



PROGRESSIVE  
HOUSING SOCIETY

# 2023/2024

## Annual Report



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# OUR MISSION

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WE STRIVE TO **EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS** TO  
BE ENGAGED WITH THE  
COMMUNITY TO **ACHIEVE PERSONAL  
INDEPENDENCE** BY PROVIDING  
ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND LIFE SKILLS.

# Guiding Our Future: Strategic Insights

## Strategic Goals for the Next 3 Years

### ENSURING FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Create a funding reserve to meet current organizational needs as well as explore the potential for new opportunities related to building ownership with PHS funding contributions.

### DEEPENING CLIENT & STAKEHOLDER CONNECTION

Strengthen our clinical relationship with Fraser Health to maintain funding and better meet the growing needs of our clients.

Build our brand through better promotion and digital storytelling to leverage our strong reputation and ability for PHS to positively influence the system both virtually and in-person.

### IMPROVING OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Develop more efficient systems for operations and knowledge-sharing to prepare for future growth.

Improve utilization of operational spaces to meet current needs and create opportunities for future collaborative partnerships.

Create a stronger foundation to secure IT, digital data and mitigate potential cybersecurity issues.

### INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE & CULTURE

Invest in current and new leaders who serve as the catalyst for better organizational outcomes including training, morale, and eventual succession.

Prioritize self-care of staff to help employees feel more engaged and part of the future of PHS.

Create a robust and comprehensive staff training program to recruit and retain needed talent.



# PROGRESSIVE HOUSING SOCIETY



85% OF OUR  
STAFF FEEL  
THEY MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE FOR  
OTHERS



85% OF OUR  
STAFF FEEL THEY  
HAVE GOOD  
RELATIONSHIPS  
WITH THEIR  
CO-WORKERS



80% OF OUR  
STAFF FEEL  
THAT WE VALUE  
DIVERSITY AND  
INCLUSION

# Our Programs



## EMERGENCY SHELTER

This program is a housing-focused shelter that offers temporary accommodations for up to 40 clients. The program provides daily meals as well as connections to counselling, health, and permanent housing services. Staff take a person-centred approach to helping people meet their needs and find long-term housing.



## NORLAND PLACE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

This 52-unit supportive housing facility provides people with a place to transition independently in their own suite, but also as part of a program and a community. Staff are available 24/7 to provide support and guidance, working with each individual in a person-centered approach to support them in the goals which matter to them most.



## LEDGER PLACE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

This 43-unit supportive housing building offers residents a space where they can live independently in their own suite, while also being part of a connected community and structured program. With staff available around the clock, we provide tailored support and guidance, focusing on each person's unique goals and aspirations, helping them transition successfully toward greater independence.

## BURNABY HOUSING & OUTREACH HUB

This program provides direct, on-site support for individuals facing homelessness in the Burnaby and New Westminster communities. Individuals have access to basic necessities as well as life skills coaching, referrals to community services, and support in finding and securing housing.





## SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING (SIL)

This program provides one-on-one support and rent subsidies to individuals with severe and persistent mental illnesses. This program is designed to provide the skills training and support necessary to successfully maintain an independent lifestyle, with clients scheduling regular meeting with support workers to stay on track with their goals.



## COMMUNITY LIVING SUPPORT PROGRAM (CLS)

The CLS program includes our Shared and Transitional Housing programs and is designed to provide personal support to individuals with severe and persistent mental illnesses and assist them in developing the skills needed to live independently. Clients in this program live collaboratively in one of our three houses across Burnaby, creating a nurturing, and positive living environment with support from CLS staff.



## BURNABY WINTER SHELTER

The Burnaby Winter Shelter was launched through a partnership between the City of Burnaby and BC Housing, with Progressive Housing Society managing operations. Located on Buller Avenue near the Royal Oak SkyTrain station, the shelter offers 40 beds, daily meals, and a harm reduction space, providing crucial support during the winter months.



## TRI-CITIES WINTER SHELTER

The Tri-Cities Winter Shelter rotated monthly between five churches in Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam. Supported by Saint Laurence Anglican, Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship, Trinity United, and Calvary Baptist, it opened nightly from 9 p.m. to 8 a.m. Guests were bused to and from three locations and provided with supper, snacks, breakfast, and a packed lunch.



## TRI-CITIES EMERGENCY WEATHER RESPONSE (EWR)

The Tri-Cities Extreme Weather Response (EWR) served the community during harsh weather, operating from the Kyle Centre in Port Moody. It opened on days of extreme cold, rain, or wind, offering guests hot meals, breakfast, snacks, and outreach support, delivering vital care during challenging conditions.

# Executive Message

As seems like tradition, the year in review for Progressive Housing Society involves reflection on successes, challenges, and growth for the organization in the preceding year, and that each year these each seem to grow compared to the one previous. In this regard, this year has been no different.

However, from the perspective of the Board, there has been one thing that makes this year stick out. Through this year, the organization, including clients, staff, management, and the Board, participated in an update of the organization's plan. While this is a part of good governance practices, it was also an opportunity to learn in more detail about a "day in the life" of the organization, from a sample of perspectives from those who live those lives.

What we grew to appreciate that the successes of PHS as an organization are not measured by the large-scale events; the building openings, the new developments, the new relationships with new partners. Success at PHS happens every day, in every work site in the organization, with the daily events that can easily go unseen. The friendly hello, the right advice for a client at the right time, a subsidy cheque that is rushed to make it in time to prevent an eviction, making a new hire, serving a meal, and unlocking a door at a temporary shelter for an evening; these and all the other daily moments are all the successes of PHS.

As the organization has had the opportunity this year to reflect on itself, and the direction for the future, I encourage you to do the same, and remember that your success is also measurable in these moments. On behalf of the Board of Directors of Progressive Housing Society, a deep and sincere thanks for all the moments you've spent with us this year.

# Our Board



**Executive Director**

Name  
**Jaye Treit**



**Board President**

Name  
**James Caspersen**



**Past Board President**

Name  
**Marsha Goldford**



**Board Treasurer**

Name  
**Emmanuel Chouinard**



**Board Director**

Name  
**Esprit Chouinard**



**Board Secretary**

Name  
**Tina Larouche**



**Board Director**

Name  
**Garth Evans**



**Board Director**

Name  
**Kim Darcey**



**Board Director**

Name  
**Eugene Tseng**

# A Year in Review

May 2023  
Walk for Mental Health

We held our annual walk for mental health at Burnaby Lake.



July 2023  
ERC BBQ

We held a summer BBQ event with the City of Burnaby at our ERC



June 2023  
Gardening with Prospera

Volunteers from Prospera donated supplies and time to help us restore the gardens at one of our houses



December 2023  
Mental Health  
Christmas Party

We hosted  
our annual  
Christmas Party!



OVER 4,968 PEOPLE  
SERVED



85% HOUSING  
RETENTION



OVER 9,800 OVERNIGHT  
SHELTER STAYS PROVIDED



OVER 4,426 SUPPORTS  
PROVIDED

September 2023  
Ledger Opening

Our eagerly  
anticipated  
Ledger Supportive  
Housing Building  
was opened!

# Emergency Shelter

Now in its fifth year of operations, the Douglas Rd Shelter saw a large turnover of long-term clients and staff. Of particular note, our coordinator, Rebecca McMeeken, moved upwards in the company to become the manager for the Noland building. And our long term veteran, Will Oksansen, moved to an Outreach position at the 6th Street HUB.

This year saw many of our longer-term clients housed or successfully connected with treatment services. With the last of our residents staying with us since the start of 2022 being successfully housed at Ledger.

It has also been a busy year with the shelter running either at or above our original intended capacity. Briefly alleviated by the opening of the Buller winter shelter site, and compounded by its closure, we continue to see an extreme demand for our services from unhoused Burnaby residents.

It has been a good year for medical outcomes. Work with Burnaby hospital and Fraser health as seen a significant improvement in hospital discharges to the shelter. And our partnerships with PCN and IHART has

resulted in a healing environment where these clients can successfully recuperate. And we've expanded our resources to include medical oxygen for use in overdose situations.

Additionally, we have been having great successes working with the City of Burnaby's new Outreach team. Who, partnered with our 6th St. and in-house Outreach workers have been working towards bringing in unhoused people in the community staying in tents or campers in public spaces. Especially those



708 SHELTER STAYS PROVIDED



70 DAY AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY



22% REDUCTION OF OVERDOSES



1297 PEOPLE TURNED AWAY

# Norland Place Supportive Housing

During the past year, we have made significant strides in fostering a strong and supportive community at Norland. A key indicator of our success is our resident retention rate, which stands at an impressive 50%. This figure reflects the trust and satisfaction our residents have in the services and community we provide. Specifically, 25 clients have continued to reside at Norland since its opening, demonstrating their commitment to our community and the value they find in living here.

One of the most notable demographics within our community is the senior population. Over half of all residents in our building are aged 55 and older, highlighting the importance of tailoring our services to meet their unique needs. This demographic trend has driven our efforts to enhance support systems and programs specifically designed for seniors. Our goal is to ensure that Norland is not just a place to live, but a vibrant community where older adults can thrive, stay active, and feel connected.

Looking ahead, we are committed to continuously improving our services and support for seniors. We plan to introduce more innovative programs and partnerships with local organizations to enhance the resources available to our residents. Our strategic priorities include expanding health and wellness initiatives, increasing social engagement opportunities, and further integrating technology to improve communication and service delivery.

In conclusion, the past year at Norland has been marked by significant achievements in building a supportive and inclusive community for our residents, particularly our seniors. With a resident retention rate of 50% and 25 clients stably housed since our opening, we are proud of the strong, trusting relationships we

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A COMMITMENT  
TO CELEBRATING  
DIVERSITY”**

have cultivated. As we move forward, we remain dedicated to enhancing the lives of our residents through comprehensive support, community engagement, and a commitment to celebrating diversity. Together, we will continue to make Norland a place where everyone feels at home and empowered to live their best lives.



# Emergency Response Centre / Ledger Place

The Emergency Response Centre (ERC) provided support services and temporary housing to 40 individuals facing homelessness and mental health and substance use disorders from February 2021 to September 2023. Regrettably, two individuals passed away, and two others were discharged from the program during 2023.

Despite the clients' resilient efforts, service and other systemic limitations worsened some of their biopsychosocial challenges and hindered their active participation in the community. Nevertheless, PHS staff ensured the safety and well-being of clients, working closely with our community partner, IHART, to guide clients through the healthcare system and provide alternative solutions to meet their needs.

In October 2023, Ledger Place was inaugurated, marking a new chapter in clients' lives. After a lengthy wait, forty ERC clients happily transitioned to their new home. Three other PHS clients joined the newly formed Ledger community. Ledger Place, located beside PHS' Norland Place, offers spacious, well-lit rooms, comfortable, trauma-informed common areas, and safe work offices. Following the move, clients experienced notable improvements in their mental health and coping skills and adopted healthier habits.

The new Ledger community welcomes allies to join in promoting clients' well-being and fostering a more uplifting environment. Programming and new services have been implemented to enhance ledger clients' skills and support them better in their journey toward independence.

# HOUSING & OUTREACH

Our Burnaby Housing & Outreach Hub experienced high numbers of people coming in for services to start off this year, and an increasing number of graduates from our Peer Support program were involved in staffing the Hub and running programs. The community that formed was full of laughter, art, and mutual support. Sadly, the funding for this program ended in July, and drop-in services had to be wound down. We moved to more of an appointment-based model, with Outreach staff still onsite as well as our IHART partners (Fraser Health's homeless outreach team), our clinical team, and more.

New intake referrals continued as well, with the numbers of people in need continuing to grow. Our program saw 587 new referrals this last year, for an average of 49 per month. Many of these were people experiencing homelessness, but an increasing number were individuals and families who were in dire risk of losing their housing. As housing in Burnaby and the lower mainland becomes more and more unaffordable, housing instability is creeping up through income levels, and we are now seeing people at our doors who would never before have been at risk of losing housing or experiencing food insecurity. Housing affordability remains the number one challenge that our program faces.

We focused our attention on these people losing their housing with subsidies to help prevent evictions, and then follow-up support from our amazing Housing Support team (HSS). Our workers meet with all of our people on subsidies regularly to help them set goals that they work together to identify, and then work towards those. People in this program experience longer and more sustainable housing, and are often able to increase their income or find stable, long-term affordable housing. Our workers are incredible at overcoming barriers and helping people to live fuller lives in community. Over this last year our four workers (including one Lookout

partner) supported 90 people on average in our subsidy programs.

Our Outreach program continued to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness in Burnaby out on the streets and in camps, and through partnerships with IHART, the Society to End Homelessness, the City of Burnaby's new intervention team, as well as others. We had an average of 117 people in our Outreach program at any given time, and many of them were connected with housing, income supports, identification, medical assistance, and many other types of support.

One new initiative that we started this year was an internal Coordinated Access committee, to effectively identify and place people from all of Progressive Housing's programs into the most suitable and needed housing as units became available. So far over 20 people have been placed into one of our supportive or transitional housing programs, and many have made great progress. It has also helped to build our internal capacity and develop leaders within our organization, as our staff passionately advocate for those they care for.

Lastly, our Tri-Cities Outreach program continued, and made some amazing inroads and partnerships into the communities of Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, and Port Moody. Our workers supported the Winter Shelter there, as well as the Emergency Weather Response (EWR) centre during extreme cold. In addition to this they made over 1400 connections with people and provided over 900 services (food, clothing, supplies, etc.) and over 200 referrals to needed supports. We are hopeful to continue the great work that has been ongoing in Burnaby and is growing in the Tri-Cities as we look ahead to 2024-25.

# MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

In collaboration with Burnaby Mental Health & Substance Use (Fraser Health), our mental health programs have been instrumental in providing vital support to individuals in Burnaby grappling with persistent mental health challenges. Through our Supported Independent Living (SIL) and Community Living Support (CLS) initiatives, our dedicated teams have been conducting regular visits to clients' homes and engaging them within the community. Our primary focus remains on fostering independence, honing essential skills, ensuring stable housing, and facilitating progress towards personalized goals.

Emerging from the exigencies of the pandemic, we observed a heightened struggle among our clients concerning mental health and social isolation. However, with concerted efforts, we have seen a remarkable surge in client engagement, both through in-person visits and through our weekly activities hosted at our 6th Street office every Wednesday. These activities, ranging from grocery bingo to charades and various board games, have been well-received, with attendance consistently growing week by week.

Furthermore, amidst our ongoing support endeavors, we've established fruitful collaborations with other organizations to enhance the effectiveness of our SIL/CLS programs. Despite encountering profound loss with the passing of three clients due to suicide, including a cherished Peer Support Worker, our team displayed commendable resilience, rallying together to navigate these challenging times with empathy and solidarity.

We also bid farewell to a longstanding colleague, Andi Hale, who retired after 24 years of dedicated service to Progressive Housing Society. While her departure leaves

a void, we extend our heartfelt wishes for a fulfilling journey ahead in her new endeavors.

Celebration marked our journey as well, with four successful transitions/graduations from our programs this past year. Each milestone achieved reflects the unwavering commitment of our team and the resilience of our clients.

A significant highlight of the year was the commencement of the redevelopment project at the Holly House site. Having served as home to five CLS participants for over two decades, the site is now undergoing transformation into a new development, introducing 14 much-needed affordable housing units to Burnaby. The transition for our existing clients was seamless, and they embraced their new homes at the onset of March 2023 with enthusiasm. This development not only signifies progress but also underscores our agency's commitment to expanding access to housing for those in need.

As we embark on this journey of growth and transformation, we are filled with anticipation for the completion of the new building and the opportunities it will afford to enrich the lives of those we serve.



350 PEOPLE  
SUPPORTED

# BURNABY WINTER SHELTER

The Burnaby Winter Shelter was launched as a joint initiative between the City of Burnaby and BC Housing, with operations managed by Progressive Housing Society. The shelter was established to provide essential support to the unhoused population during the harsh winter months. Located on Buller Avenue, near the Royal Oak SkyTrain station, the shelter offers 40 beds along with daily meals and a harm reduction space.

The shelter officially opened its doors on December 15, 2023, and remained operational until the end of April 2024. Initially, it was designed to provide services during the evening and night hours, operating from 4:00 PM to 8:00 AM. However, in response to the severe challenges faced by individuals trying to stay warm during the daytime, the City of Burnaby made the decision in late December 2023 to extend the shelter's operation to 24/7 throughout the season.

The Burnaby Winter Shelter aimed not only to provide immediate relief from the cold but also to offer a safe and supportive environment where individuals can access the resources they need during a vulnerable time of year.

Throughout the course of the Burnaby Winter Shelter program, we provided essential services to a total of 197 individuals,

amounting to 4,800 overnight stays with an average daily occupancy rate of 86%. The City of Burnaby's Intervention Support Team was onsite daily, offering crucial support to help clients transition into more stable housing situations. Additionally, the IHART team from Fraser Health was present each day to provide medical assistance to those in need. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Intervention Support Team, our outreach staff, and healthcare professionals, we successfully transitioned over 80% of our clients to another shelter or housing by the program's conclusion.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the City of Burnaby and BC Housing for their essential role in making the Burnaby Winter Shelter program possible. Their support allowed us to provide a safe, warm space for nearly 200 individuals throughout the winter season.

Our gratitude also goes to the IHART team from Fraser Health, who were instrumental in offering medical support to our clients on a daily basis. A special thanks to the dedicated winter shelter staff and the Intervention Support Team, whose tireless efforts ensured that those in need had a place to turn during the harshest months of the year. Together, we made a meaningful difference in the lives of many.



4,800  
OVERNIGHT  
STAYS



AVERAGE  
86% DAILY  
OCCUPANCY

# TRI-CITIES EXTREME WEATHER RESPONSE (EWR)

The Tri-Cities Extreme Weather Response (EWR) served the community between October 1st 2023 and April 16th 2024. The EWR was located at the Kyle Centre in Port Moody, and opened its doors on days with extreme cold, rain or wind. Similarly to the Winter Shelter, guests at the EWR were welcomed with a hot supper, breakfast and snacks, as well as outreach support.

The EWR was funded by BC Housing, and supported by the City of Port Moody and the Tri-Cities Homeless and Housing Task Group.



702 PEOPLE  
SERVED

# TRI-CITIES TEMPORARY WINTER SHELTER

The Tri-Cities Winter Shelter operated between October 1st 2023 and April 16th 2024. The shelter location changed each month, rotating across five different churches in Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam. The shelter functioned thanks to the generous program participation of Saint Laurence Anglican Church, Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship, Trinity United Church and Calvary Baptist Church.

Winter shelter opened its doors every night between 9pm and 8am. Guests were transported by bus to and from 3 designated locations in the Tri-Cities area. They were provided with a hot supper, snacks, breakfast and a bagged lunch for the following day. Church volunteers generously provided additional support with food preparation and cleaning tasks.

Shelter guests were offered a warm place to stay and a space where their needs and concerns were listened to. They were able to access outreach support for unattended medical needs, housing opportunities, Ministry assistance, mental health and substance use disorders, and other community services. Guest were also offered clothing and hygiene donations provided by other local agencies and community groups.

The program was funded by BC Housing and supported by the Tri-Cities Homelessness and Housing Task Group.



3,631 SHELTER  
STAYS  
PROVIDED



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# Thank you so much!

PROGRESSIVE HOUSING  
SOCIETY

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