care of their physical and mental health e.g. taking their medication, making appointments and attending appointments etc. Having a daytime activity like going to college, working paid or unpaid is also key.

I continue to give the residents three months support once they move into their own property. Helping them to set up their utilities and helping them access grants to help them to get some of their white goods and other items for their property. I support them to maintain a good tenancy and to budget with their new list of bills. The best part of this work is being able to see how much the resident has grown and the journey they have been on, to the point where you are able to see them make a house into a home for themselves.

I wish to thank the Buttle grant organisation for continued support of our young people in education, as that support that they have given has truly helped them.

From Ore Williams-Kofoworade, Waking night staff:

My role at MPMT is providing essential overnight support and care to all residents. Joining a team that supports and empowers women was always the perfect fit for me, I have a deep sense of compassion, empathy and I thrive in staying committed and witnessing positive changes; so with that being said, I am in the right place!

Since joining in February 2024, I have had the pleasure of building positive relationships with the girls; it was an honour to celebrate the ladies in September when we went to Thorpe Park, a team building, strengthening activity. I love what I do and I pride myself in the support I offer, being trauma informed, supporting the journey of healing, offering stability and helping women work through past and ongoing challenges in a healthy and constructive way. My way of working is 'prosocial modelling', I emulate this in the work I do with the girls, leading by example, treating others just as I would like to be treated.

MPMT is not just a place I call work, we are a family, I look forward to all the exciting opportunities that are yet to come and growing/thriving in our forever growing family!

From Chinyere A Ogba, Support worker

Well, it has been a year and three months since I started working at Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust as a Project /Support Worker. We are committed to nurturing the talent of our young people at MPMT and providing opportunities for career progression and development. Helping our residents to maintain their tenancy through successful management and keeping their rent account up to date, as this is one of the life skills they must acquire while living here in MPMT. Delivering safe and effective person-centred services to our residents in our supported living schemes.

As a support worker I have continued to support my residents by providing assistance, advice and signposting, particularly as the cost of living challenges deepen, we make sure we support our residents to plan ahead and budget their shopping to help them manage their money, Residents were supported to maintain their tenancy through help with budgeting to address rent arrears; applying for a move through to alternative accommodation; and reporting anti-social behaviour.

It has been a great pleasure working with the young people and watching them move onto their own flats.

At this point, I would like to say thank you to the management for the opportunity to work in this amazing company, and I am looking forward to more fulfilling years that lay ahead by God's grace.



From Loraine Phoenix, Facilities Manager

Well! Yet another year and it's time to update you all as to what has been happening at MPMT during the past year.

Where shall I start? When I wrote to you all in the last report, I was planning to have the dining room and living room redecorated and then move on to the stairwells. The dining room and living room were completed (looking nice and fresh even if I say so myself). Just the flooring remains to be done, but we had a bigger problem to deal with. We discovered the effects of subsidence to the side of 92 Tressillian were so bad that areas on the first and second floors were affected. Girls had to be moved out of two rooms so the problem could be dealt with. In fact we temporarily lost the use of four rooms: two on the top floor and two on the first floor as a bressemer beam had to be replaced and joists repinned. Of course you know we did this in a very safe way. It took six weeks to complete the works, but all is sorted now, and the rooms are back in use.

The next big project was to convert what used to be the staff flat into another bedroom. This conversion means we will be able to house 22 young women now and it has given us an extra bathroom as well so we will now have five bathrooms. These works should be completed in the next few weeks. In between all that has been going on I have had the guttering sorted as that was also in a bad way! I have also had a lot of rooms repainted and re-carpeted as the girls move out. I keep up with general maintenance of the house, keeping everything in good working order, and staying on top of all the regular inspections that must be done such as pest control, pat testing, gas inspections, legionella and fire inspections.

Amongst all that has been going on we have also changed our computer tech company, so I have been working closely with Tom Craske from Net Matters. They have been updating all our computers, with me at this end (must admit I knew nothing about computers until now LOL!). So, as you can see, we have had a very busy year and work still goes on to make us better for years to come.



From Vanesa Gomez Garcia, Project Worker

Another year has passed by at Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust, and what a journey it has been! It's hard to believe how quickly time flies when you're busy helping young women discover their potential. Every day brings new challenges, and a fair share of laughter, too! This year, I've had the privilege of working with some incredible young women, each with their unique stories and aspirations. Their determination to overcome obstacles has been nothing short of inspiring. It's amazing to see how hard they work to achieve their goals, even when faced with challenges that sometimes feel like climbing a mountain in flip-flops!

Of course, we've had our share of hurdles. Whether it's building trust or addressing complex needs, every challenge has taught us something valuable. These experiences have strengthened our team and fuelled our commitment to empowering these young women. Our collaborative spirit has been essential in navigating these challenges. Supporting each other and celebrating our successes, big and small, has made our work not only productive but also enjoyable. I'm grateful to be part of a team that genuinely cares about making a difference.

I want to thank everyone at Marsha Phoenix for their continued support and dedication. I'm excited for what's next and eager to keep pushing forward. Together, we'll continue to empower these remarkable young women to chase their dreams and make them a reality!





From Adebimpe Oputa, Erlanger Road Project Manager

It has come so quickly another year was like yesterday, but it is what it is, one year indeed.

My role is in two parts. Part one is the housing management aspect and dealing with all L&Q contractors where it is compliance issues. The other part is support and care for the residents, where I meet with them monthly or twice a month as the time permits, apart from seeing them in the project when visited.

Erlanger Road has been very busy this year with diverse resident issues which is sometimes challenging but we are able to cope with things and move on.

We have residents for whom English is not their first language, yet they are thriving and very much invested in growing and learning. One current resident recently bumped into a former resident who is now a professional. The former resident even sent a message of greeting to me. This is very encouraging to know that some of the former residents never forget where they started.

Another exciting thing to mention is their commitment to the house meetings and if for any reason they will not be there, they will send an apology. This is a great achievement to what had happened in the past years.

It has been excellent with L&Q, especially with our lovely Contract Officer Gemma Carpenter. We have been having the liaison meeting on the Team and the next meeting is arranged for 23/11/24 all things being equal and the audit will be next year 2025 sometime. L&Q has been a great partner of Marsha Phoenix and we hope to continue our relationship with them.

STATS 23/24

47	Referrals
26	Accepted and Housed
8	Did not attend
11	Refused the service
1	Re-assigned to other service
1	MPMT refused

Ethnicity of Referrals by percentage

15	Black Caribbean
9	Dual Heritage
7	White British
5	Black British
5	Black African
2	Unknown
1	White European
1	Asian
1	Gypsy Roma

Mental Health, Neurodiversity and Substance Misuse

9	Mental Health
3	Neurodiversity
2	Substance Misuse

what you give out you will
receive. Stay pretty and
Positive ♡

Smile

Feedback from Residents Meeting

- Residents were taken to Thorpe Park, which they all thoroughly enjoyed and would like to go again.
- Residents are happy with the new cleaners (Ms Theresa Fleming and the crew) and the cleanliness of communal areas.
- Residents enjoy the meals provided by Ms Malvia.
- Residents are happy with the new counsellor from Cassell, who they say is young and understands them.
- Residents say they understand and are happy with the curfew.

Rothanne is always positive
& respectful.

get on with it

& I was extremely
grateful when she
shared her concerns
with staff that
gesture was very
thoughtful

hair is always
stay.

Nothing good comes from giving up,
do what you must now, to
do what you want later. :)

Always be Positive.

don't let anyone dim your light,
keep shining and stay positive
even through the hardships.
♡

Have a good day

Keep your head up &
stay smiling ♡

VOIDS and ARREARS

Over the course of this year we have continued to have challenges with voids in our service and have at times had several bed spaces vacant. As a result, our void rate has increased. We continue working in partnership with our referral pathways and listening to feedback from residents and those who have visited our service to ensure we remain a provider of choice.

The team works hard to make certain that our residents are equipped to understand how to budget and a very important part of this is paying rent. Jackie and her staff are consistent in their approach with the young women from the moment they come for an assessment. Their obligation to pay their rent is clear and they are supported throughout their stay to prioritise this. Where there are issues with this an action plan is put in place to bring payments up to date. Jackie ensures that residents are informed weekly of the balance on their rent accounts, and that the team will support them in a variety of ways. This includes assisting with housing benefit claims, discretionary housing payments on behalf of new residents or residents that are in crisis, as well as helping students apply for their student loans.

The ability to manage money effectively is tied in with our move on objectives and supporting our young women to gain this skill is a core ethos of the Trust.

Total lettings, Tressillian Road: 23

Total lettings, Erlanger Road: 4

Tressillian Void Rate as an average this financial year: 14%

Erlanger Void Rate as an average this financial year: 14%

From Jen Rose, Ex-project worker

Helping people has always been my thing, so when I was taking a voluntary redundancy from the NHM (Natural History Museum) I was looking to do a social worker's degree course as a pathway to do something meaningful. I was kindly directed to MPMT as a way to test if social work was really what I thought it would be. So I started as a volunteer back in 2011 and then was offered a position as project worker, which I was delighted to accept and stayed for 12 years. I saw a lot of change during that time, small and gradual changes to the way support was offered to those who were homeless, planning for success and seeing it through, to the offer of a home of their own.

Getting the young person ready for independent living was always a driver for me. Seeing them overcoming mental barriers as well as the financial challenges involved in getting to that finish line of a home of one's own, and seeing them grow and realise their potential. During my time as a support worker I had the privilege of meeting and working with young people that managed to turn things around for themselves by educating themselves, learning to understand themselves and to build healthier relationships and gain a stronger sense of self, but more importantly not allowing themselves to be defined by their homelessness.

Moving away from being a project & support worker was a decision made easier by the fact that I would still be doing something worthwhile and relevant while working for the Metropolitan Police Service. In many ways caring about people who have been victims of crime is not so dissimilar to supporting young people who, let's face it, are sometimes indirectly victims of crimes that cause them to be homeless, such as relationship breakdowns, domestic abuse, losing parents to violence or drugs; so I have seen it from both perspectives.

I do hope that when I have settled into my new role, at some point in the future I can consider giving some of my time back to MPMT for the good of our young people.

From Natasha Millen de Guerra, former resident at MPMT

My name is Natasha and I am just about to turn 40 years old. Imagine, I was in your shoes, living at Marsha Phoenix over 25 years ago! I remember when I came to live there and not wanting to follow the rules. I thought I knew everything, I had an answer for everything and always looked for a way to bend the rules. I had received chance after chance, then came my written warning, then I was about to be evicted. Crazy. I had to fix up and make some changes!!

I remember being called to Rebecca [the Director]'s office, nervously going with (if I remember correctly) two written warnings on record. Long story short, I was then given one last the chance to stay, if I proved myself. I did indeed improve my behaviour and attitude, later got to have my own room. I think it was room #16. My shared room was room #1. It was so exciting having my own room!

Fast forward some time, to when I got my 2nd stage accomodation. Independent living! Mrs Carey [the Manager] helped me to move in, she was amazing. So kind and helpful. Really when I look back now as a big women, and a mother, I see that all the staff were just looking out for me. I mean... think about it, What crazy person would work with a house full of girls if they didn't really care?? Lol. They care! They just have to be hard and disciplined to help you succeed!

Girls, listen to the wisdom from the staff, try to make the right decisions now... it will change your life for the better later! Trust me, I'm living proof!!

So, a little about me now, I became a Christian at 19 years old. Moved from my 2nd stage in Forest Hill, to my own flat in a lovely house in Penge. Then in 2014 I met a guy from Panama (a Latin American / Spanish country in North America) on facebook. GOD told me he was my husband (after a week of knowing him, which I thought was crazy) but hearing GOD so clearly, and long story short, within that year, I gave up my flat in Penge and flew to Panama. Completely leaving everything behind to follow GOD and love.



We were married a month later in December 2012! We had our first child in April 2015, fast forwards to 2024... we now have four children, who I homeschool. Juan Carlos Elias is 9 years old, Hadassah is 7, Hosanna is 3 and our little baby Hannah is 18 months old. We are truly blessed by God and so grateful.

I know 100% I would not be where I am today, if it was not for the MPMT! All the support and guidance (cough cough and discipline lol).

Thank you so much!!!

My name is Ashlee, I'm 25 right now. ~~but~~ I used to live here 7 years ago. I got my own place in Lewisham, working full time as a children's nurse. I'm currently on the steps of purchasing my own Property. I'm always thankful of being in Marsha Phoenix as it gave me the stepping zone to becoming who I am. Advice I can give, going through this process is, always be positive. Have a goal. Think in 5 years, the situation you are in now is nothing and you're stronger than everything. Surround yourself with positive people. Save as much as you can. Be kind + nice. Work hard. But Marsha Phoenix has and always will be a part of my success story.

Ashlee R x

From Ashlee R., former resident at MPMT

My name is Ashlee, I'm 25 right now. I used to live here seven years ago. I got my own place in Lewisham, working full-time as a children's nurse. I am currently on the steps of purchasing my own property. I'm always thankful for being at Marsha Phoenix as it gave me the stepping stone to becoming who I am.

Advice I can give, going through this process is: always be positive. Have a goal. Think in five years, the situation you are in now is nothing and you're stronger than everything. Surround yourself with positive people. Save as much as you can. Be kind + nice. Work hard. Marsha Phoenix has and always will be a part of my success story.



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