ABOUT FOCUS IRELAND

FOCUS IRELAND IS ONE OF THE LEADING NON-PROFIT AGENCIES IN IRELAND WORKING WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE OUT-OF-HOME. FOUNDED BY SR. STANISLAUS KENNEDY IN 1985, FOCUS IRELAND HAS AS A RESULT OF ITS RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS BOTH PROPOSED SOLUTIONS AND PROVIDED PRACTICAL RESPONSES (IN THE FORM OF HOUSING AND SERVICES) FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS. ORIGINALLY DUBLIN BASED, FOCUS IRELAND NOW HAS ADDITIONAL PROJECTS IN BOTH LIMERICK AND WATERFORD.

Mission

Focus Ireland aims to advance the rights of people out-of-home to live in a place they call home through quality services, research and advocacy.

Vision

Focus Ireland believes that everyone has the right to a place they can call home.

Objectives

Focus Ireland’s objectives are to:

- respond to the needs of people out-of-home and those at risk of becoming homeless, through a range of appropriate high quality services
- provide emergency, transitional and long-term accommodation for people out-of-home
- campaign and lobby for the rights of people out-of-home and the prevention of homelessness

Values

Focus Ireland’s models of service provision are dictated by the needs of our customers. We believe that the quality of service delivery is as important as the kind of services we provide. There are eight primary values that underpin our models of service delivery, both to our staff and our customers:

- respect
- safety
- accessibility
- empowerment
- stewardship
- quality
- partnership
- integration
Trustees
Sr Marie Helen Hicks
Mr Dermot Hussey
Mr Donal Nevin

Directors
Sr Stanislaus Kennedy, Life President
Mr Desmond Byrne (Chairman)
Dr Edmond Molloy**
Ms Trudi Devereux
Mr Patrick Griffin**
Mr Edward McCumiskey
Dr Valerie Richardson
Mr Matthew Walsh**
Mr John O’Haire
Mr Bill Nowlan

Chief Executive
Mr Declan Jones

Secretary
Ms Evelyn Fitzpatrick

Registered office
14a Eustace St, Dublin 2

Auditors
Phelan, Prescott & Co, Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors

Solicitors
Arthur Cox
Ferry Solicitors

Principal Bankers
Bank of Ireland
Allied Irish Banks plc
Bank of Scotland

Registered Charity No
CHY 7220

** retired in accordance with the articles of association and were re-elected to the board.
FOREWORD

2003 saw our first full year of seven-day services for many of our projects and the demand for the wider service was clear, for instance, our Coffee Shop welcomed 21% more people than in the previous year and overall we provided a range of services to 3,394 people.

Our growth is a response to the needs of people who are homeless. Because of the way our society is evolving, the issues facing them have become more complex and their demand for our services has continued to grow. We have responded by widening our services as well as providing more specialist projects to help address the complexity of the phenomenon known as homelessness.

In May 2003, working with the Society of St Vincent de Paul, Focus Ireland opened the Caretakers Hostel, catering for young people aged 16-21, most of whom have come through the care system and who are homeless and misusing drugs. The Caretakers’ clients are among the most marginalised and chaotic of young people who are homeless and present with complex issues that are addressed by a skilled, multi-disciplinary team of staff.

To enable us to meet the demands of the current environment, we also must ensure that the Agency itself is well maintained. Ensuring that our customers always receive quality services can often result in high levels of investment in both the maintenance of our housing properties as well as the delivery of our services. The refurbishment of one of our housing developments was completed this year and we plan to refurbish two more in 2004. Following a risk assessment of all areas of our work, a risk management programme has been implemented to ensure the impact of any potential risk to the Agency is minimised.

This year we welcomed a number of positive initiatives introduced to address the problem of homelessness in Ireland. The partnership models advocated by the Government’s ‘Homelessness – An Integrated Strategy 2000’ appears to be working. Homeless Fora have been established and local authorities, health boards and voluntary organisations have worked together to produce Homeless Action Plans that set out ways in which homelessness will be tackled locally. It will take some time to assess the effectiveness of these plans in reducing homelessness.

The focus of these strategies is the improvement of crisis services for people out-of-home and this new focus is beginning to pay dividends. Our Outreach team has reported a drop in the number of people they met who were consistently sleeping rough in Dublin in 2003. Due to the improvement in services, there has been a significant decrease in the number of adult rough sleepers. However, there continues to be new entrants onto the street scene and it is notable that although we are not seeing the very young children of a few years ago, newly homeless young people may have come through the care system.
It therefore remains clear that the pathways into homelessness, particularly in the area of children leaving care – identified by Focus Ireland in our 2000 study ‘Left Out on Their Own – Young People Leaving Care in Ireland’ – are not being adequately addressed. Until homelessness prevention strategies are implemented for those leaving care, as well as for those leaving prisons and mental institutions, homelessness and rough sleeping will continue to be a feature of our society.

With approximately 140,000 people still on the housing waiting list, the Government is not meeting its targets under the National Anti-Poverty Strategy to provide social housing. While acknowledging the improvement in crisis services, we cannot ever forget that the ultimate resolution to homelessness is the provision of adequate and secure housing, accompanied by appropriate community supports. We must not allow the debate on homelessness to be reduced to personal factors only. Homelessness and lack of housing is a structural problem. Too often the public indicts the individual, but it is painfully clear that people who come from certain areas face greater difficulties in accessing decent housing, proper health care and essential education.

During 2003 Focus Ireland campaigned for a right to housing and the provision of adequate social housing. We continue to apply pressure on Government and advocate with statutory agencies and authorities that are in a position to drive meaningful structural change.

Over the last number of years, Focus Ireland has responded to the immediate and changing needs of people who are homeless. In reading the stories of the individuals contained in our report, one can see how our range of services offers help to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

As we move into 2004, our focus will be on bringing about the solutions necessary to change the face of homelessness. By initiating services such as tenancy support and by working in partnership to identify and address the major pathways into homelessness, we will be working to prevent people from becoming homeless. Our second major emphasis will be on settlement. We will directly provide Focus Ireland homes as well as developing partnerships with other housing providers where we can provide the support necessary for tenants to maintain their homes. Focus Ireland will extend our housing project in Waterford and will increase our Community Settlement Programme to double its level of service.

It has been an incredible year and undoubtedly more challenges are on their way. We are fortunate in that we have a strong body of highly skilled and committed staff and volunteers who so generously give their time to our work. The generosity of individual donors and Corporations alike never ceases to astound us. We are all too aware that without this support we could not hope to deliver the number of services we have successfully introduced over the past years.

Declan Jones
Chief Executive
Keeping the Values of Focus Alive

It's hard to believe that almost 20 years have passed since I first started my work with people who were experiencing homelessness. Back then my research was with five hundred women all of different ages some with children, some single. Some of them would be out of home, but not homeless, because they would have families they couldn't go to, for one reason or another.

Respect was a major issue. Significant for them was the way they were treated. They'd find a lack of respect from people once they knew they were homeless. They could count on the fingers of one hand the people who had shown them respect. Their sense of self-respect and dignity was eroded and taken from them. It left them in a situation in which they felt they had little to lose. They became what they were perceived to be. The one thing I saw over the year was that they immediately knew whether people respected them or not and they would react to people based on that. They could tell, like children can tell.

As Focus evolved, its values became clearer. The values of our organisation – accessibility, respect, empowerment, stewardship, advocacy, safety, quality and partnership, were arrived at for people out of home, led by them and their needs. Underlying our values was the perception of these people as human beings with needs like the rest of us. That would develop as our attitudes to them changed and their idea of themselves changed, and the services we provided changed in response to this. We no longer saw ourselves as a charity, but as providing things that people had a right to.

Focus has maintained those values. In all of our projects, there is that sense of hospitality, respect and dignity. The one thing people say continually is, ‘I was always treated with respect’. All the time, those founding values and principles guide us and direct us. It’s my wish that they will continue to do so and I know they will. We have an induction programme for staff and volunteers and they’re trained continuously, so they know our history and the values that underpin our services. We manage to keep the balance between getting bigger and holding on to those values. We must never forget the values that were there at the beginning, brought in by the clients themselves.

Forty years ago, I started my work. There was a poverty back then you couldn’t imagine. Now, as the country gets more prosperous, there’s a bigger gap than ever between the rich and poor. It is very important to keep before people the need for clear human values in a society that has to be a more human society, a fairer society. It’s very easy to live our lives untouched by the inequality and the unfairness that goes on.

Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy
Life President, Focus Ireland.
INTRODUCTION

‘I HAVE PLANS TO GET ON WITH MY LIFE.’
Darren (25, Focus Ireland Customer)

Focus Ireland’s vision for its customers is that they, like Darren, will get on with their lives. Even though some of them might feel that they will be homeless forever, we work with them every step of the way, helping them to help themselves out of homelessness.

Our customers are a diverse group, young people, families, adults and children, each group has their separate needs and our services have been developed with these specific groups in mind. We have identified three different stages to homelessness and provide service to meet the needs at each. Not everyone who comes to us experiences all three stages, but rather they use the services that best meet their needs at whatever phase they are at. Stage one is a period when people are in crisis, they are either already homeless or threatened with homelessness. At this stage we provide them with a place to go, a person to support them, we help them plan a way forward. The second stage is about stabilisation and moving closer to a solution. The third stage concentrates on settling people into their new home and providing them the help they need to keep their home and get on with the rest of their lives.
But where can I go?
‘WE KEEP COMING BACK TO THEM TILL THEY ARE READY TO TALK TO YOU. WE SAY HELLO EVERYTIME TILL THEY’RE READY TO TALK. EVEN LITTLE STEPS WHEN THEY SAY HELLO BACK MEANS A LOT TO US.’

Johnny Meehan, Staff Member, Street Outreach.
Joseph, 35, has been living on the streets for nearly two years. ‘Sometimes I sleep in a loading bay, I put cardboard on top of me to keep me warm, I sleep behind the skips to stop the rain coming in on top of me.

You get people spitting at you, screaming at you. There’s times I just walk around till the next morning, I don’t sleep at all. Sometimes I’m begging and I fall asleep because of the tiredness if I haven’t slept the night before. It is very lonely, a lot of guilt and shame is there, but the hardest part is the loneliness. I see people I know family and friends walking by me, neighbours.

If I don’t have the drugs inside of me I get very emotional, I just want to sit down and cry. I think of my kids every day. I stay in hostels sometimes, Santa Maria and Cedar House, but they cost. Some nights I haven’t the money for the hostel so I have to ring the freephone number to see if there’s any beds, if there’s no beds, I have to sleep out.

I first met with Focus in Thomas Street they look after me, they gave me a sleeping bag helped me out with clothes, helped me with getting myself a doctor and getting myself a medical card, things like that. They are also there just to talk to. I let them know how my day is. They come round in the evening and have a chat with you, see how you are. Or if there’s any more news they tell you. They sent me to the Coffee Shop so I go there to get a meal in the day.’

The Street Outreach Team work on the streets seven days a week, meeting people who are homeless, building relationships with them and helping them to move away from the streets by encouraging them to use services that will help them.

The number of people in contact with our Outreach Team has decreased by 5 per cent over the year. This decrease corresponds to an increase in the provision of emergency accommodation in the sector.
‘WHAT WE’RE SEEING IS A DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES USING THE COFFEE SHOP AND AN INCREASE IN SINGLE HOMELESS ADULTS. THERE’S A BIG WAITING LIST FOR ACCOMMODATION FOR SINGLE PEOPLE, THEY AREN’T MOVING ON. THEY ARE MORE ISOLATED AND NEED MORE CARE AND ATTENTION TO MANAGE THEIR HOMELESSNESS. THE STAFF TRY TO KEEP THEM MOTIVATED IT’S HARD. OFTEN A PERSON MAY THINK THEY’RE GOING TO GET A PLACE AND IT LEADS TO NOTHING.’

Kieran Stenson, Staff Member, Housing Advice Centre and Coffee Shop.
Sam is 28 years old and has been homeless since she was 15. “I was in Foster Care since I was 3; I lived with a family on the Southside. I wasn’t happy there so I went to live with my mother, but it didn’t work out, I didn’t have much contact with her before then. I left and got a flat, I couldn’t pay for it so I ended up in prostitution. I met John who was homeless, we had 3 children, John had a drink problem, things got rough so I left, the children went into Foster Care. I went back to working on the streets, things were terrible, I got into drugs, I just wanted to forget what was happening, everyone around me was using. I’m off drugs now, I’m living in a hostel, it’s depressing. It’s just surviving every day, watching out for yourself. I come here for a cup of tea and a scone, a chat. Sometimes I go on the adult programme. Sam’s wish for the future is a place of her own. ‘I’d love my own place my own peace and quiet. Roisin is my keyworker she organised for me to go for an interview for a transitional house, so I have an interview for that. If I had a place of my own I’d work hard to get my kids back.

The Housing Advice Centre and Coffee Shop is a haven for many adults who find themselves without a place to go during the day. A hot meal, advice, information and support as well as a programme of activities are available to everyone who crosses the door.

More than 3,000 customers accessed the Coffee Shop this year – representing a 21 percent increase on last year’s figures. This increase is most likely due to the Coffee Shop’s first full year operating as a 7 day service. The number of adults aged between 26 and 40 years using the service has increased from 1,214 in 2002 to 1,546 in 2003.
‘WE TRY TO REMEMBER THAT IT’S THE YOUNG PERSON’S LIFE. SOMETIMES IT’S FruSTRATING, BUT YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER THEY’RE MAYBE NOT IN THE RIGHT PLACE. YOU’VE TO WORK WITH THEM AT WHATEVER MOMENT OF CRISIS THEY’RE AT. THAT’S WHERE YOU WORK’.

Grace McCormack, Staff Member, The Loft.
Olivia, 15, came to The Loft after becoming homeless again. ‘I had a fight with my auntie and left,’ she says. She had been homeless before, for about a year. This time, though, she had a young baby to look after, so she needed somewhere to go. ‘My brothers are homeless, too, and they told me about The Loft. It is a good place to come because it keeps you out of trouble and then the out-of-hours shelter takes care of you in the evenings. I like to play pool here.’

Olivia made the tough decision to give her months-old daughter into care temporarily while they wait for somewhere they can call home. She knows that getting help was a good first step and although she misses her child, she is hopeful that they’ll be together again soon.

Looking forward to getting support lodgings and being part of a new family, Olivia knows there’s some way to go but is already taking steps. ‘I feel I’m starting to get control of my life, I’m doing the European Computer Driving Licence and I want to do my Leaving Cert.’

She’s already planning the long-term future for herself and her daughter. ‘After school, I’d like to be in college doing a childcare course, for looking after children in childcare homes, because I was in one myself.’

Olivia feels that, while she gets things together, The Loft allows her much-needed breathing-space, a place to go and chill. ‘It really does help,’ she says. ‘Focus are helping me to get help. They’re always there to listen. I respect them for that.’

The Loft is a drop-in centre for young people between 12 and 18 years of age. Each young person is assigned a keyworker who works with them, helping them to move out of homelessness. The Loft provides young people with a place where they can have a hot meal, shower, wash their clothes, talk to their friends, attend training courses, or just relax.

Developments in Health Board services are resulting in fewer young people under 18 entering the street homeless scene. However, there is an increase in the number of young people who come to the Loft with multiple and often complex needs.
'WE PROVIDE PRACTICAL NECESSITIES FOR PEOPLE. FOOD, TOILETRIES, INTERNET, POOL TABLES. THEY CAN HELP THEMSELVES TO TEA OR COFFEE AND THEY CAN BUY HOT MEALS VERY CHEAPLY. BUT IT’S NOT JUST A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE CAN COME WHEN THEY NEED TO CHILL OUT OR DO THEIR LAUNDRY. THERE’S PREPARATION FOR THE LONGER TERM, TOO. WE HELP IF THEY WANT TO BE REFERRED FOR TREATMENT OR HOUSING.'

Jillian O’Brien, Staff Member, The Extension.
Paul, 25, is dealing with unspeakable personal pain. ‘My mother and father died and the house was taken off me and my brothers and sisters because we couldn’t pay the rent.’

Homelessness was something Paul, like others, could not have prepared for. ‘I was never homeless before and I didn’t know what to do and I still to this day don’t know what to do.’

Paul came to Focus because, as he says, ‘I heard they give you sleeping bags,’ and when he heard about the Extension, he went there to find out more. ‘They said you can use this place, the Extension.’ Although he got a hostel, Paul did not like it, as ‘there were serious people there, injecting.’ The Extension provides a place where he can be away from that environment, at least during the day. ‘In the morning I used to take drugs and now I come here for a cup of tea. Then I go to another cafe where I know the staff.’

Paul has been a few months dropping in to the Extension where he has praise in particular for Kelly, a key worker, who ‘talks to you like you’re a human being. I have nothing but respect. She’ll see me lying on a bridge and still stops and shake my hand. It’s great to have someone like that to talk to. She’s like my little counsellor. I’d like to thank her for being there. One of the nicest people. She’s a gem. She’s a pure gem.’

As you would expect, Paul can’t forget what happened. ‘I’ve been through a lot,’ he says. ‘I’m after being so low I can’t go any lower. It’s literally impossible for me to go any lower. I don’t like Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. Most nights I cry. I know my mother’s looking down on me. Not having my family here is like a thousand knives stabbing in my gut.’

Nonetheless, Paul has plans for the future. He is learning to be a forklift driver and he hopes to have a place to live. ‘All I want is to get my own flat, get a job and get out of here. I just want somewhere I can close the door at night and say this is my home’.

The Extension is a drop-in centre for young people between 18 and 25 years of age. Each person attending the Extension is linked in with a keyworker who helps them address their problems so they can move out of homelessness. The Extension provides practical facilities including laundry and showers. It’s a place of welcome and stability for young men and women whose lives are otherwise chaotic.

The Spokes Programme is based in the Extension and offers young people the chance to take part in education and training courses.

The Extension went from being a five to a seven day service this year, over 300 young people used the service.
‘THESE YOUNG PEOPLE’S LIVES ARE CHAOTIC SO THE FACT THAT THEY COME TO THE CARETAKERS ON A REGULAR BASIS IS A HUGE EFFORT FOR THEM AND SOMETHING WE VIEW AS BEING VERY POSITIVE.’

Mary Jameson, Staff Member, Caretakers.

‘My brother brought me up,’ says Aine, aged 20. He was on the streets since he was twelve, and he knew all the places. I came to Focus two years ago, to the Extension. I still go to the Extension. I like it as it is a handy place to get something to eat or go during the day. They give you all the help you need.’

For over a year, Aine used the Caretakers hostel, of her time at Caretakers, Aine says, ‘It's horrible being on the streets. This was the best place to open up in Dublin. A place you can come to. It opens at eight and closes at nine-thirty in the morning and there's always someone there. There's food freshly cooked by the chef. They do spaghetti bolognese and chicken curry. You can watch telly. There's a quiet room you can go if you're pissed off.’

Aine is currently doing computer classes at the Extension. She mentions Jillian from Spokes. ‘Everyone loves Jill. She's only supposed to be there for computers but if we need help with an application, she helps us out. She also takes us on day trips.’

Aine has now successfully moved on to managed social housing for young people in St Catherine’s Foyer, a joint initiative by Dublin Corporation, Cara Housing Association and St Catherine’s Combined Communities Group. The Caretakers’ staff still keep in contact with Aine who visits every month. ‘Even though I’m living in St Catherine’s now I still go back to see the staff and have dinner’.

Emergency Accommodation for Young People

The Caretakers in partnership with St. Vincent de Paul was opened in June 2003. This project provides hostel accommodation for young people aged between 16 and 21 years, who are using drugs and are currently living out of home. Caretakers is a drug free environment. Staff working in the Caretakers have a background of working with people who have substance abuse issues.

Off-the-Streets provides emergency accommodation for 2 young people on a night by night basis.

Since it opened in June, 40 young people have used the Caretakers Hostel.
‘WE AIM TO FOSTER INDEPENDENCE. WHEN CHILDREN ARE LIVING IN B&Bs NOTHING IS ACCESSIBLE TO THEM. THE LACK OF SPACE MEANS TOYS HAVE TO BE PUT AWAY. WE MAKE EVERYTHING ACCESSIBLE HERE SO THE CHILDREN CAN CHOOSE WHAT TOYS THEY WANT TO PLAY WITH.’

Janice O'Rourke, Staff Member, Childcare Centre.
Gale is 21 years old and is the mother of Jack who is 2. Jack was only 6 weeks old when Gale’s father was sent to prison for violence against her mother. When he was released from prison he returned to the family home. Fearing for the safety of her baby, Gale took Jack, and along with her mother and 3 younger siblings, left their home. They moved in with their Grandmother for a short time and then moved to a refuge, and finally emergency accommodation in the City centre. ‘We were in a flat all day, Jack got bored, he has toys he can’t play with because there’s no room. The woman who lives in the flat below us told me about the crèche. I went to the Focus Ireland Coffee Shop to ask about it. I met a girl called Roisin who works there, she sent me to the crèche. Roisin told me about the Family Programme so I go there every day when Jack’s in the crèche. I’m doing a six week course in massage and aromatherapy there, it finishes at 1 o’clock so I go and pick up Jack then. Before he started in the crèche I used to take Jack to St Patrick’s Park every day, but in the winter there was no place to go. The crèche is great they taught him to say please and thanks. He’s only two years of age and he can do puzzles and everything. He showed me how he could do a puzzle, I was sitting there crying I thought how did he do that? Now I have loads of puzzles for him, and he’s out of nappies and he’s potty trained now, the staff there helped me with potty training him. First thing in the morning he takes his nappy off, they taught him that, he used to keep taking his nappy off and saying to me "Ma I want to go to the toilet". He knows his ABCs and songs like Head Shoulders Knees and Toes, and Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. When they take him swimming they can’t tell him until they’re ready to go because he gets too excited. He has a bit of a lisp but even his speech is coming on. When I pick him up at least I know he’s after getting his breakfast and dinner, if you’re rushing around going to the Corporation and all that you don’t have to worry about feeding him.

Gale’s family want to stay together, they are waiting to be re-housed and would like to live near their Grandmother in Walkinstown. ‘We’re two years waiting for a house. We all want to stay together. Even though we’re still homeless I feel more settled I’d love to get a big enough house with me Ma and just settle down.’

Emergency Services for Families

The Childcare Centre is a drop-in centre for young children of homeless families. Trained staff work to ensure that each child is given the chance to play, make friends and explore in a warm caring environment. It’s a place of fun, learning and development for many children who previously had little structure in their young lives.

The Family Programme offers parents the chance to get away from the stresses of B&B living. Parents can take time out to address their homeless situation or take part in discussion groups, meet other parents, or take advantage of education opportunities secure in the knowlege that their children are being cared for in our Childcare facilities.
Aylward Green, Finglas provides families in crisis with short-term accommodation. Families can stay in the accommodation for three months and are given the support they need to help them address their situation. Crèche facilities are available to families with young children, whilst the AIB Schoolmate Programme provides school going children with the opportunity to get help with their homework, as well as participate in activities including swimming and drama.

There has been an increase of in the number of parents under 20 using the Family Programme and crèche.

A new ventilation and air conditioning system was installed in the Childcare Centre. A chef was employed to provide meals for the children in our Childcare facilities.
Preparing for change
‘IT’S WORTH IT WHEN YOU SEE HOW PEOPLE CAN MOVE ON. WHEN THE PARENTS LEAVE AND YOU KNOW IT’S A GOOD ENDING, YOU KNOW THE KIDS WILL GO TO SCHOOL AND THEN TO SECONDARY AND THE CYCLE IS BROKEN AND THE PARENTS BELIEVE IN THEIR KIDS’ FUTURE, THAT’S REALLY GOOD.’

Cara Gibbons, Staff Member, George’s Hill
At the age of 45, after he separated from his wife, Brian was on the streets, ‘roughing here and there, anywhere you could get your head down.’ He went to England for eleven years and found himself homeless again when he returned to Ireland. As well as this, ‘I had been off the drink for fourteen years before I went homeless and then I went back on it for four years. Now I’m off it nearly two years.’

Brian came to Focus through a referral. ‘It’s really brilliant here. It’s really a good kind of outlook to looking forward. It has its rules, of course. I abide by them and they help you as much as they can. They go down every road for you. They’re there when you need them.’

The groups are one aspect of life in George’s Hill that has given Brian more hope. ‘I got a lot out of the groups. You learn awareness skills about living alone: cooking, decorating and so on. A doctor comes in and briefs you on health issues. Social services come in and tell you about what you’re entitled to. It’s showing you doors you never went through and then whether you go through them or not, it’s up to you. It’s taught me that everyone has their own reality. There’d be six to eight people in a group. It helps me look at the different characteristics of people. It taught me a lot of things, the values I missed out on.’

Brian feels his life here has made a difference. ‘The most important thing I have found in myself is I can choose. I have the power to choose. For a long time, I hadn’t. By attending the group here and by listening and working with my key worker and by eating humble pie, you learn a lot.’

And what of the future? ‘One of the programmes that’s taught is listening skills. I’m hoping to do a course on addiction and counselling, I’m hoping to join one that’s coming up, so listening skills are important. There’s an area I’m doing at the moment which is the skill to challenge people. My key worker is teaching me, because I asked. I want to know the primary triggers for addiction. She’s going to spend time with me and do it, which I think is fabulous.’

Brian hopes to live independently soon, in his own home. ‘Focus not only shows you the way, it’s there for you six months after you leave here. There’s an Community Settlement worker to help you and guide you, which I think is very good. The people here are very professional. About four weeks before a person comes out of here, Focus put you forward for housing and interview you to see if you have the skills to survive independently. I will say Focus is a way forward. The respect I’ve given myself is I’ve learned to love myself.’
Transitional Programmes - many people who come to us after a period of homelessness need to do some groundwork before moving-on to a home of their own. Education, training, practical skills and self development are key to a successful transition from homelessness to home. We have developed a number of short-term residential programmes tailored to suit young people, adults and families. These programmes aim to prepare people for a time when they are ready to move on to a home of their own.

- **Families** - programmes for families take place over a period of twelve months, and are supported by childcare and homework clubs. These programmes are available in our Stanhope Green and George's Hill projects in Dublin, and in our Grange Cohan project in Waterford.

- **Single Adults/Couples** – transitional programmes for this group are provided in our Waterford and George's Hill projects.

- **Young people**
  - **Off-the-Streets** offers a residential programme to young people between 16 and 18 years of age.

- **Aftercare Programmes**
  - **Residential support** for young people who have left State care is provided in our housing projects in Limerick, Waterford and Dublin.
  
  - **The Young Women’s Aftercare Project** is a residential programme offering support to young women both during their time in the project and after they move-on.

An evaluation of the Transition Programme for Single Men in George’s Hill was completed in 2003. The evaluation sought to assess the effectiveness of the programme in meeting the needs of the men participating. The evaluation found that in general the men participating in the programme were very happy with both the accommodation and level of support that they received from the staff. More than 50 per cent of the men successfully completed the programme.
‘MOST PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE NOW HAVE WORK OR THEY’RE ON A SCHEME, WHICH WASN’T THE CASE WHEN THEY MOVED IN. THEY’RE NOT STRUGGLING THE WAY THEY USED TO. THEIR ASPIRATIONS ARE THE SAME AS EVERYONE ELSE’S, SOME PEOPLE ASPIRE TO OWNING A HOME OF THEIR OWN, WE VIEW IT VERY POSITIVELY THAT SOME PEOPLE MOVE ON TO BUYING THEIR OWN HOUSE.’

Anne McAnespie, Staff Member, Grange Cohan, Waterford
Linda, 44, left home to find a safe place for herself and her 3 children. ‘I was reared in the country mum and dad both worked. I married a farmer. It’s a lovely place for children, there's ponds and frogspawn, places to play. It was a good life for children, but my husband was controlling and violent. I thought it was only happening to me so I kept it quiet because I thought people would judge me.’

What made you leave? I asked Linda ‘In the end I went to a refuge, I’d gone before but I went back thinking I could change him. Nothing changed I went to a refuge one Thursday; I thought it was lovely, safe, lovely people. When I was in the refuge I went out for the day with the children I turned to my oldest and said, “we don’t have to hurry back, he won’t be waiting for us, we can stay out as long as we want” we were free. It was terrible for the children they had nightmares about their father finding them.’

Whilst the refuge provided Linda with a safe place, she needed a proper home for herself and her children. ‘The refuge referred me to Focus in Waterford. The houses were just being built. I walked there every day from the refuge just to see how the builders were getting on. I was so beaten down I couldn’t hold my head up, my husband rattled my confidence I couldn’t even look at people, I walked with my head down. Noel Sherry who worked here was good to me, he helped me get myself together.’

As Linda's confidence grew she decided to return to study. ‘I got sponsorship from FAS to do a National Certificate in Community Education and Development at Waterford Institute of Technology. I did it by night I loved it I was hungry for it really. I’m doing the Diploma now and will go on to do my degree’. When asked what she would like to do in the future Linda replied. ‘I’m working part-time as a Development Worker for the Independent Mothers Project. Focus was good to me, but I’m ready to move on. I’ve bought a house on an affordable housing scheme. It's important to me that I make the decisions about mine and the children's lives. The kids already have their rooms picked out in the new house. I want them to grow up having choices, so they have a future to look forward to.’
Olivia has been homeless twice and now feels that she's finally settling down. 'I actually love this place,' she says of her new home in the long-term housing project at Finglas, 'though I didn’t settle down at first.'

Olivia and her 4 children had been living in a Corporation house in Tallaght, but moved back to England for a year. When they returned to Ireland, the house was no longer available. Since then, they had been moving around until a Focus worker called Tricia told me about the house in Finglas. Before I moved here I was all over the place and now things are settling down. I hope to stay in the same house and it’s got room for all of my kids.'

Taking some of the pressure off is The Homework Club. ‘It’s great for the kids,’ says Olivia. ‘My four-year-old got put into the crèche through that. The Homework Club is Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. They help the kids to do homework and play games with them. It’s hard when you’re trying to do four lots of homework every evening. Every Wednesday, they take the kids swimming. They learned my younger ones to swim. And the whole big courtyard out there for the kids to play in is great.’

She has also found stability for herself. ‘There should be more places like this. The best move I ever did was coming here. I’m hoping the pattern of me moving all the time is over.’

Olivia’s Key Worker is Laura. ‘I like her. She’s helped me with the support I need. She is always there.’ As for the other staff, Olivia likes their attitude. ‘They don’t judge. Paul, who runs this place, was the first person not to judge me, though he did say I can either keep on going or I can stop and face my problems. So that’s what I’m doing.’

What of her plans for the future? ‘I don’t plan for down the road. You never know where you’re going to be.’ In the shorter term, though, I am going back to schooling in September to finish my Leaving Cert English. I’m hoping to start a flower-arranging course, too, in St Helena’s.’ When asked if this is because she wants to be a florist, Olivia smiles. ‘No,’ she says, I just like flowers.’

Settling in - undoubtedly homelessness is a time of misery and stress, but often moving into a permanent home can bring with it stresses of its own. An unknown area, a different community, loneliness and isolation can all contribute to the feeling of alienation that a person can experience when they move-on. Focus Ireland provides long-term housing in Dublin, Waterford and Limerick. All our housing projects provide full support to the tenants who live there. Customers who move into local authority or private rented accommodation are linked in with our Community Settlement Team, who help them move into their new home and link them into the services such as schools, health centres etc. that they will need to settle successfully into their new community.
This year saw an increase of 40 per cent in the number of people who were in contact with the Community Settlement Team. The majority of these were women aged between 18 and 25, 55 per cent were people with children. The Team visited clients in local authority flats and houses as well as private rented accommodation.

There was an increase of 12 per cent in the number of customers accessing private rented accommodation; this was probably due to an increase in supply in the private rented market.

In partnership with Fingal County Council a housing development for members of the Travelling Community was opened in Scribblestown.

Work commenced on 16 units of long-term housing in Waterford.

At the end of this year 500 people were living in Focus Ireland’s housing developments.
Hungry for Change: social exclusion, food poverty and homelessness in Dublin

A research study investigating the impact of poverty and social exclusion on the food, diet and nutrition of people who are homeless in Dublin City was completed. This pilot study, funded by the Combat Poverty Agency, Crosscare and the Society of St Vincent de Paul is the first of its kind in Ireland exploring the issue of food poverty among people who are homeless.

The findings and insights from this study will be used not only to inform and support Focus Ireland’s service delivery and policy response to food poverty but also to influence local and national policy makers.

Working to ensure access to housing for all

Following the publication in 2002 of Housing access for all? by Focus Ireland, the Simon Communities of Ireland, Threshold and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The four organisations held a seminar in September in Dublin to discuss solutions to the growing problems of housing and homelessness. The partnerships established through the research have continued to work together to influence government to improve their housing supply policy and ultimately to make the right to a home a legislative one.

Budget 2004

In our Pre-Budget Submission this year, we made a number of demands that we believed would go some way towards redressing the balance in favour of some of the most marginalised members of our society:

- Borrow €1 billion as extra investment in social housing and ensure a multi-annual programme of investment to meet Government’s own output targets begins in 2004.

- Improve mechanisms to boost social housing output under Part V of the Planning and Development Act and allow the direct transfer of more publicly owned land to social housing developers.

- Remove the recent changes to Social Welfare allowance (SWA) rent supplement and instead tackle its poverty traps and labour market disincentives, until a dedicated fully integrated multi-tenure housing income support scheme for low-income households is developed and put in place.

- Increase funding for homeless services in 2004 so that:
  - No family with children resides in B&B accommodation for more than one month before more appropriate accommodation is secured.
  - Adequate move-on, transitional and short-term housing with access to appropriate support services are available for homeless families with children.
Despite our demands Budget 2004 was a combination of disillusionment and frustration for Focus Ireland. The €10 per week minimum increase in social welfare payments barely compensated for the paltry increase last year, and will do little to balance out the significant cutbacks of €60 million and in particular the cutbacks to rent allowances announced in the Book of Estimates. Children whose parent’s are dependent on child benefit payments will again pay the price, despite the extensive media coverage about the cost of living in Ireland and the Government’s commitment to the End Child Poverty Coalition. Child Dependent Allowances for families on social welfare remains frozen. Whilst an increase of €6 per month in child benefit payments will do little to give some sense of parity to the quality of the lives of children.

Keeping the ‘Right to a Home’ online

We continue to work on a number of levels to achieve our objective that everyone has a right to a home.

Our commitment to lobbying for the elimination of homelessness resulted in the launch of an online campaign asking the public to lobby their local TDs about the issue of homelessness. To date over 4,800 people have logged on to www.focusireland.org and sent letters supporting our campaign to their local representatives. In addition to the online campaign, we made a submission to the All Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution who were reviewing the issue of private property rights, requesting that a consideration for a rights based approach in the provision of housing should be included in the review.

Prevention through education

Education is key to the prevention of homelessness. Over the past year we continued our education work in schools. Our team of school speakers many of whom are volunteers, reached over 4,000 secondary school students in the Dublin area, whilst our staff in Limerick delivered school talks to an additional 1,750 pupils in the local secondary schools. Our education pack continues to be in demand across the country, and is particularly relevant to the Civic, Social and Political Education and Leaving Certificate Applied curriculum. The pack comprises three modules and a video and seeks to both raise awareness about the issues of homelessness as well as offer practical advice and information to young people who are leaving home.
Homelessness and Health – a series of 10 modules for the Nursing Degree Programme

Our growing awareness of health issues including mental health issues among our customers, compounded by the realisation that many health staff were often not familiar with homelessness and the difficulties the homeless population face in accessing health care, prompted us to develop a series of 10 modules for the Nursing Degree Programme:

- **Section 1:** The Homeless - Prejudices and Stereotypes
- **Section 2:** Defining Homelessness
- **Section 3:** The Causes and Consequences of Homelessness
- **Section 4:** Physical Health and Out-of-Home People
- **Section 5:** Alcohol Abuse and Out-of-Home People
- **Section 6:** Drug Abuse and Out-of-Home People
- **Section 7:** The Mental Health and Needs of People Out-of-Home
- **Section 8:** Barriers to Health Care Uptake for People Out-of-Home
- **Section 9:** Accident and Emergency (A&E) Presentations and the Homeless
- **Section 10:** Homelessness and the Public Health Nursing Service

**Garda Training**

The Gardai frequently come in contact with people who are homeless in the course of their work. It is important therefore that they receive adequate training to help them address any problems they may encounter in this situation. This is the fifth year that a core group of our staff have provided training to student Gardai in the Garda Training College in Templemore. The training has been developed to provide the students with insights into the complex issue of homelessness, as well as giving them practical information and advice in addressing some of the more common problems experienced by this group.

The Mid-West Children's Rights Forum was established by Focus Ireland (Limerick), Barnardos and the Women's Refuge Movement. The Forum works to influence statutory and other organisations about the issue of children's rights.
Supporting our staff to meet future challenges
'WITH NO DAY THE SAME AS THE NEXT, WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH CHAOTIC LIFESTYLES AND VARYING NEEDS WAS A WELCOME HANDS ON CHALLENGE AFTER MANY YEARS OF STUDYING. IT WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK AS PART OF A HIGHLY SKILLED TEAM OF PROFESSIONALS WITHIN AN ORGANISATION THAT OFFERED NEW AND DIVERSE LEARNING POSSIBILITIES. THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF THE YEAR, MY PRACTICAL DAY-TO-DAY WORK WAS COMPLEMENTED BY A WIDE VARIETY OF TRAINING COURSES, WHICH INCLUDED DEALING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR UNDERSTANDING ADDICTION AND WORKING WITH VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE.'

Janette Flynn, Staff Member, Childcare Centre
Focus Ireland supports its staff through the provision of education and training programmes to become the best professionals in their field, we have always prided ourselves in the quality of our service provision and continue to invest in the development of our staff to ensure our customers receive a quality service. Undoubtedly our staff are our most valuable asset and we encourage them to progress and provide them with the resources and opportunities they require to fulfil their career goals.

In 2003 we worked with the Agency Management to develop the foundations of a transition process, which will see the Services Directorates hone and develop their projects in response to on-going customer evaluations and emerging customer needs. At the same time we conducted research into career planning and pathing and from this are developing a series of policies to enable more fluid learning and progression in the Agency. We are taking our training programme to a new level and integrating our training closely with the on-the-job practice as well as developing our line managers to new levels of capability in the arena of people management and HR practice.

For 2004 we will concentrate on the changes to our culture and structures of service provision. Our intention is to focus on enabling staff and management to develop the systems necessary for them to apply consistent learning and growth to their own practices. We are introducing training and career planning to facilitate future changes and to ensure that staff and management will be fully equipped to meet these new challenges.
Thank you

With the demands on our services for people who are homeless increasing again in 2003, the pressure to generate a substantial amount of our own income is as great as ever.

Thanks to the support of individuals, companies, trusts and foundations, in 2003 we raised €3.21 million with the majority of support coming from individual donors. Without this commitment, we would be unable to deliver a number of our services or to confidently plan for new services that would ease the distress of people who are experiencing homelessness.

Regular supporters

This year €557,000 was raised through regular donations from our supporters including people committing to regular direct debits or standing orders.

At the end of this year we embarked on a new strategy and investment to recruit new committed givers. This form of support provides a much-needed source of guaranteed income, which allows us to confidently plan for the future. This strategy will continue into 2004 where the financial benefit will begin to be realised.

Tax efficient donations

This year again we were able to avail of a tax reclaim of €118,000 from all our donors who were able to support us to the sum of €21 per month or €250 over the year.

Fundraising events

Many people also supported us by participating in the events that were organised by Focus Ireland, or organised on our behalf throughout the country.

Our Peaks Challenges proved hugely popular again in 2003 generating a combined total of €217,000.

The fantastic dedication and work of the Focus Ireland GAFF committee, ensured that the 2003 GAFF Twilight Ball at the Mansion House was a great success raising over €15,000

In addition to these events many other groups and societies around the Country fundraised on our behalf generating much needed funds. A list of those who raised €1,000 or more is on the back inside cover.
Corporate partnerships

Corporate partnerships again played a vital role in our fundraising strategy in 2003, accounting for €640,000 of our fundraised income. The development and maintenance of a number of our much needed projects would not have been possible without the generous sponsorship and vision of a number of our corporate partners including:

- Allied Irish Bank through the AIB Better Ireland Schoolmate Project;
- **permanent tsb's** sponsorship of a number of key events throughout the year including our Christmas TV and Radio campaign;
- Anglo Irish Bank, whose long-term support has provided us with unrestricted resources that supported the development of a number of new projects.

At Christmas our corporate supporters did us proud. In its second year, our Christmas Tree for the Homeless appeal raised €215,000. Almost 100 companies sponsored a star on the Tree, in addition, many RTE Guide reader’s also supported this appeal and their collective donations raised enough for a star of their own.

**Trusts**
The Irish Famine Commemoration Fund contributed €124,768 towards our programmes for young people.

**Fundraising income 2003**
2004 - Continuing to deliver quality services
OUR AIM IS ALWAYS TO PROVIDE OUR CUSTOMERS WITH GOOD QUALITY SERVICES. IN 2004 WE WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE OUR EXISTING AND DEVELOP NEW SERVICES TO ENSURE THAT WE ARE MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL OUR CUSTOMERS.

Research

The latter half of 2003 saw the development of a research agenda that will take the Agency from 2004 to 2006, and focuses on 3 key themes:

1. Current housing legislation - in particular Part V and how the legislation is being used to tackle the housing needs of people out-of-home and those in housing need.

2. Education disadvantage and education sustainment - with emphasis on children aged 5 to 16 years who are out-of-home with their families.


Healthy Eating Week - based on recommendations arising from our research - Hungry for Change, Focus Ireland will launch a Healthy Eating Week in Summer 2004.
Services

The Coffee Shop & Housing Advice Centre – refurbishment of this project will take place in 2004.

The Loft – an evaluation of the Loft programme will be undertaken.

The Childcare Centre – the outside play area for the children will be refurbished this year.
A speech and language therapy service will be re-instated. Staff will be provided with additional specialised training in the practices of the ‘Hannon Method’ - a method of working with children who have speech and language delay.

Aylward Green, Finglas

- Joint care plan - working in partnership with the Homeless Social Worker a joint care plan approach to our work with the families will be implemented.

- Public health nurse - with the assistance of our local Community Care Team, a Public Health Nurse will be assigned to carry out regular child development checks and provides health care advice to parents of children under 5 years and to nursing mothers.

- Widening of referral system - the current Family Support Service will be expanded to enable other agencies to make direct referrals into our services.

- Settlement support – this new initiative will provide interim settlement support to families moving out of our emergency accommodation and into a home of their own.

- Homework project for settled families - a pilot Homework Club for 4 - 12 year olds living in our permanent housing will be introduced.

Off-the-Streets - this project will cease to supply emergency accommodation in favour of short-term (6 months) residential programmes for young people.

The Young Women's Aftercare Project - in response to a significant need for accommodation for young people leaving State care. The Young Women's Aftercare Project will acquire larger premises enabling it to double its capacity.

Limerick

New housing - a new housing project is planned which will provide transitional and long-term accommodation for families and single adults.

Grange Cohan, Waterford

- New housing - sixteen new houses, 10 for families, 4 for couples and 2 for single people will open in summer 2004.

- Childcare Centre - an application has been made for capital and revenue funding to expand this project.
# BUT WHERE CAN I GO? - CRISIS SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Group</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>Outreach Service</td>
<td>Streetwork: builds trust, helps people move off the streets, provides sleeping bags, socks etc.</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coffee shop &amp; Housing Advice Centre</td>
<td>Drop-in Service: support, advocacy, information, advice, low cost food, referrals</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults over 25s</td>
<td>Adult Programmes</td>
<td>Drop-in Service: education &amp; social activities</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young People 12 – 18 years</td>
<td>The Loft</td>
<td>Drop-in Centre: keyworking, meals, shower facilities, education facilities, recreational facilities, referral</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25 years</td>
<td>The Extension</td>
<td>Drop-in Centre: keyworking, meals, shower, recreational facilities, referral</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 – 25 years</td>
<td>Spokes Programme</td>
<td>Drop-in Service: Education &amp; Training, CV preparation, job search, formal education / training course</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Group</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Location</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 16 – 21 years       | Caretakers – hostel (young people with drug abuse issues):                   | - support  
                        - advocacy  
                        - referral to medical and rehab facilities | Dublin          |
| 16 – 18 years       | Off-the-Streets             | Emergency accommodation:  
                        - support  
                        - advocacy | Dublin          |
| Families            | Family Programme            | Drop-in service:  
                        - support  
                        - glass painting  
                        - drama  
                        - reflexology  
                        - crèche facilities  
                        - AIB, Schoolmate Programme  
                        - homework club | Dublin          |
|                     | Childcare Centre            | Drop-in service:  
                        - hot midday meal  
                        - play time  
                        - child development  
                        - speech and language therapist | Dublin          |
|                     | Family Support Programme    | Outreach Service:  
                        - contact with families in emergency accommodation  
                        - support them to move on to long-term housing | Dublin          |
|                     | Emergency accommodation     | Temporary accommodation:  
                        - keyworking  
                        - support with moving-on  
                        - advocacy  
                        - childcare  
                        - homework club  
                        - breakfast club and café  
                        - AIB, Schoolmate Programme | Aylward Green, Finglas, Dublin |
# PREPARING FOR CHANGE - TRANSITION SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Group</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young People (18 - 25s)</td>
<td>Aftercare programmes – residential programmes for young people many of whom have left State care</td>
<td>Residential programme: - keyworking - advocacy - support with moving-on - budgeting - cooking - childcare</td>
<td>Stanhope Green, Dublin Young Women’s Aftercare Project, Dublin Off-the-Streets, Dublin Grange Cohan, Waterford Parnell Place, Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Adults/ Couples</td>
<td>Transitional Housing (short-term) housing accommodation programmes</td>
<td>Residential programme: - keyworking - budgeting - cooking - support with moving-on - advocacy</td>
<td>George’s Hill, Dublin Grange Cohan, Waterford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>Transitional housing (short-term) housing accommodation programmes</td>
<td>Residential programme: - keyworking - budgeting - cooking - support with moving-on - advocacy - childcare - AIB, Schoolmate Programme - homework club</td>
<td>Stanhope Green, Dublin George’s Hill, Dublin Grange Cohan, Waterford</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SETTLING IN – SETTLEMENT SERVICES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Target Group</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Adults/ Couples</td>
<td>Long-term housing</td>
<td>Supported housing:</td>
<td>Stanhope Green, Dublin</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- advocacy</td>
<td>Basin Lane, Dublin</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- support</td>
<td>Grange Cohan, Dublin</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- groupwork</td>
<td>Waterford</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parnell Place, Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>Long-term housing</td>
<td>Supported housing:</td>
<td>George's Hill, Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- advocacy</td>
<td>Aylward Green, Finglas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- support</td>
<td>Grange Cohan, Waterford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- childcare centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- homework clubs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>Community Settlement Service</td>
<td>Help people sustain their new home:</td>
<td>14a Eustace Street, Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- accessing services</td>
<td>Grange Cohan, Waterford</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- help with furniture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- help with appointments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- support</td>
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FOCUS IRELAND LIMITED AND SUBSIDIARIES

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS

The Directors present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the Company and of the Group for the year ended December 31, 2003.

The Company is a charity and hence the report and results are presented in a form which complies with the requirements of the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2003 and although not obliged to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) as issued by the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales in October 2000, the Group has implemented its recommendations where relevant in these accounts.

Legal status and change of name

Focus Ireland Limited is a company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital, incorporated in Ireland on March 7, 1985 under the Companies Acts, 1963 to 1983, registered number 106149.

On March 26, 2003 the company changed its name from Focus Point Ireland Limited to Focus Ireland Limited.

The objects of the Company and of the Group are charitable in nature with established charitable status (Charity Status No. 7220). All income is applied solely towards the promotion of the charitable objects of the Group.

Corporate governance

The Company is committed to high standards of corporate governance and the Board of Directors believe that this is a key element to ensuring the proper operation of the Company’s activities. Although the Company is not a listed company and therefore not subject to the "Principles of Good Governance and Code of Best Practice" (as adopted by the Irish Stock Exchange), the Board nevertheless has determined that the Group should comply with the basic principals of corporate governance as outlined in this code.

As part of this policy, an effective Board and a competent executive team head the Company. The Board includes non-executive Directors drawn from diverse backgrounds including Commercial Business, Finance, Universities and Law, who bring to Board deliberations, the significant business and decision making skills achieved in their respective fields together with a broad range of experience and views.

There is a clear division of responsibility at the Company with the Board retaining control of major decisions under a formal schedule of matters reserved to the Board for decision, with the chief executive responsible for devising strategy and policy within the authorities delegated to him by the Board. An effective committee structure at Board level deals with specific areas of the Group’s activities and disciplines.
One-third of the Directors are required to retire annually by rotation. The Board meets regularly as required and met 6 times during 2003 (2002 - 7).

**Internal controls**

The Board has overall responsibility for the Group system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness. This involves an on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the significant risks faced by the Company and reviewing the effectiveness of the systems of internal control on an on-going basis. The organisational structure has clearly defined lines of responsibility, division of duties and delegation of authority.

Procedures and control systems were formally documented in a series of Service Level Agreements and these were implemented in 2003 within each area of the Group.

During 2003, the Group had an external Auditor conduct an independent audit of its internal controls, who concluded that the controls were sufficiently robust to safeguard the assets of the Group.

**Principal activities and objectives**

The main activities of the Group are charitable. Its mission is to advance the rights of people out-of-home to live in a place they call home through quality services, research and advocacy.

The Group objectives are to:

- Respond to the needs of people out-of-home and those at risk of becoming homeless through a range of appropriate high quality support services.
- Provide emergency, transitional and long-term housing and accommodation.
- Campaign and lobby for the rights of people out-of-home and for the prevention of homelessness.
Services provided

Support Services

1. **Street Outreach Seven-Day Programme** – this service provides contact, support and advocacy for people sleeping rough or begging in Dublin.

2. **Drop-In Coffee Shop and Housing Advice Centre** – this service is open to everyone and is often the first port of call for people in crisis, it is also our central referral point and refers customers to other Focus Ireland or other Agencies’ services, that might better serve their needs.

3. **The Loft** – provides a place for young people under 18 years of age to go during the day. It is open 7 days a week and provides a safe environment away from the streets where young people can eat, shower and participate in recreational and educational activities.

4. **The Extension** – is a day centre for young people aged between 18-25 years who are out-of-home. It provides practical facilities including showers, laundry and cooking facilities. Each person is assigned a key worker who helps them to identify their needs, provides them with support and also acts as advocate with organisations on their behalf.

5. **Family Services Programme** – is a drop-in weekday morning service for families. The programme runs activities such as aromatherapy, glass painting and other crafts. It provides a crèche for the children, giving parents an opportunity to spend creative time together away from the stresses of hostel and B&B living.

6. **Nurseries/Child Care**
   **The Child Care Centre** – offers children time and space to play and meet their peers away from the confines of B&B and other emergency accommodation. Children are given a hot mid-day meal and families have access to health professionals including GP’s, Public Health Nurses and Speech and Language Therapists. Our Child Care Centre provides parents with the opportunity to participate in activities such as education, training programmes, Key working or to look for accommodation or work. Our Nurseries in our housing projects in both Waterford and George’s Hill, provide support to families participating in our transitional programmes.

7. **Community Settlement** – Provides post settlement support to families and single adults who have recently acquired secure accommodation following a period of homelessness or upon completion of our transitional programme. Clients are given practical support to help set up a home, and to access local services and facilities. They also receive supportive counselling to enable them to settle successfully.
Housing and Accommodation

1. **Emergency accommodation** – the first of its kind for families in Ireland, Focus Ireland provides 13 units of emergency accommodation for families in Dublin. Families are supported to address their homelessness after which they move on to transitional or long-term accommodation.

2. **Transitional accommodation** – Focus Ireland’s transitional programmes assist participants to make decisions about their future, address personal issues that have contributed to their homeless status and provide them with skills to sustain a home. The programmes work in partnership with outside agencies, both statutory and voluntary.

3. **Long-term accommodation** – our long-term accommodation provides good quality, secure and supported accommodation. The level of support required by single people and families vary depending on individual needs. Focus Ireland has long-term housing developments in Dublin, Waterford and Limerick.

4. **Off the Streets Hostel** – provides emergency accommodation for young people under 18 years of age. This project aims to help these young people move on to suitable residential or other suitable accommodation. The staff work closely with the Health Board to ensure the needs of the young people are met.

5. **The Caretakers Hostel** – it provides overnight accommodation and daily support services to young people (16-21 years of age) who have experienced substance abuse and homelessness.

Research and education

Our research work helps to identify and in many cases fill gaps in service provision for people out-of-home. We are committed to raising awareness about the plight of homeless people in Ireland through education, marketing, lobbying and public awareness campaigns.

The Caretakers Project Limited

The Caretakers Project Limited was incorporated on April 3, 2003 (Company No. 369456) as a company limited by guarantee, for the purposes of operating short term emergency accommodation and social services from a property made available to the Company by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. All operational and financial activities are administered by Focus Ireland Limited. The Company is controlled jointly by the Group and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to reflect their joint participation in the project. The Company prepares separate statutory audited financial statements which are filed at the Companies Registration Office as required by law.
Organisational structure

The Group includes the Holding Company, its wholly owned Subsidiary – Focus Housing Association Limited, and its joint venture undertaking – The Caretakers Project Limited. The Holding Company is principally concerned with the provision of support with services to the homeless and conduct of research. The Subsidiary Company provides accommodation in Dublin, Limerick and Waterford.

The Board of Directors who meet approximately six times annually retains overall responsibility for the strategic development of the charity in close liaison with the executive officers.

Mr. Declan Jones, Chief Executive, manages the operation of the charity with delegated divisional responsibility to the following:

- **Families**: Benn Keaveney
- **Young People**: Orla Barry
- **Open Access & Housing**: Christina McTaggart
- **Finance & Administration**: Evelyn Fitzpatrick
- **Fundraising**: Caroline Hickson
- **Research Development & Education**: Mamar Merzouk
- **Human Resources**: Jean Dempsey

An organisational structure has been implemented with clearly defined lines of responsibility and delegations of authority. Detailed budgets are prepared annually which are reviewed and approved by the Board. Actual results are compared with budgets, variances identified and appropriate action initiated.

The Board has appointed certain sub-committees dealing with Finance, Audit, Development and Research, who each meet regularly during the year.

Relationships with other charities

The Group has entered into a joint venture with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, known as The Caretakers Project Limited, as disclosed above. The Group also works with other charitable institutions in pursuing common objectives.
**Risk management programme**

The Group set up a working party (including external advisers) to carry out a risk assessment covering all areas of the Group’s activities. In 2003, the Board approved a risk management programme and authorised its implementation. The programme is designed to minimise the impact of potential risk.

**Upkeep of housing properties**

The Group’s policy is to maintain its housing properties (mostly listed buildings) in a state of good repair. In order to provide for this expenditure, which is not grant-assisted, we have set up a provision based on condition audits carried out by the Group’s architects. One property was refurbished in 2003 and two further properties are in the process of refurbishment.

**Results for the year and review of operations**

The results for the year as set out on page 74 are considered to be satisfactory by the Board.

A further provision of €352K has been included for outstanding upkeep and major structural repair of certain properties, as determined by the Group’s architectural advisors. As at December 31, 2003, the aggregate provision amounted to €1,626K (2002 - €1,308K).

A capital deficit provision of €300K (2002 – Nil) was made to cover shortfalls in the funding of capital expansion in our housing stock. This provision is made in respect of developments committed to at the Balance Sheet date.

Despite a surplus in resources arising in the year, the Group still only holds sufficient reserves to accommodate 14 weeks operational costs, whereas the recommendation of the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities (SORP) is to hold approximately 6 months operational costs in Reserve.

**Dividends and retention**

The Company is precluded by its Memorandum of Association from paying dividends either as part of normal operations or on a distribution of its assets in the event of a winding-up.
Future developments

The Directors intend to continue to develop the existing activities of the Group in pursuit of its established charitable objectives. An expansion to our housing stock will open in Waterford in 2004. The Board have recently approved a housing expansion in Limerick.

Post balance sheet events

There were no significant events affecting the Company since the year end.

Companies (Amendment) Act, 1986

The reporting requirements of the Companies (Amendment) Act, 1986 relating to financial statements do not apply to the Company as it is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital.

The Group operates an externally funded Defined Benefit Contributory Pension Scheme, of which the Company provides two-thirds of the contribution and the employees contribute one-third. The assets of the Scheme are held separately from those of the Group.

Health and safety

It is the policy of the Group to ensure the health and welfare of its employees and clients by maintaining a safe place and system of work. This policy is based on the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989. This is achieved with the appointment of safety officers at each location and the implementation of a full programme of staff training in Health and Safety in regard to all aspects of their duties and responsibilities.
Directors’ responsibility statement

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the Group, of the Company and of the financial results of the Group for that year. In preparing those financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

Books and accounting records

The Directors are responsible for ensuring that proper books and accounting records, as outlined in Section 202 of the Companies Act 1990, are kept by the Company. To achieve this, the Directors have appointed qualified accounting personnel in order to ensure that those requirements are complied with.

These books and accounting records are maintained at 9/12 High Street, Dublin 8.

Auditors

Phelan Prescott & Co Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors, continue in office in accordance with Section 160 of the Companies Act, 1963.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

Matthew Walsh    Desmond Byrne
Director        Director

MAY 26, 2004
FOCUS IRELAND LIMITED AND SUBSIDIARIES

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS

We have audited the financial statements of Focus Ireland Limited for the year ended December 31, 2003, which comprise of the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out therein.

This report is made solely to the Company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 193 of the Companies Act, 1990. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Company's members 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 Company and the Company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Directors and auditors

As described in the report of the Directors, the Company's Directors are responsible for the preparation of financial statements in accordance with applicable law and Irish Accounting Standards.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and Auditing Standards promulgated by the Auditing Practices Board in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts. We also report to you whether in our opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the Company and whether the information given in the report of the Directors is consistent with the financial statements. In addition, we state whether we have obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit and whether the Company's balance sheet and statement of financial activities are in agreement with the books of account.

We report to you if, in our opinion, any information specified by law regarding Directors' remuneration and Directors' transactions is not given and, where practicable, include such information in our report.

We read the report of the Directors and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent mis-statement within it.
Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Company’s circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material mis-statement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Company’s and Group’s affairs as at December 31, 2003 and of its statement of financial activities for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2003 and the European Communities (Companies: Group Accounts) Regulations, 1992.

We have obtained all the information and explanations we considered necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion the Company has kept proper books of account. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

In our opinion the information given in the report of the Directors is consistent with the financial statements.

PHELAN PRESCOTT & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS & REGISTERED AUDITORS

ALTON HOUSE 4 HERBERT STREET DUBLIN 2
MAY 26, 2004
FOCUS IRELAND LIMITED AND SUBSIDIARIES

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting convention

The financial statements are presented in Euro (€) under the historical cost convention. The Group, in common with many similar charitable organisations, derives a proportion of its income from voluntary donations and fundraising activities held by individuals/parties outside the control of the Company. The income from these sources are necessarily accounted when received.

Basis of consolidation

Focus Housing Association Limited became a Subsidiary by alteration of its Memorandum and Articles of Association on March 5, 1998. These Articles provide that Focus Ireland Limited shall at all times hold voting control of the Subsidiary Company.

The Caretakers Project Limited is treated as a subsidiary and the full financial results of the Company are incorporated in the Group accounts as the Group has control of the management and administration of all the financial activities of the entity.

Fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis to write off the cost of the assets over their estimated useful lives at the following annual rates:

- Housing properties (refer below) nil
- Leasehold improvements 5%
- Office furniture and equipment 25%
- Housing furniture and equipment 10%
- Motor vehicles 20%

Assets are eliminated from the balance sheet when fully depreciated.

Housing properties

Depreciation is not provided on housing properties as renewals accounting has been adopted in accordance with FRS 15 and it is the policy of the Group to operate a continuous programme of refurbishment of the properties to keep them in good order. A provision is made annually on the basis of architects recommendation for the cost of outstanding upkeep and major structural repair of housing properties.
**Capital assistance scheme loans**

Loans under capital assistance schemes have not been amortised on the basis that they remain repayable in full for a twenty year period from the date of advance. On completion of the loan period, provided certain conditions are met, the loans and interest, if applicable, are relieved in full and will be released to reserves.

**Recognition of income and capital contributions**

Items of income, principally revenue based grants and rents, are recorded on an accruals basis. Contributions collected by recognised fundraising committees and donations from the public are recorded in or deferred to the period in which the related expenditure is charged.

In accordance with best practice, Fundraising Income is shown gross without deduction of any overhead costs involved in raising such funds. Fundraising and Event costs, shown separately in the financial statements, include staff, direct and indirect overhead and Event costs.

Contributions received towards capital projects are taken directly to Capital Reserves.

**Grants**

Grants received to fund housing properties are deferred and not amortised to income.

Grants received to fund other capital expenditure are deferred and amortised to income over the estimated useful lives of the related fixed assets.

Grants and assistance to fund non-capital expenditure are credited to income and expenditure in the period in which the related expenditure is incurred.

Grants and assistance due but not yet received are included as "Grants Receivable" in the Balance Sheet. Grants and assistance received which relate to the funding of expenditure not yet incurred are deferred and included under "Grants received in advance" in the Balance Sheet.

**Pension costs**

The amount charged in the statement of financial activities in respect of contributions to the Company's defined benefit pension scheme is the estimated regular cost of providing the benefits accrued in the year (as advised by professional actuaries). The regular cost is calculated so that it represents a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll.
FOCUS IRELAND LIMITED AND SUBSIDIARIES

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTE</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>€'000</td>
<td>€'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incoming resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations and Fundraising income</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue based grants</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents and charges to residents</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant sales</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total incoming resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10,564</td>
<td>3,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources expended</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis intervention, needs assessment and care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management for homeless people</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported housing and resettlement services</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and administration overheads</td>
<td></td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research, development and education</td>
<td></td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising and Events costs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for structural upkeep of housing properties</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for funding deficit in housing expansion</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation, net of capital grants amortised</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total resources expended</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10,598</td>
<td>3,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET INCOMING RESOURCES</strong></td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>(34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACCUMULATED FUNDS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACCUMULATED FUNDS AT END OF YEAR</strong></td>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>1,119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were no recognised gains or losses other than the net incoming resources for the year.

Approved on behalf of the Board by: Matthew Walsh  Desmond Byrne
MAY 26, 2004
FOCUS IRELAND LIMITED AND SUBSIDIARIES

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AT
DECEMBER 31, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NOTE</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIXED ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>€'000</td>
<td>€'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing properties</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>17,823</td>
<td>17,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital assistance scheme loans</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(16,477)</td>
<td>(16,357)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,346</td>
<td>1,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other tangible assets</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,020</td>
<td>1,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash at bank and in hand</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5,212</td>
<td>4,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debtors</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants receivable</td>
<td></td>
<td>536</td>
<td>895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5,846</td>
<td>5,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CREDITORS – due within one year</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors, accruals and deferred income</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2,125</td>
<td>1,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants received in advance</td>
<td></td>
<td>129</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,254</td>
<td>2,269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,592</td>
<td>2,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>5,612</td>
<td>4,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LONG TERM LIABILITIES AND PROVISIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank loan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>(356)</td>
<td>(406)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for funding deficit in housing expansion</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>(300)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for structural upkeep of housing properties</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(1,626)</td>
<td>(1,308)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,330</td>
<td>3,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESERVES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital grants and donations</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2,245</td>
<td>2,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated funds restricted</td>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated funds unrestricted</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,119</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,330</td>
<td>3,070</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approved on behalf of the Board by: Matthew Walsh
Desmond Byrne
MAY 26, 2004
FOCUS IRELAND LIMITED AND SUBSIDIARIES
NOTES ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR
THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2003

1. Fundraising

- Fundraising Income
  Fundraising Income represents the gross money raised including the gross income for all Events held.

- Fundraising Costs
  In 2003 there was a strategic decision made to invest in recruiting new members of the public as committed long-term donors. The costs of this programme commenced towards the end of 2003. Even though the financial benefits will only realise fully over future years, it was considered more prudent to recognise the costs in the year that they were incurred. Excluding these start-up expenses, Fundraising costs were 19% of Gross Income raised, which is the same as 2002 and below our target of 20%.

All costs related to Events, including purchase costs for items sold at Event auctions, are included in Fundraising Costs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>2003 €'000</th>
<th>2002 €'000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area Development Management Limited (ADM)</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Dublin Youth Services Board (CDYSB)</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comhairle</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Environment</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Justice, Equality &amp; Law Reform</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of Social, Community &amp; Family Affairs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin City Council</td>
<td>3,653</td>
<td>2,694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAS</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick City Council</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Drugs Task Force</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Western Health Board</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Area Health Board</td>
<td>3,198</td>
<td>2,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Eastern Health Board</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Western Area Health Board</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford City Council</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior year grants overstated</td>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,125</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,042</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2003, the Homeless Agency authorised and approved statutory funding of €5,195K, which is included under grants from Dublin City Council, Northern Area Health Board and South Western Area Health Board.
The average number of persons employed by the Group during the year was 275 (2002 - 265).

The Group operates a contributory pension scheme which provides defined benefits for its employees. The assets of the Scheme are held separately from those of the Company under a Trust.

The last actuarial report, based on a valuation as at January 1, 2003, completed by independent consulting actuaries, indicated that the value of the Scheme’s assets were insufficient to meet the cost of the members’ accrued benefits on a discontinuance basis. The deficit is to be made up by additional contributions over a 3 year period. The first contribution which amounted to one third of the deficit (€83K) was made in this years accounts. Actuarial reports are not available for public inspection but are available to the members of the scheme.

Amounts outstanding at year end were €23K (2002 - €25K) and were paid within thirty days of the year end.

No salaries or fees are payable to the Directors of the Company. An employee’s representative to the Board is remunerated for employment only.
5 Taxation

The charitable status of the Holding Company and its Subsidiaries has been approved by the Revenue Commissioners.

Where our money came from in 2003

- Revenue based grants: 72%
- Donations and fundraising income: 23%
- Restaurant sales: 1%
- Other income: 1%
- Rents and charges to residents: 3%

How we spent our money in 2003

- Crisis intervention - needs assessment and care management: 46%
- Supportive housing and resettlement services: 32%
- Finance and administration overheads: 6%
- Research, development and education: 4%
- Fundraising and events costs: 6%
- Provision for maintenance, repair and upkeep of housing properties: 4%
- Provision for funding deficit in housing expansion: 2%
6 Financial assets

On March 5, 1998 the Company acquired control of Focus Housing Association Limited for €Nil consideration. The net assets acquired have not been treated under the equity basis of accounting as it is considered inappropriate to the operations of the Company and, accordingly, the provisions of FRS 2 have not been applied. The assets acquired by the Company are included at cost, namely €Nil, in the Company balance sheet.

The Caretakers Project Limited was established as a joint venture to manage a project under which Focus Ireland Limited would provide all the administrative and financial input into the Company and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul would make available the property from which the Company would operate. The effect of the results of this Subsidiary on the Group's Consolidated Accounts are summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement of financial activities</th>
<th>€’000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants receivable (Northern Area Health Board)</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted donation</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: Support and advocacy services</td>
<td>(584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and administration</td>
<td>(47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reorganisation of premises</td>
<td>(48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus/deficit</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Balance Sheet**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash at bank and in hand</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors, accruals and deferred income</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing properties and capital assistance scheme loans</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Properties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanhope Green</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George's Hill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckingham Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballybough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finglas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basin Lane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parnell Street, Limerick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballytruckle, Waterford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Housing properties**

The title deeds of the properties at Stanhope Green, George's Hill, Buckingham Street, Ballybough, Finglas and Basin Lane are held by Dublin City Council. The title deeds of the properties at Parnell Street, Limerick and Ballytruckle, Waterford, are held by Limerick City Council and Waterford City Council respectively. In regard to certain properties legal charges are registered against the properties by the local authorities.

**Capital Assistance Scheme Loans**

Loans advanced by municipal (housing) authorities to the Subsidiary company have a twenty year repayment period. However, the Subsidiary company will be relieved in full of repayments of capital and interest so long as the housing authority is satisfied that the accommodation continues to be properly maintained and to be let to eligible categories of persons at reasonable rent levels.

In the event of the accommodation not continuing to be let in accordance with the terms of the scheme, the Subsidiary company will become liable for repaying the outstanding balance of the loan together with any accrued interest. In the event of default of repayments, the housing authorities may take appropriate steps to secure redemption of the loan.

The Subsidiary company may not, if there is any balance outstanding on the loans, dispose of the accommodation without the consent of the housing authorities.
### 8 Other fixed assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Freehold Buildings</th>
<th>Leasehold Improvements</th>
<th>Office Furniture &amp; Equipment</th>
<th>Housing Furniture &amp; Equipment</th>
<th>Motor Vehicle</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COST</strong></td>
<td>€'000</td>
<td>€'000</td>
<td>€'000</td>
<td>€'000</td>
<td>€'000</td>
<td>€'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At beginning of year</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additions</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets fully depreciated</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(35)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>At end of year</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1,540</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DEPRECIATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At beginning of year</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charge for year</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets fully depreciated</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(35)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>At end of year</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>866</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NET BOOK VALUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
<th>€'000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At December 31, 2003</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At December 31, 2002</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>828</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9 Debtors

#### AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepayments and accrued Income</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Debtors</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>98</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10 Creditors, accruals and deferred income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank overdraft</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term loan (Note 11)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Creditors</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accruals and other Creditors</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred Income</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAYE/PRSI</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ \text{2,125} ]</td>
<td>[ \text{1,900} ]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 Bank loan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term loan</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ \text{356} ]</td>
<td>[ \text{406} ]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Security

The term loan from Permanent TSB, which is repayable by annual instalments over a period not exceeding ten years on a non-interest bearing basis, is secured by a guarantee from the Northern Area Health Board. The Northern Area Health Board has agreed to fund the repayments by a grant amount equal to each annual loan repayment.

12 Provision for funding deficit in housing expansion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision made in year</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At end of year</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Group has committed to certain capital projects and has therefore become liable for shortfalls between statutory funding provided and cost of project completion.

13 Provision for structural upkeep of housing properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At beginning of year</td>
<td>1,308</td>
<td>920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilised during year</td>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision made in year</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At end of year</td>
<td>[ \text{1,626} ]</td>
<td>[ \text{1,308} ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14 Capital grants and donations

**RECEIVED AND RECEIVABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance at beginning of year</td>
<td>2,559</td>
<td>1,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elimination of grants fully amortised</td>
<td>(236)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amounts received during year</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance at end of year</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,327</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,559</strong></td>
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</table>

**AMORTISATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance at beginning of year</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elimination of grants fully amortised</td>
<td>(236)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Released during year</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance at end of year</strong></td>
<td><strong>82</strong></td>
<td><strong>309</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NET BOOK AMOUNT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,245</td>
<td>2,250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 Capital commitments and contingent liabilities

**a) Capital commitments**

Group capital commitments approved by the Board at December 31, 2003 in respect of a proposed development of a 20 apartment complex in Limerick amounted to €3,121K.

At December 31, 2002 the Group had commitments in respect of 16 houses in Waterford city amounting to €2,173K. This development opened in May 2004.

There were no contingent liabilities outstanding at December 31, 2003 (2002 – Nil).

**b) Leasing commitments**

The Company occupies a leasehold premises at 9/12 High Street, Dublin 8 for 15 years from August 1, 2003, subject to five yearly reviews at a current rent of €260K per annum.

**c) Contingent liabilities**

There were no contingent liabilities at December 31, 2003 (2002 – None).
16 Pensions FRS17 disclosures

This year full disclosures on the pension scheme were provided by Watson Wyatt LLP for inclusion as a note to the accounts. The Accounting Standards Board (ASB) issued Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS17) Retirement Benefits on 30 November 2000. The Standard deals with the treatment of pensions and other retirement benefits in an employer’s accounts. The Standard will be implemented in full from 2005 and will replace SSAP24 Accounting for pension costs. Focus Ireland, like most Irish companies have elected not to fully adopt the Standard until 2005 and provide the information in the form of disclosures.

The Standard makes significant changes to the treatment of defined benefit pension schemes (schemes where the employees are promised a specific benefit regardless of the investment performance of the scheme). Under SSAP24 both the assets and the liabilities in a defined benefit pension scheme were valued on an actuarial basis. The objective being to arrive at a regular pension cost each year that was a reasonably stable percentage of the pensionable payroll. Variations from the regular cost were spread forward and recognised gradually over the remaining service lives of the employees.

FRS17 abandons the use of actuarial values for assets in a pension scheme in favour of a market based approach. This is consistent with current practice in the US. On an FRS17 basis the scheme disclosed a deficit of €649,000 as at 31 December 2003. This compares with a deficit of €783,000 at 31 December 2002. An ongoing funding valuation was also carried out during the year with an effective date of 31 December 2002 and this valuation disclosed a deficit of just under €250,000 between long-term on a long term basis. The deficit disclosed on the ongoing basis is significantly less than the deficits under FRS17. This is mainly due to the use of a bond yield linked discount rate to value the liabilities under FRS17, compared with a higher discount rate on the ongoing basis which reflects the higher expected future returns on the actual scheme investments (which are comprised of stocks and shares, property and other investment types).

17 Approval of financial statements

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on May 26, 2004.
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Limerick

Tel: 061 317199
Fax: 061 317199

Website: www.focusireland.ie
Focus Ireland would like to thank all those who so generously supported our work last year. The following generously made contributions or donated goods to the value of €1,000 and above:

AIB Better Ireland Fund
Anglo Irish Bank
IAWS Group plc
permanent tsb
Vision Consulting
3-Com Technologies
AA Ireland
ACC Bank
Aer Rianta
AGTEL Ltd
All Print and Design
Allied Imports Ltd
Amrop
AXA Insurance
Bank of Ireland
Bewleys Café
Boileau & Boyd
Book Stop
Broadcast Video Services Ltd
Cabvertise Ltd
Calyx
Cantrell & Cochrane Group
Cassidy’s Pub
Castletown
Cheers Take-Home Ltd
Christopher Bennett & Son
Clarian
Conor Holdings Limited
Containerships Dublin Ltd
Corporate & Commercial Treasury
Cross Vetpharm Group Ltd
Crosson Cars Ltd
Cybercom
D P L Group Ltd
Dalton + O’Donnell Architects Interior Designers
Dardanelle Herd
DIAGEO (Ireland)
Distrupol Ireland
Donnybrook Corporate Travel
Dorville Homes Ltd
Durkan Group
EBS Building Society
EI Electronics
Eircom
Elian Corporation plc
Ellier Developments
EMC Ireland
Energi
ESB Group Insurance
Executive Travel Group
Extraspace
First Equity Group
Fitzpatrick Gallagher McEvoy
Friends First
G & T Crampton Building & Civil Engineers
GE Superabrasives Ireland
Glanbia Plc
Gore & Grimes Solicitors
Greenstar Recycling Holdings Ltd
Grundfos Ltd
GT Media
Hegarty Demolition Ltd
Henry J. Lyons & Partners
Hibernian Insurance Co
Houseworks Limited
IIB Bank Ltd
Indecon Economic Consultants
Innovex Ireland
Internet Broadcasting Company
Irish Biscuits Ltd
Irish Film Institute
Irish Life & Permanent plc
The Irish Times
Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd
ITT Flygt Ltd
John Craddock Ltd
John McElhinney & Co
John Sisk & Son (Holdings) Ltd
JP Morgan
Jurys Doyle Hotel Group Plc
Kellogg Company of Ireland
Kelly Cards
Kilroy Solicitors
Leahy Property Consultants
Lever Faberge Ireland
London Life and General Reinsurance Company Ltd
LPS Direct
Lunar Records
MacArde McSweeney Associates
Maplewood Homes Limited
Mark John Limited
Marks & Spencer
Martin Colour Print
Matheson Ormsby Prentice
McCann Fitzgerald
McInerney Construction Ltd
Mediterranean Nautilus Lts
Mercer Human Resource Consulting
Michael McNamara & Co
Miso Restaurant
Modern Plant Limited
Moss Technology
Mullingar Pewter Ltd
NAI Mason Owen & Lyons
Network 365
Newenham Mulligan & Associates
NTL
O. J. Kilkenny
P. Elliott & Co. Ltd
P. Kavanagh & Sons Ltd
P.J. Hegarty & Sons
PacNet Services (Europe) Ltd
Patrick Brock & Sons Ltd
Phelan Prescott & Co
Phimac Computing Ltd
PJ Boner & Co
Procircuit Contractors
Prudential
Q4 Public Relations
Red Dog Design
Renault Ireland
Rohcon Ltd
Rott Systems
Royal Bank of Scotland
RTE Guide
RTE Radio
Sabeo Technologies Ltd
SAP ssc (Ireland) Ltd
SBA Architects
Scott and MacNeill Architects
Screen Scene Ltd
Setanta Communications
Sheehan and Company
SIAC Construction Ltd
Sonopress
Spectrum Print Management
Statoil Ireland Ltd
StorageTek Ireland Ltd
Storefit Shopfitters Ltd
The Quays Pub
Today FM
Townlink Construction Ltd
Toytown Films
Treasury Holdings Ltd
Unilever Ireland
Vodafone Ireland Dundalk Call Centre
Wavin Ireland Ltd
Whelehan Group
Woodleigh Ventilation
XMI Ltd
Xxpert Technology
Young Advertising