



Annual Report 2017

Focus On Families

Introduction

The housing crisis in Ireland is forcing more and more people into homelessness. By the close of 2017, there were over 8,500 people in emergency accommodation, including over 3,000 children in 1,400 families. This represents an increase of over 400% in the number of children and families who are homeless, since full records were first available in mid-2014.

A characteristic of homelessness in Ireland is that it is increasingly a crisis of families. Over two-thirds of homeless people in Ireland are women and children.

In this context the demands on Good Shepherd Cork continue to grow. We worked with over 800 women and children across our services in 2017. As the only shelter in Cork that can accommodate children, Edel House has been full to capacity throughout the year. Referrals to our Support and Advocacy service increased by over 40% from 2016 and we have seen a huge rise in the number of families staying in bed and breakfast accommodation in Cork City and County. Our B&B support workers engaged with 67 families, with over 150 children, over the year.



Towards the end of the year we were invited, by Cork City Council, to establish Cork's first 'family hub' for families who have been staying in B&Bs and other private emergency accommodation. This will open in 2018.

Not only are more people coming to us for support, those that engage with us stay for longer and longer periods of time as women and families on low incomes are squeezed out of housing options and the chance of finding safe, secure long-term housing at an affordable price.

Embarking on a new strategic plan in 2017, we recognised the need to offer a wider range of practical, emotional and therapeutic supports to the women, children and families who are staying for long periods in our services, so as to best equip them to move on to secure, long-term tenancies.

To that end over 2017 we have expanded our work with children in Edel House and those staying in B&B accommodation to offer a wider range of individual and group activities and supports, extended the one to one counselling we can offer to our services users, invested further in building our capacity to deliver the Wellness Recovery Action Plan programme, upgraded facilities at Riverview, our centre for teenage girls who are out of home, and, through our education service, Bruac, secured funding for an education and personal development project for residents in Edel House.

The funding environment for charities in Ireland continues to be challenging but we continue to benefit from, and are very much appreciative of, the generosity of our individual, corporate and philanthropic donors and supporters. We are also very grateful to our core funders – Tusla, HSE, Cork City Council and Cork Education and Training Board for their confidence in, and commitment to, our work with vulnerable women, children and families across Cork.

We could not do the important work we do without the skills, commitment and compassion of our staff, volunteers and Board members. We would like to thank everyone involved for their generosity of time and spirit in being part of Good Shepherd Cork. Finally, we would like to thank the women, children and families who use our services for the inspiration they give us and for the dignity and determination they show as they work with us, through periods of hardship or homelessness, before moving on to more settled lives.

Miriam De Barra, Chairperson,
Sister Jane Murphy, Mission Leader,
Allison Aldred, CEO.

Mission, Vision and Values

Over 2017 we made some modest adjustments to our mission and vision statement:

- to refer to our aim to support service users to become more empowered;
- to reflect our growing work with families becoming homeless, including fathers and older sons;
- to reflect our commitment to human rights.

Mission: *Through trusting relationships we support women and children who are vulnerable to homelessness to live more empowered, fulfilled and self-sufficient lives.*

We work with women, children and families to achieve our mission.

Vision: *Our vision is a society where every woman and child enjoy a secure, safe and dignified home in a supportive environment, respectful of their rights.*

Our **Values** remain unchanged:

Welcome: *We welcome women of all backgrounds, ages and stages in life in a non-judgemental way.*

Respect & Dignity: *We acknowledge and respect the intrinsic dignity and value of each individual person, and promise trust, confidentiality and integrity in our conduct.*

Ambition: *We are ambitious for the women and children we serve: we aim for lasting positive change.*

Social Justice: *We believe in social justice and equality: we look to address the reasons for homelessness.*

Leadership: *We look to lead and to give example in shaping a better future.*

Collaboration & Partnership: *We are open and responsive to the women and children we serve and to working with other agencies and organisations.*

Accountability: *We work to clear standards; we are transparent and answerable to our stakeholders; we are outcomes-focused and learn from each experience to improve our service.*

Edel House: Emergency Shelter for Women and Children

Edel House provided accommodation and a range of practical, emotional and therapeutic supports to 234 women and children over 2017.

Sadly, we had to turn away a further 214 women and 138 children because Edel House was full. Indeed 2017 was the fifth year running in which the shelter was at full capacity throughout the year.

In early 2017, An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission for the re-development of Edel House. Over 2017 we worked closely with our architects to develop detailed plans for the re-development and by the close of the year we had made a detailed (stage 3) submission to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for funding for the re-development. (Negotiations on this are on-going.)

We know that periods of homelessness can have profoundly negative long-term effects on children's well-being and development. Over 2017 we have continued to develop a programme of supports, in collaboration with Tusla's Springboard project, to children in Edel House. This includes a hugely popular weekly Youth Club, one-to-one and small group work, and targeted intensive support for the most vulnerable children.

In April 2017 we were invited to showcase this work at the national launch of Tusla's Creative Community Alternatives approach which aims to develop and deliver evidence-based alternatives to residential care for children.

Funding from Healthy Ireland allowed us to extend the scope of the Youth Club and provide more physical activity and healthy eating opportunities for children in Edel House and to reach children staying in Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

Through the generous support of our donors we were able to offer all, suitably-aged children in Edel House the chance to take part in summer camps over the summer holidays.



We have also been able to offer women staying in Edel House fresh, healthy foods through Food Cloud, which supports charities and other non-profits with surplus food donated by farms, food manufacturers and distributors, and through the Department of Social Protection's FEAD programme, which provides food and essential non-food items to people on low incomes.

In 2017 we were able to support the emotional and psychological needs of residents in Edel House with the provision of nearly 300 sessions of one to one counselling with a highly experienced Psychologist.

Towards the end of 2017 we received funding from Cork City Council, for a second B&B Outreach Worker to support the families in B&B accommodation. This has enabled us to meet the needs of 67 families (including over 150 children) over the year. We were also successful in securing funding for a new 'Making Home Making Change' project which will allow us to recruit an Education Coordinator to be based in Edel House to support residents to engage in individual and small group learning opportunities.

We continued to invest in the staff team in Edel House, providing a range of training inputs including First Aid, Solution Focused Brief Therapy and STORM (Skills Training in Risk Management) which supports staff to conduct risk assessments and safety planning with people who may be at risk of self-harm or suicide.



Riverview: Accommodation for teenage girls who are out of home

Riverview offers accommodation to teenage girls, 15 to 19 years, who are out of home. Each girl has her own room and there is a communal kitchen and living room. Riverview works in partnership with Tusla's Children's Residential Service.

During 2017 we had 16 admissions, 14 for girls under 18 years and two over-18 placements.

Each young person coming in to Riverview is allocated her own Key Worker, from within the staff team, who she meets with frequently one to one. Riverview, like other Good Shepherd Cork services, uses a solution-focused model of care which puts the service-user at the centre and recognises that she is the expert regarding her own life.

Each young person arrives at Riverview with her own individual problems and challenges – and hopes and aspirations.

Through interaction with her Key Worker, we aim to help each resident to identify the future she wants for herself and to recognise the skills and strengths she has, and what she might need to do differently, to get there. This approach puts great value on the young person's strengths and capacities and what she has achieved to-date.

Key Workers work with the young person, her family and other professionals, advocating for the young person and highlighting the successful aspects of the placement, ensuring that problems and challenges are not magnified.



Our approach has resulted in many of the residents successfully attending full time education and finding stability and support from staff and from other residents. This period of stability allows each young person the time and space to focus on her individual skills and talents and plan a more productive future. Many are able to move back to their families. We support others to find suitable, safe long-term accommodation arrangements.

Over 2017 we had the opportunity to remodel and redecorate the residents' kitchen and living room. Staff and residents planned the design and with the sponsorship of ESB, Cork City Council and the support of a number of local businesses, the work started in September. The kitchen and living room were completely redesigned and updated. Residents are delighted with the results as they now have a comfortable, colourful, teen-friendly living space.



Riverview staff, in conjunction with the social work team at Liberty Street House, also facilitate a weekly social group for young women at risk of homelessness. Over 2017 we ran a variety of activities designed around the individual needs of the young women taking part. This included a make-up course, jewelry-making and social activities including bowling and cooking. The group allows young people to develop a social network and try activities that they may use to enhance their wellbeing going forward.

The lack of suitable longer-term housing options for residents to move on to and the difficulty accessing over-stretched, adolescent mental health services continued to be challenges over 2017.

Bruac: Education and Development Service

Our education and development project at Bruac provides accessible and relevant education and personal development opportunities to teenage girls and young women who are out of school.

Over the 2017/18 academic year we worked substantively with a total of 24 highly vulnerable women and girls.

15 learners were formally enrolled in our QQI level 3 course (Employability Skills). Of these, nine completed the qualification, achieving a total of five major awards and 40 minor awards, and two successfully moved on to further education and employment during the year.

Alongside the formal (QQI) qualification, we emphasise basic literacy and numeracy and teach practical life skills including horticulture, cooking and household budgeting. We work with learners on issues such as sexual health. We support learners to connect with other services, including addiction and mental health services where relevant.

It is very difficult for the most vulnerable learners to maintain a commitment to their educational and personal development. Feelings of helplessness, demotivation and loss of morale often lead to disengagement and alienation. Mainstream education, with a fixed, standardised approach to programmes, timetables, discipline, assignments and examination often cannot meet learners 'where they are at'.

Bruac provides a safe, caring space where learners are accepted for who they are and 'where they are at'. At the core of our innovative approach is a highly flexible, person centred approach with personalised objectives and goals. Staff offer a highly supportive, caring environment.



We place high value on small outcomes. Even the most challenging individual can register small successes and know they are capable of achieving more. In the initial weeks at Bruac, even attending regularly can be a huge achievement for some learners. Staff recognise and value every achievement, helping learners to recognise and value their own achievements. By valuing their own modest achievements learners can build confidence to try for bigger goals, over time learning to value themselves.

During 2017 we commissioned a Psychologist to help us articulate and document the model of change we use at Bruac. She concluded that Bruac:

‘provides a crucial and unique learning environment for girls and women who require a level of educational and personal support that goes beyond any formal curriculum and without which many of whom would not remain in education of any kind.....The model and approach being used in Bruac reflects much of the current research and writings about inclusion and what constitutes best practice’.

Bruac Model of Change

Key elements of the Bruac model of change are:

- Context of a trusting relationship: - “Relationship is key”
- Tailoring to accommodate each learner - “It’s about making it work – you have to understand the girls”
- Inclusion and acceptance – “there is an acceptance of the fact that people are different but similar”.
- Attainable goals – “what can you do today?”
- Structure and routine – carefully planned daily, weekly, annual timetable

The model is informed by theory and practice of:

- Trauma Informed Practice
- Ecological Systems approach
- Actively inclusive
- Person-centred
- Creates an affective and therapeutic learning environment
- Developmental repair
- Reflective and learning organisation.

Support and Advocacy

The support offered by our Support and Advocacy service is tailored to the particular needs of each woman and child presenting to us.

The work is client-led, empowering women to play an active role in their own progress. The team offer a flexible approach and all support is delivered in a confidential and non-judgemental manner.

The service offers a range of different types of support:

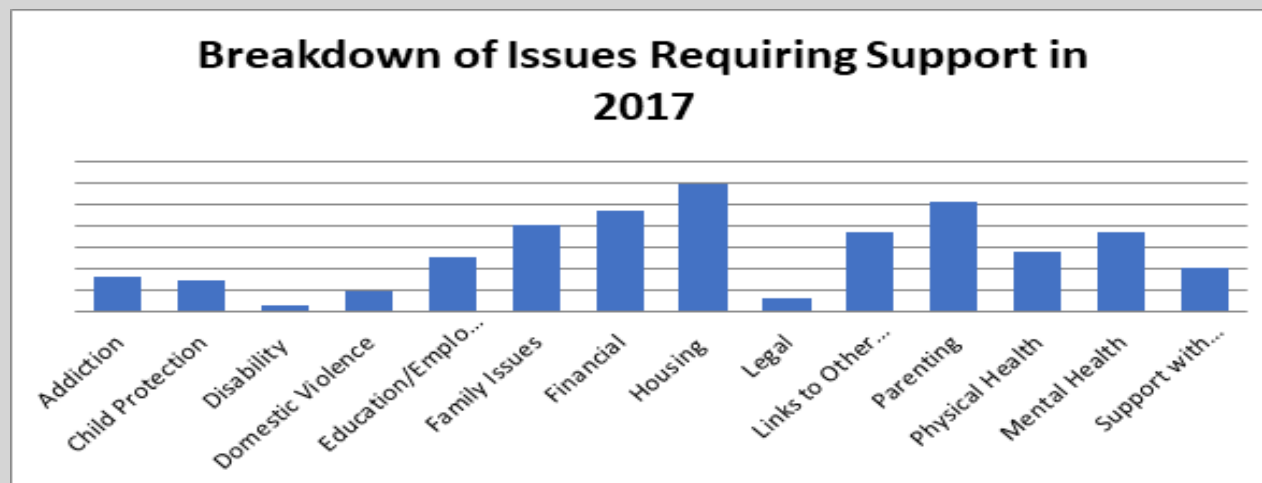
- One to one support meetings in client's homes or other venues in the community
- Accompaniment to meetings with other professionals, e.g. social work and local authority housing departments, health appointments, legal appointments and court
- Advocacy and referrals to other agencies
- Befriending
- Courses on Being Well, Cooking, Healthy Eating, Sexual Health and WRAP
- Social activities to combat social isolation and loneliness, including coffee mornings, DVD nights, summer day trips and an annual Christmas party for families.

The Support and Advocacy team received 86 new referrals in 2017. This represented a 43% increase on the number of referrals in 2016, putting considerable demands on the team of six (full and part-time) staff.

The number of contacts the team had with service users increased significantly in 2017 compared to the previous year. In 2017 we had a total of 9,430 phone contacts, representing a 46% increase on 2016. Contact with other relevant professionals also increased by 39%, compared to the previous year.

The chart to the right shows the main issues that service users sought help with over 2017. Access to affordable housing remains the most frequent issue.

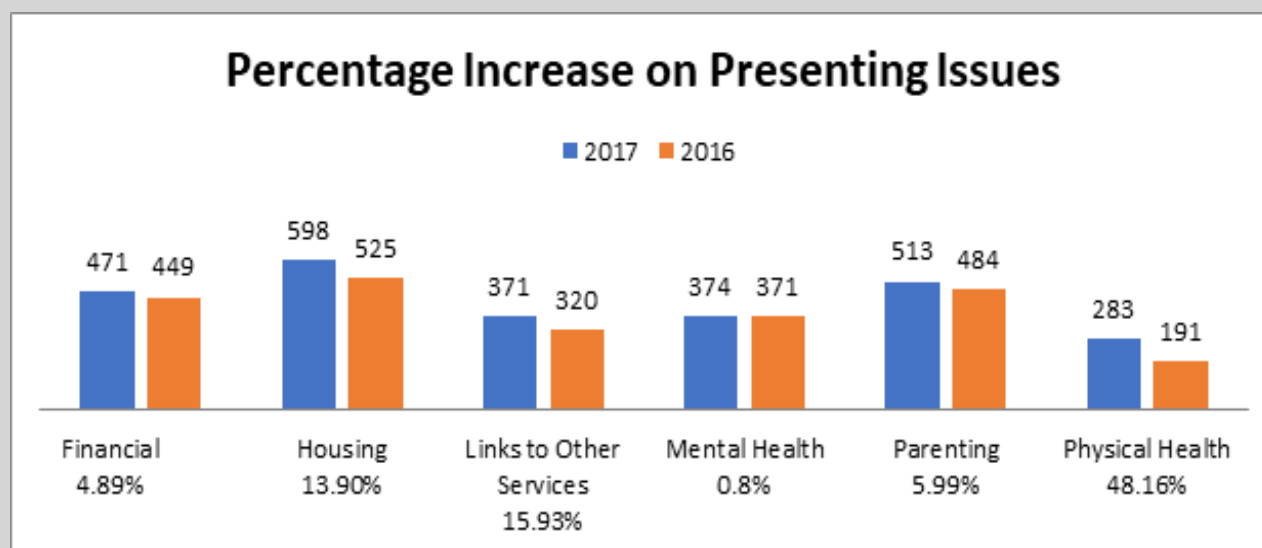
The deepening housing crisis is making it almost impossible for women accessing the service to find accommodation and secure long-term tenancies, resulting in an increasing number of service users being subjected to multiple experiences of homelessness.



Homelessness continues to affect an ever-increasing number of women and children. However, those affected require support across a broad range of issues. Lack of affordable and accessible housing and cuts to other services have placed a higher demand on our Support & Advocacy Service. The below chart highlights the significant increase in presenting issues, between 2016 and 2017, that our service users have required support with.

The Support and Advocacy team continued to expand the social group activities during 2017. We focused particularly on increasing the activities on offer during the evenings as social isolation and loneliness continue to be an issue for a large number of our clients. Among the activities on offer were dinner nights and DVD evenings.

We continued to offer WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) to our clients. WRAP training helps participants to identify personal resources which they can use to develop their own personal Action Plans that can help in dealing with challenging situations. This year we also invested in training two of our staff to become certified WRAP trainers. This means that we can now train all our staff and a number of service users to be able to deliver WRAP programmes, allowing us to reach out to an even greater number of women accessing our services to support them with mental health issues.



Baile An Aoire: Supported Housing

The sheltered housing complex at Baile An Aoire offers long-term supported housing to a number of vulnerable older women, 13 over 2017, most of whom grew up in the care of the Good Shepherd Sisters and a number of younger women who have moved to Baile from Edel House or other homelessness services.

Over 2017, Good Shepherd Cork and the Good Shepherd Sisters worked together to finalise a transfer of ownership of the project to Good Shepherd Cork. We expect this to be completed in 2018.

Managed under the project are two apartments leased to Good Shepherd by Cork City Council. We are able to offer families who are homeless the chance of this stable accommodation for several months as we work with them on identifying suitable long-term housing options.



Governance Arrangements

Good Shepherd Cork is an independent, Cork-based charity, registered with the Charity Regulator with a voluntary Board of Directors. We operate services in five different locations in Cork City to support women and children across Cork City and County who are homeless or vulnerable to homelessness.

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance. The Board of Directors is made up of eight highly experienced non-executive members, drawn from diverse backgrounds and the support of a committed Company Secretary. The Board meets at least nine times a year. There are clear distinctions between the roles of the Board and the executive management team.

All our Directors are volunteers and do not receive any remuneration or expenses for their work with Good Shepherd Cork. The Directors who served on the Board over 2017 were:

Ms. Mriam De Barra (Chairperson), Mr. Garvan Corkery, Ms. Ann Marie O'Sullivan, Ms. Brigitte Minter, Sister Ethna McDermott, Mr. Paddy Caffrey, Mr. Brendan Lenihan, Mr. Jim Mulcahy, Sister Jane Murphy served as Company Secretary.

We are compliant with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) and the ICTR Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising and are on the journey to compliance with the Governance Code. We plan to achieve full compliance with the Governance Code over 2018, giving us the 'triple lock' for charities of transparent accounting, ethical fundraising principles and good governance.

Our annual accounts are audited by Moore Stephens and are published on our website. We work to best practice service-level agreements with our major statutory funders.

Registered Office: Bruac, The Priory, redemption Road, Cork T23 C579

Good Shepherd Cork Ltd, Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in Ireland. Company number 82114.

Charity Number CHY 13399.

Registered with the Charity Regulator: CRA Number 20041618.

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Income and Expenditure

Income	Grants (and other)	Fundraising	Rent	Total
Tusla	1,209,460			1,209,460
HSE	447,222			447,222
Cork City Council	272,974			272,974
CETB	118,353			118,353
YPSFS grant	46,636			46,636
Rent			41,560	41,560
Donations and other fundraising		99,236		99,236
Sundry income and other grants	58,117			58,117
Amortisation	11,068			11,068
Investments	1,753			
Total	2,165,583	99,236	41,560	2,306,379

Expenditure	
Staff costs	1,933,669
Depreciation and impairment	56,769
Insurance	30,196
Light and heat	35,213
Repairs and maintenance	88,704
Office expenses	6,031
Crafts	128
Recreation	9,823
Printing, post, stationery	16,102
Telephone	9,970
Motor and travel	15,091
Under 18 expenses	251
Client care	13,817
Household expenses	22,395
Sundry expenses	9,577
Course materials	12,002
Support costs	43,311
Total	2,303,049

Our full audited accounts for 2017 and for previous years are available on our website: www.goodshepherdcork.ie