

## About Focus Ireland

Focus Ireland is a housing and homeless charity working to prevent people becoming, remaining, or returning to homelessness through the provision of quality services, supported housing, research and advocacy. Founded in 1985 by Sr Stanislaus Kennedy, Focus Ireland believes that everyone has a right to a place they can call home which is safe, secure, affordable and appropriate to their needs.

### Our mission

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

### Our vision

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

#### Current directors

Sr Stanislaus Kennedy  
(Life President)  
Mr Gerry Danaher  
(Chairman)  
Ms Trudi Devereux  
(resigned July 2008)  
Dr Valerie Richardson  
Mr William K Nowlan  
Mr Paul Finnerty  
Ms Helen Kilroy  
Mr David Martin  
Mr Desmond Byrne,  
(resigned 26 Nov 2008)  
Ms Deirdre Connolly  
(appointed 28 May 2008)  
Ms Mary O'Shea  
(appointed 26 Nov 2008)  
Mr Paul Carroll  
(appointed 26 Nov 2008)

#### Trustees

Mr Dermot Hussey  
Mr Donal Nevin  
Sr Sheila Wall

#### Chief executive

Ms Joyce Loughnan

#### Company secretary

Ms Evelyn Fitzpatrick

#### Registered office

9-12 High Street  
Christchurch  
Dublin 8

#### Registered number

106149

#### Charitable status number

CHY 7220

#### Auditors

PricewaterhouseCoopers, Chartered  
Accountants and Registered Auditors

#### Solicitors

Arthur Cox  
Ferrys Solicitors  
McCann FitzGerald

#### Bankers

Bank of Ireland  
Allied Irish Banks  
permanent tsb  
Anglo Irish Bank Corporation  
Ulster Bank  
Bank of Scotland (Ireland)

#### Architects

Gerry Cahill  
CJ Falconer & Associates

## Financial review

	2008		2007	
	€m	%	€m	%
<b>Mix of income</b>				
Fundraising income	5.70	30%	6.15	33%
Grant income	11.62	62%	11.36	61%
Other including investment income and restaurant sales	0.58	3%	0.40	2%
Rental income	0.91	5%	0.77	4%
<b>Total income</b>	<b>18.81</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>18.68</b>	<b>100%</b>

	2008		2007	
	€m	%	€m	%
<b>Mix of expenditure</b>				
Direct charitable activities	16.73	88%	17.33	89%
Support costs	0.91	5%	0.94	5%
Fundraising and events costs	1.34	7%	1.13	6%
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>18.98</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19.40</b>	<b>100%</b>

To review Focus Ireland's full financial report for 2008 please go to [www.focusireland.ie](http://www.focusireland.ie) and download our Annual Report 2008.

## Fundraising

Your support helps prevent people from becoming homeless, provides support for thousands who are homeless and helps provide a place to call home for hundreds who experienced homelessness.

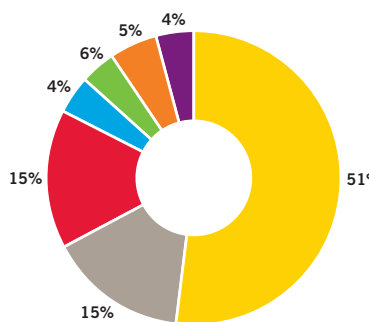
Without the generous support of thousands of people, companies, clubs, societies and organizations, Focus Ireland would not be able to provide the support, prevention and housing services to all the men, women, young people and children who used our services in 2008.

Whilst we all faced our own individual difficulties during the year, our staff and customers were heartened by the

continuing generosity of companies, individuals, community groups and event participants who dug deep and worked harder than ever to raise funds for us, achieving a fantastic total of over €5.7 million. These much needed funds helped us to sustain our services, and to continue to deliver the support and help required, to help make homelessness a thing of the past for thousands of people.

### Fundraising by activity

- Individual supporters
- Company supporters
- Focus Ireland event fundraising
- Community and schools fundraising
- Trusts and foundations
- Bequests
- Individual supporters tax reclaims



Sincere thanks to all companies, funders, donors and people who took part in Focus Ireland fundraising events in 2008 to help support our vital work to combat and prevent homelessness.

To find out more about Focus Ireland's fundraising work please go to [www.focusireland.ie](http://www.focusireland.ie) and download our Annual Report 2008.

To protect our customers identity we have not used his real picture on the front page of this summary.

#### Focus Ireland, Head Office

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Christchurch  
Dublin 8

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[www.focusireland.ie](http://www.focusireland.ie)



# Focus Ireland Annual Report 2008 Summary



Everyone has a right to a place  
they can call home.





## A challenging year

Joyce Loughnan  
Chief Executive

Focus Ireland worked with over 5,500 people nationally in 2008 in what proved to be a challenging year. The impact of the recession saw additional hardships for many of the most marginalised in our society at the very time funding for support services became tighter.

We still achieved a great deal during the year and delivered 102 homes for families and single people around the country. This means we now provide a place to call home for 650 households in Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, Cork and Sligo.

Highlights of 2008 included a new development of 21 homes in Dungarvan and 16 at Hennessy's Road in Waterford city to help meet housing needs in the area.

Meanwhile our Tenancy Support and Settlement services supported a further 175 households to settle into new homes and communities during 2008. This work has now supported 619 households (families, children and single people) to settle since 2005.

Much of our work is geared to directly prevent people from becoming homeless so the continuation of these services, linked with better access to housing, is key to support the most vulnerable families and single people through hard times.

This good work is dependant on funding and the continued great support we receive from individual donors and businesses. This support is vital to our work and we work under one of our key values of stewardship to ensure provision of high quality services that are also cost effective.

Our track record of meeting every challenge head on was key in 2008 as funding approvals for new developments ground to a halt by the end of 2007. We responded by developing an innovative Housing Finance Initiative which aims to provide homes through securing use of available public and private finance. This programme was presented to Government as an effective way to provide homes despite

current budgetary restraints. Advancing this initiative will be a core part of our work in 2009.

The Government announced its plans to provide 300 homes under a leasing scheme for long-term use by people who are homeless. This is a step in the right direction but a lot more could be done given the current housing market.

In 2008 we stepped up our work to advocate on behalf of people who are homeless and we worked hard to influence policy on key issues relating to homelessness. This included launching our campaign to secure a legal right to aftercare and also intensive lobbying work to influence the Homeless Strategy and Housing Bill. We also work continuously through a range of media to raise awareness of the many complex issues surrounding homelessness to keep the issue on the national agenda. We will continue this work.

Much of the news has been bleak recently but it's vital we are not overwhelmed by problems. We must always look to advance solutions. It is vital to remember that we can end homelessness. The problems are not insurmountable.

They can be overcome with increased commitment and greater political will to prioritise the issue of providing homes for those in need and also by taking action to protect families and single people at risk of losing their home. The opportunity is there to achieve this. We must grasp it now to help protect not only this generation, but also the ones to come.

  
Joyce Loughnan - Chief Executive



## Without your home, your life develops differently

Sr Stanislaus Kennedy  
Life President

Ireland is going through difficult times as a society as we are sadly aware. Many people are coming to Focus Ireland seeking support as the impact of the recession is being felt in homes across Ireland. More people are in need of housing and at risk of becoming homeless.

As you will read in our Annual Report, we are working hard to play our part to prevent people from becoming homeless and to support others to move out of homelessness. Our vision is that everyone has a right to a place called home. To make this vision a reality we must block pathways into homelessness.

There are many different reasons people become homeless including: poverty; poor housing; family breakdown; a childhood in State care, addiction to drugs/alcohol and mental health problems.

These are the recurring issues in the personal histories of the people we work with each day. These problems must be tackled through targeted services, including aftercare, access to education, community mental health services and drug-treatment facilities. Focus Ireland has a long history of working to support people to overcome these issues and provides ongoing support as required.

However, this work is being seriously undermined unless people have a place they can call home. People remain homeless due to the lack of suitable housing.

Homelessness and a lack of housing are two sides of the same coin.

As a nation we cannot stand over the excuse that we cannot afford to protect the most vulnerable. How can over €7 billion be secured to bail out the banks yet there are still not enough homes for people?

It is shocking to see the shortfall in delivery of social housing during the boom years. This is a result of a conscious decision by successive governments to, in effect, cut back on provision of social housing while the level of need was rising each year.

This was a conscious decision by the State to transfer responsibility for meeting social needs, namely housing, to the private sector and massively subsidising them in this role.

This strategy has now backfired spectacularly. In such a climate, it would be disastrous if the Government were to further cut levels of funding. Any continuing failure to deliver on social housing targets makes a mockery of the Government's commitment to meet its own target to end long-term homelessness by 2010.

We must all work together to ensure that those who have benefited least during the boom years do not also pay the price during a downturn.

If this investment in people is not made, it will lay the foundation for an even more unequal society. This will result in more families and single people becoming homeless in the coming years with fewer routes out of the situation.



Sr Stanislaus Kennedy - Life President

## Advocacy, research and communication

Focus Ireland's vision is that everyone has a right to a place they can call home. Our Advocacy work advances our vision by developing an informed and more receptive political landscape through a range of communications, lobbying, research and policy work.

Focus Ireland works to raise understanding of the complex issues behind homelessness and housing need in Ireland, and to inform and influence the development of policy by carrying out evidence-based research to identify emerging trends in these areas. During 2008, Focus Ireland's advocacy work has become even more focused towards helping to drive forward the organisation's strategic aims and to advocate for our customers. An overview of this work follows.

### Driving policy through advocacy

Focus Ireland is always working hard to advance policy positions to help to tackle and prevent homelessness. We do this through our research, policy and communications work. A vital starting

point is demonstrating the effectiveness a particular policy and communicating this across key audiences such as the Oireachtas, statutory, other voluntary bodies and the public.

### Aftercare policy

In 2008 this work saw us renew our call for a 'Statutory Right to Aftercare'. Focus Ireland research entitled 'Left On Their Own' found that within two years of leaving care over two-thirds of young people had experienced homelessness within the first two years of leaving State care. The provision of a statutory right to Aftercare would ensure that every young person leaving care would be able to avail of aftercare supports appropriate to their needs – and as they are required – as an integral part of their care plan.

To find out more about Focus Ireland's work please go to [www.focusireland.ie](http://www.focusireland.ie) and download our Annual Report 2008.

## Finance Director's report

2008 was a challenging year in a number of ways. The downturn in the economy proved to be much greater than projected at the end of 2007. This impacted on Statutory Grants, Fundraising Income, Housing development programme and the value of our Pension Fund. It was year four of a five year Strategy and our Business Plan had to be modified to take account of the changing economic circumstances.

Despite these challenges we maintained all our services to our customers. We finished the year with a €86k trading surplus, before allowing for a pension provision of €250k, which was €536k ahead of Budget. Due to tight management of our spend and great attention to projected cash flow we were able to survive without borrowing funds. We honoured commitments made to pay service increments and CPI adjustment agreed by Social Partnership.

- Statutory Grants were cut by €1.2m which was unexpected and posed huge challenges to us to continue to deliver all our services and standard of delivery to our customers.
- As always, we are grateful to our donors for their continued generosity despite the recession. We raised €5.7m which was a 7% decrease on 2007. Fundraising has become even more challenging in these difficult economic times and our Cost to income ratios increased marginally.

continued overleaf

## Focus Ireland services

Prevention · Support · Housing

Focus Ireland has worked hard to build on past experience to enhance our model of housing and homeless services to help ensure long-term homelessness will be eliminated.

In the 1980s Focus Ireland developed a model of Crisis, Transition and Settlement to move people through homelessness to a place they can call home.

In our 2005–2010 strategy housing and prevention were prioritised as areas of activity instrumental in moving the focus of service provision from homelessness to home. We have further refined our model to the key areas of: prevention, support and housing. Our experience has shown that this is the most effective way to

work towards our aim of eliminating homelessness. Our work is focused on preventing people becoming, remaining or returning to homelessness. To achieve this Focus Ireland's services are tailored to meet the individual needs of young people, adults, families and children who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.