

## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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I have optimism as we navigate the post-pandemic, do-you-remember-how-to, reality of meetings and events. Technology still reigns supreme and hybrid is as much about gathering, as it is about how we get to where we're going.

While headlines about addiction and overdose no longer dominate, but still permeate the news and cast a long shadow, the strength and power of the human spirit remain a constant here at Charlford House; women fight back every day, clutching to life with all their might, not daring to let it slip through their fingers. It's a hard-fought battle, but the rewards cannot be understated. The alternative is a bleak reminder most of our women know all-too-well.

As staff, I see the state of an individual when she first walks through our front door, making her way to the Program Office, where the intake process begins. I observe from a distance when she emerges, the reality sinking in that she'll be here for the next 90 days! Around the dining room table, over lunch, and through random comings and goings, I have the privilege of witnessing her journey. From the periphery, it is a joy to behold these women connecting with themselves and each other, learning and growing, emerging from darkness to light, from hopelessness to hope. It is an honour to receive their confidence and trust.

Keeping the beds full, is both a priority and a challenge for any facility. In the fiscal year 2022-23, Charlford House's bed capacity was 83.2%; This is lower than 2021-22 (89.8%) but higher than 2020-21 (81.7%). An average of 3 out of 5 of our non-Government funded beds (32.9%) is included in this calculation.

At our last AGM, we had a number of Board Members resign, leaving us with only 4 Directors to continue tending the affairs of Charlford House; due to a valiant effort on their part however, we were able to recruit 7 more (bringing the total to 11), who were elected at a Special General Meeting in February of 2023. They have proven to be a strong and committed team, enabling us to re-convene our various committees and continue balancing the operational growth of the organization with optimal client care.



Our staff has seen some changes as well, saying good bye to some long-term team members and welcoming some new ones into the fray. We congratulate Stacie Yarrow as she finds her footing in her new role as Acting Program Director. We welcome Amanda Enevoldson-Kapras back, as our volunteer volunteer co-ordinator (not a typo) and are grateful for the impact she has on the women in our care, and in spreading awareness of our cause. With the ability of people to gather in public once again, we have been able to jump-start our dormant Volunteer Program.

In terms of programming, we received a specific grant to pay for the Music Therapist's hours and a multi-year grant to support expressive arts, so we were able to expand our Music Therapy program and purchase new instruments; we were also able to offer Art Therapy again and purchase all the necessary art supplies. Both the Music Therapist (Rebecca Barr) and the Art Therapist (Da Eun Chung) were practicum students at Charlford House once upon a time. It is wonderful to see them both flourish in their chosen careers and witness how sharing their gifts with our women can be so impactful.

We also received a generous donation to support the recreation and activities at our 2nd Stage facility; this allowed our women to benefit from workshops on everything from budgeting and financial literacy to gardening; and enjoy activities like laser tag, rowing /pedal boating at Deer Lake, bowling, or going to the movies. Fun in recovery is considered an important part of relapse prevention – there needs to be some enjoyment in life or there is no incentive to remain clean and sober!

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Thanks to some funds and a group of volunteers from a generous corporate donor, we were able to give the house a (partial) face lift: We painted the entire inside of the house (even the women got in on the action!); demolished bulky, old office furniture in the program and administrative offices and replaced them with more modern, compact furnishings; replaced flooring in the dining room and living room; replaced area rugs; replaced patio furniture; and more.

As an organization, when it comes to fundraising, we have chosen for the immediate future, to invest most of our time and energy into donation requests and grant proposals; any events we participate in, are passive fundraisers – minimal resources invested for maximum return. For instance, last year, we were the Charity Partner for the Rubber Ducky Race; this year, we are the Brand Partner. We were also a charity partner of the Sun Run earlier this year. Our Board President Sara Li made excellent time in her run by the way!

We look forward to continuing the legacy that our founder Thelma McPherson began, when she opened the door to her own home back in the 1960's, then started the Society in 1970. We are still a grass-roots organization with a mission and vision that is woman-centred, family-oriented and community driven.

*- Miranda Vecchio, Executive Director*

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## **PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

For those of you who haven't met me, my name is Stacie Yarrow. I have been employed with Charlford House since 2018 as a counsellor and case manager. I have recently stepped into the position of acting Program Director.

This past year has been one of change, growth and expansion.

In January, we had a practicum student, Samantha Palmer join us. She did so well in her practicum that we hired her as part of our growing team. She has been absolutely amazing. Samantha brings her years of administration, education for addictions counseling as well as her invaluable lived experience. She is compassionate about her new position in every aspect and I am grateful to have her on board.

We recently hired Samantha Oakes. She will be with us part time (Mondays and Fridays) until April when her internship with MCFD is complete. Samantha previously worked for a facility for vulnerable youth.

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Jessica Boatman has taken the sole role as residential counsellor for our second stage facility. She has been doing a great job supporting the women at second/third stage. She has been setting up groups on life skills, budgeting, gardening, etc. She has also been flexible to come and assist at first stage when needed.

We have re-introduced art therapy as part of our programming. We have an art therapist that comes bi-weekly to do a facilitated group, as well as one on one sessions with the clients. This has been having a great impact on the clients that have trouble expressing feelings verbally.

Rebecca Barr continues to facilitate music therapy groups weekly. She offers one on one sessions to the women at first stage and second stage. Additionally, she has extended her services to ongoing recovery and helping so many of our alumnae who are struggling and need extra support.

We have introduced “In person” alumnae group once a month. This is held at second stage. We are also facilitating this meeting on zoom for those folks that are out of town and would like to be a “part of”.

We recently hired a psychiatrist, who is able to work with our Doctor getting referrals for clients who would benefit. So far this has been amazing. Clients who struggle with mental health generally have to wait up to a year, and they are now able to get these needs met within a week.

With my new position, I have dedicated time and training to make Charlford House more client centered. We, as a team have been doing scheduled one on one sessions with clients weekly. Nobody goes unnoticed. Clients are assigned a counsellor when they intake and follow-up and case notes will be done regularly by that individual. We do still keep the “open door policy” that clients can come for support to the office at any time.

It is my opinion that communication is key for a healthy environment. Our communication as a team has been very good over the past few months. We have regular team building meetings, and meet with the Executive Director regularly.

*- Stacie Yarrow, Acting Program Director*





## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

I am pleased to write my first message to you as Board President, and for this opportunity reflect on the successes of the past year.

It does not need to be said that Charlford House's most fundamental measure of success is in the spirit of the women in both our primary home and second stage house. With the help of our supporters, partners, staff and volunteers, we are able to serve each woman in their personal and life-changing journeys to becoming sober. The deep and lasting friendships, support, and love that one finds at Charlford House is above all, our greatest success.

Our other successes this past year include being a charity partner for the largest road race in Canada, the Vancouver Sun Run, as well as the Rubber Ducky race in Burnaby. We are grateful for a very generous grant from the Y.P. Heung Foundation which will enhance our therapeutic arts program, and for the continued support from our long time friends at the Stewart Family Foundation and Krogseth Foundation, our new friends, the John T. Hardie Foundation.

We are also thankful for a return to a "new normal" as women at the house have been able to attend community events and resume a more regular calendar of activities outside of the house. We are also back to hosting events such as our open house and garage sale.

While there is much to be thankful for, rising costs remain a threat to our ability to help women in their journey. That is why your ongoing support is so crucial. With your help, we can continue to change lives and our communities for the better in 2023/24. Thank you for your investment in and dedication to Charlford House.

*- Sara Li, Board President*



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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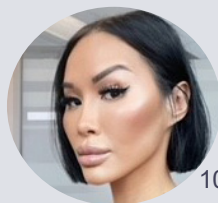
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- Sara Li**, President  
Public Guardian & Trustee
- Nester Chen**, Vice President  
Telus
- Jill Hendrickson**, Treasurer  
D&H Group
- Emilie Lahaie**, Secretary  
Cassels, Brock, & Blackwell  
LLP
- Sonny Samani**, Director  
Fraser Health
- Melissa Jang**, Director  
Telus Health
- Cynthia Bouchard**, Director  
Canadian Mortgage & Housing Corporation
- Kelly Lin**, Director  
Terra Social Purpose Real Estate
- Bryn Ward**, Director  
Student
- Stephanie Lee**, Director  
Cassels, Brock, & Blackwell LLP
- Tiffany Ho**, Director  
Barbeau Evans LLP

## CHARLFORD HOUSE STAFF



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- 1. Miranda Vecchio**  
Executive Director
- 2. Stacie Yarrow**  
Acting Program Director
- 3. Samantha Palmer**  
Addictions Counsellor
- 4. Jessica Boatman**  
Residential Counsellor
- 5. Michelle Reame**  
Program Office Assistant
- 6. Samantha Oakes**  
Addictions Counsellor
- 7. Amanda Enevoldson-Kapras**  
Volunteer Coordinator (Volunteer Extraordinaire)

## THE CHARLFORD HOUSE CONTINUUM OF CARE

### TRANSITIONAL (SECOND STAGE) HOUSING

Charlford House offers transitional housing (eight beds) to women who have graduated from our minimum 90-day program.

Because many of our women are on a fixed low income and at risk of homelessness, we provide them with an affordable, supportive housing solution with an opportunity to further strengthen their foundation of recovery to gradually re-integrate into society. This provides stability and structure, while also enabling the women to explore volunteer and educational opportunities.

The women also benefit from taking responsibility for themselves by practicing cleanliness, healthy meal preparation (with produce from their own garden), and participating in a full range of activities, while maintaining a rigorous program of recovery from addiction.

### SOBER LIVING

Charlford has four beds dedicated to sober living. These beds are for women who have completed the 12 step program; are practicing a rigorous program of recovery; and are seeking employment, gainfully employed, or exploring educational opportunities. While there are less rules and guidelines here than in transitional housing, there are still certain criteria to keep all persons living here safe.

### LIFETIME AFTERCARE

Lifetime aftercare includes ongoing support, group and individual counselling, and community support. Many women consider Charlford House their spiritual home and are welcome to come back anytime.

Many Charlford alumnae return to volunteer, offering peer support to the new women in the program, while keeping themselves safe and connected.



# CORE PROGRAMMING



**12-Step Written Work**



**Mother's Access Program**



**Body Image Workshops**



**Music Therapy**



**Yoga and Meditation**



**Art Therapy**



**First Nations Integration**



**Food Safe Training**



**First Aid, CPR, and Naloxone Training**

## MUSIC THERAPY



I started music therapy work at Charlford House as a student in 2014. After graduating from Capilano with a Bachelor's in Music therapy in 2016, I became a certified music therapist through the Canadian Association of Music Therapy and now run weekly group and individual music therapy sessions at Charlford House.

My approach to music therapy is based on an understanding of the human condition. As human beings, we all seek to be seen, heard, and validated.

My work aims to meet this fundamental need through relationship. Upon the foundation of the relationship I form with clients, I then collaborate with them to create their social, emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual goals. Working to meet these goals can include songwriting, lyric analysis, improvisation, guided meditations, recovery playlists, affirmation chants, singing familiar songs, and more.

In our music therapy sessions at Charlford House, we focus on using music to help us access emotional content that needs healing. Our main goals are to cultivate emotional intelligence, improve self-esteem and identity, and expand a sense of unity and connection. We spend time singing songs that affirm resources of identity, writing songs to process grief, playing instruments to learn to listen to others, and listening to their favourite songs to learn about each other. Overall the group allows us to connect on a deeper level and process feelings.

*- Rebecca Barr, Music Therapist*





## ART THERAPY

My relationship with Charlford House dates back to 2016, when I started off as a volunteer. While volunteering, I also studied to become an art therapist at the Vancouver Art Therapy Institute. I held my practicum partially at Charlford House, eventually graduating with a professional art therapist designation (DVATI). Today, I run bi-weekly art therapy group and individual sessions at Charlford House, regularly checking in with staff and connecting with the women.

Art therapy is a way of expression; a vulnerable way to tell our story. At Charlford House, my intention with art therapy is to recognize and acknowledge the process rather than the product. This is where art therapy differs from art class. I like to introduce art therapy as an approach to self-acceptance that is free from judgment, inclusive, and filled with creativity and playfulness. There is no right or wrong way to create art or even how one defines it.

Art making helps the creator externalize what is felt inside. Through crayons, pastels, collages, watercolour and acrylic paint, the women at Charlford House collectively create and share stories of their recovery journey, expressing their feelings of fear, sadness, gratitude, joy, and hope. It is common to see the women feel a sense of liberation, relaxation and unity by the end of art therapy. Whether group or individual sessions, art therapy has allowed the women at Charlford House to reconnect with their authentic selves through self-expression.

*- Da Eun Chung, Art Therapist*



## YOGA AND MEDITATION

Charlford House saved my life. I started using hard drugs at 13 years old. I ran away from a loving home, dropped out of school, all to live on the streets of Vancouver and be able to use drugs. I went through a lot over the many years drugs controlled my life. I've been evicted, lost jobs, hurt my family, the list goes on. I am now nearly 4 years sober.



I have always had a passion for exercise, and when I discovered yoga it became a pivotal role in my recovery. When I started working at a yoga studio I quickly realized teaching yoga is what I wanted to do as a career. Never finishing high school I had a lot of fear around going to school. Would I actually finish? The tools I've learned help me conquer my fears. Now I have the pleasure of sharing my passion with people in recovery.

Teaching the women at Charlford is very rewarding. Sharing how yoga, meditation, body awareness and self love are important tools in recovery. When the women have a moment of peace in savasana, or hold strong in a pose it means everything. Yoga is a continuous journey to discover yourself and I hope I can help these women find the pieces they lost.

*- Victoria Heard, Yoga Instructor*

## ALUMNAE GROUP

Charlford House is proud to announce we have recently started an Alumnae Group for all alumnae to meet regularly, hosted by the Second Stage women. This group allows alumnae to stay connected with their recovery community.

Meetings occur on the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM (Coffee at 6:30 PM) at Christie's Place. The meetings are hybrid so out-of-towners can join in via Zoom.



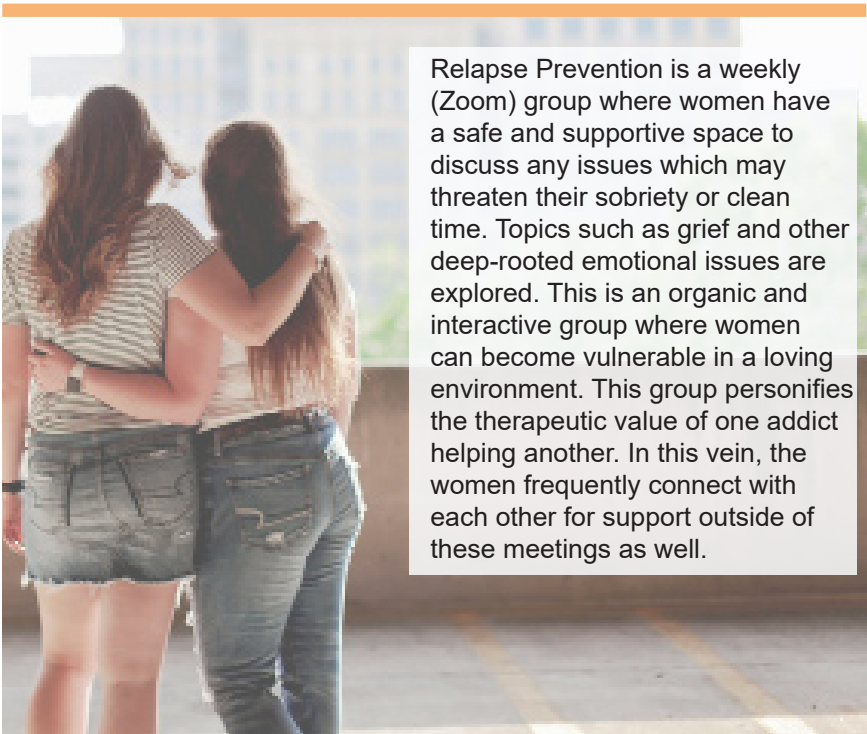
## FAMILY GROUP

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Charlford House's Family Group offers ongoing weekly support to family members of the women of Charlford House, both past and present. This group provides members with much needed insight, education, resource information and camaraderie. In 2020, we began offering this service via Zoom due to COVID-19. The online format has allowed us to connect with family members from out of town who would not otherwise have access to Family Group.

Our Family Group follows the same philosophy that we do for our main program: women supporting women, people supporting each other. Family members are always welcome to attend, even if the woman relapses. The positive outcomes are reflected in feelings of hope and solidarity with other family members in the group. They are reminded that they are never alone.

## RELAPSE PREVENTION GROUP



Relapse Prevention is a weekly (Zoom) group where women have a safe and supportive space to discuss any issues which may threaten their sobriety or clean time. Topics such as grief and other deep-rooted emotional issues are explored. This is an organic and interactive group where women can become vulnerable in a loving environment. This group personifies the therapeutic value of one addict helping another. In this vein, the women frequently connect with each other for support outside of these meetings as well.

## FIRST NATIONS INTEGRATION

Charlford House stands in solidarity with the Indigenous peoples as they grieve the recent discoveries of mass graves at former residential schools across Canada. As we recognize this heartbreaking reality, we renew our commitment to providing care for First Nations women. We acknowledge that our organization operates on the unceded territory of the Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the Tsleil-Waututh (səlil-wətaʔ), Kwikwetlem (kʷikwəʔləm), Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw), and Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm) Nations.

Here at Charlford House, we integrate First Nations customs into our program. We believe it's important for First Nations women to connect with their culture and spirituality as well as for all women to learn different ways of practicing the 12 Steps.

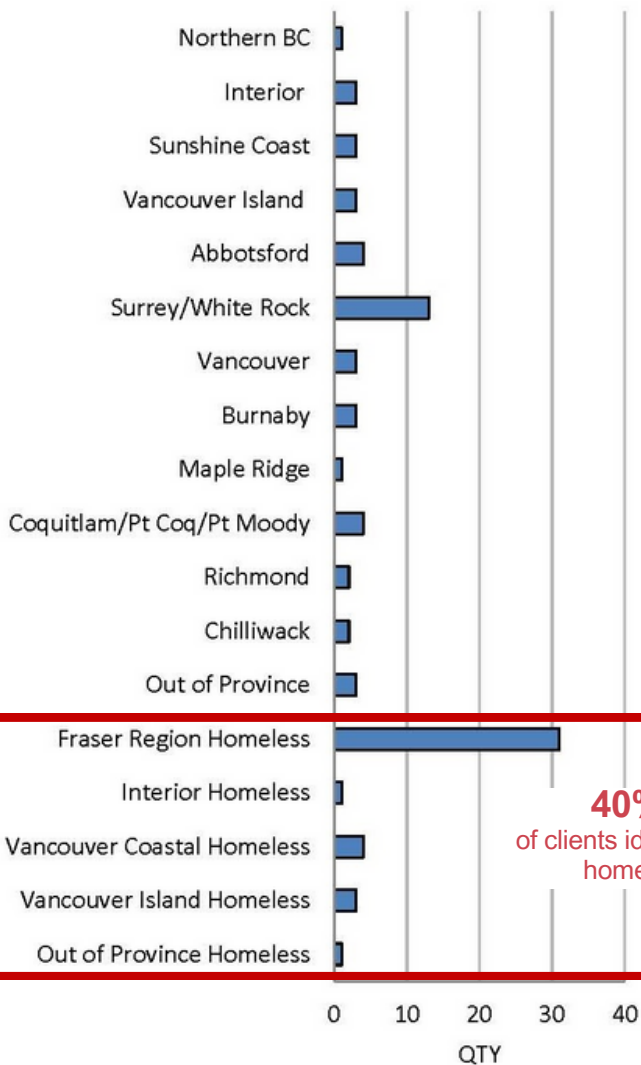
Through this program, our women learn to understand First Nations history and customs. We work with First Nations Health Authority and elders to provide cultural safety for our First Nations clients. First Nations women connect with their culture and reckon with the impact substances and colonization have had on the First People under the safe guidance of the Charlford House staff.

The women of Charlford House are introduced to *The Red Road to Wellbriety: in the Native American Way*, a book outlining the Medicine Wheel, which is when the 12 Steps are placed in a circle, in alignment with the tribal circle teachings of First Nations. The women also learn how to smudge (a cleansing practice with sage, tobacco, and sweet-grass) and how to make dream catchers and the meaning behind these practices. Elders sometimes come to the house to explain the significance of drumming, have drumming circles, and take the women to sweats in the community.

Here at Charlford House, we practice trauma-informed counselling as part of our program. Many First Nations women who pass through our doors are dealing with trauma as a direct result of residential schools. With the practices in place such as smudging and drumming, as well as the trauma-informed knowledge of our counsellors, we do everything we can to encourage healing, hope, and spirituality for our women.

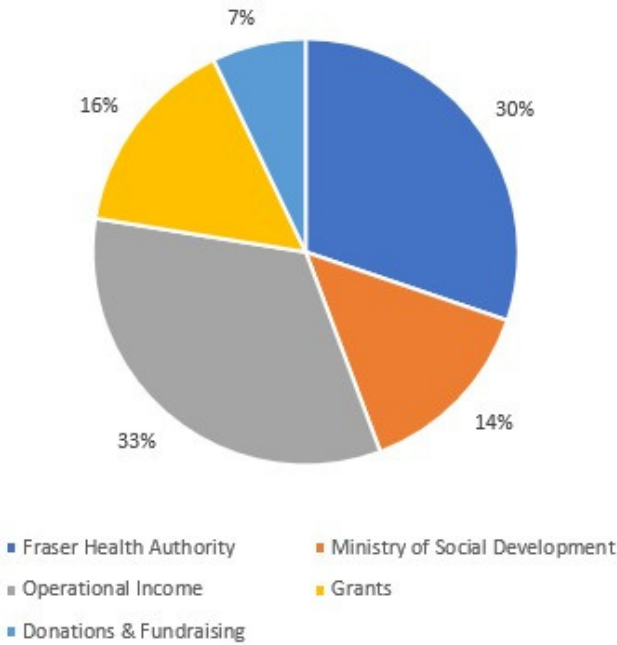


## CLIENTS BY REGION 2022-23



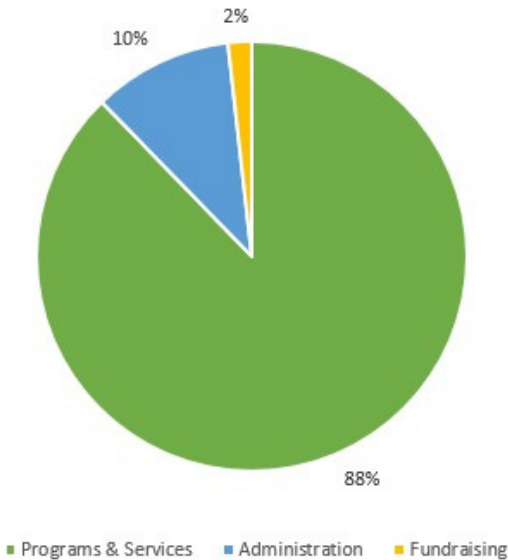
# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## Charlford House Revenue 2022/23



Revenue Total: \$892,499

## Charlford House Expenses 2022/23



Expenses Total: \$902,852



# FOREVER HOME

## KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE

### Our Vision

Our **GOAL** is to acquire or build a home in a residential neighbourhood in Burnaby. Our new home will target having:



## VOLUNTEERS



At Charford House, volunteers are the life-blood of our organization. While we rely so heavily on them, we also encourage and provide opportunities for volunteering, to the women in our care. Demonstrating the importance of this is part of our core program and corporate culture.

Some volunteers give of their time at one-of events while others do so on an ongoing basis. Regardless, each person's contribution is woven into the Charford House fabric and is valued greatly.

Also worthy of mention, is the number of companies and organizations who donate their services for the betterment of Charford House. We owe them a debt of our gratitude.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of others, below is a snapshot of the impact volunteerism has had on our organization, navigating through the final year of COVID-19, bringing us through to the post-pandemic reality of today.

- Number of active volunteers: 69 volunteers (63 women; 6 men)
- Number of In-Kind service providers: 9
- Number of hours donated: 19,836 hours!



We could not do what we do, without each and every one of you, so a heartfelt "thank you" for your service!

# DONOR SPOTLIGHT: MAJOR DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

## KROGSETH FOUNDATION



Y.P. HEUNG  
FOUNDATION

## JOHN HARDIE MITCHELL FAMILY FOUNDATION



*The Stewart Family*  
FOUNDATION

*Making a positive impact on people, animal welfare and the environment*

**FLAMAN**  
*Fitness*<sup>®</sup>

**THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS AND  
SUPPORTERS, THIS YEAR AND EVERY YEAR!**