



*First a Home,
then Hope*

Annual Report 2015



MEETING THE NEEDS OF A DEEPENING CRISIS

Caring for homeless Women and Children in Cork

Income

	Fundraising	Grants	Rent	Total
Tusla		1,104,053		1,104,053
Rents			70,436	70,436
Donations	88,185			88,185
HSE		491,936		491,936
City Council		201,749		201,749
Amortisation		10,996		10,996
CETB		117,730		117,730
Ypfsf		43,332		43,332
Sundry Income		24,912		24,912
Total	88,185	1,994,708	70,436	2,153,329
Percentages	4.10%	92.63%	3.27%	100%

Expenditure

Payroll	1,786,673
Insurance	21,260
Light & Heat	31,355
Repairs & Maintenance	90,903
Office Expenses	7,969
Recreational Support	29,229
Print, Postage, Stationery	15,012
Phone	8,672
Motor & Travel	13,542
Support Costs	69,572
Household Expenses	36,257
Sundry Expenses	13,945
Depreciation	56,767
Total	2,181,156

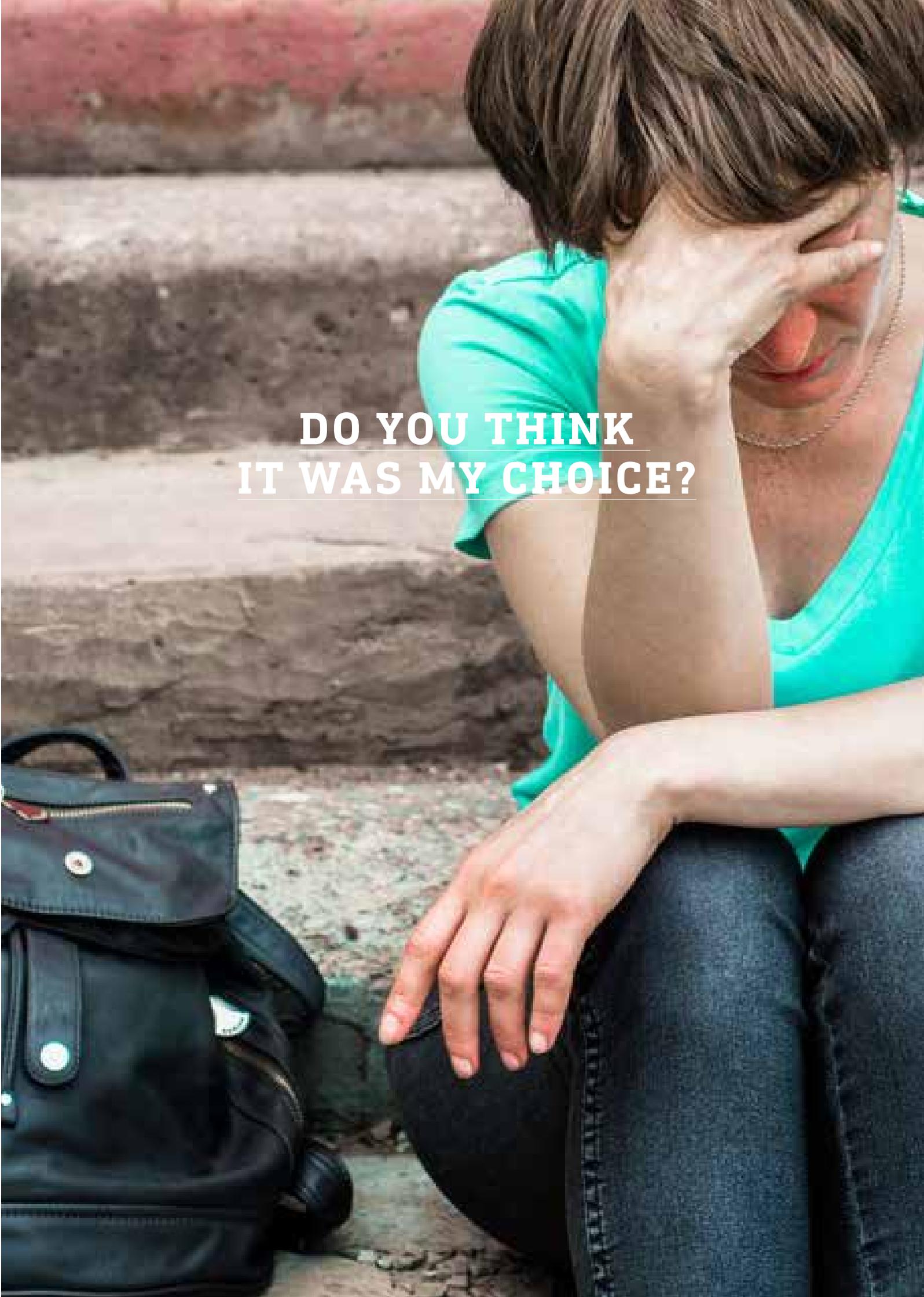
*These figures are a summary version of the information contained in our audited accounts.

Contents

Introduction	6
Highlights 2015	10
Strategic Plan 2015- 2017	14
Edel House	18
Bruac - Education & Development	20
Riverview - Residential Care for Teenage Girls	22
Support & Advocacy	26
Baile an Aoire - Supported Housing	36
Notable Activities	38

A photograph of a person lying on their side on a grey, textured pavement. The person is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and blue denim jeans with a large tear on the right knee. Their hands are clasped together near their head. To the left of the person is a brown, textured bag with a red interior lining. The background is a light-colored, textured wall. The text "WATCHING IS NOT AN OPTION" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font, underlined, in the center of the image.

WATCHING IS NOT AN
OPTION



**DO YOU THINK
IT WAS MY CHOICE?**

Introduction

MEETING THE NEEDS OF A DEEPENING CRISIS

For those who found themselves homeless or at risk of homelessness during 2015, unfortunately, the situation was extremely challenging and getting access to any type of accommodation was very difficult. Our emergency shelter was full to capacity every night which resulted in a significant number of families and individuals having to resort to hotels, bed & breakfasts and hostels on occasions.

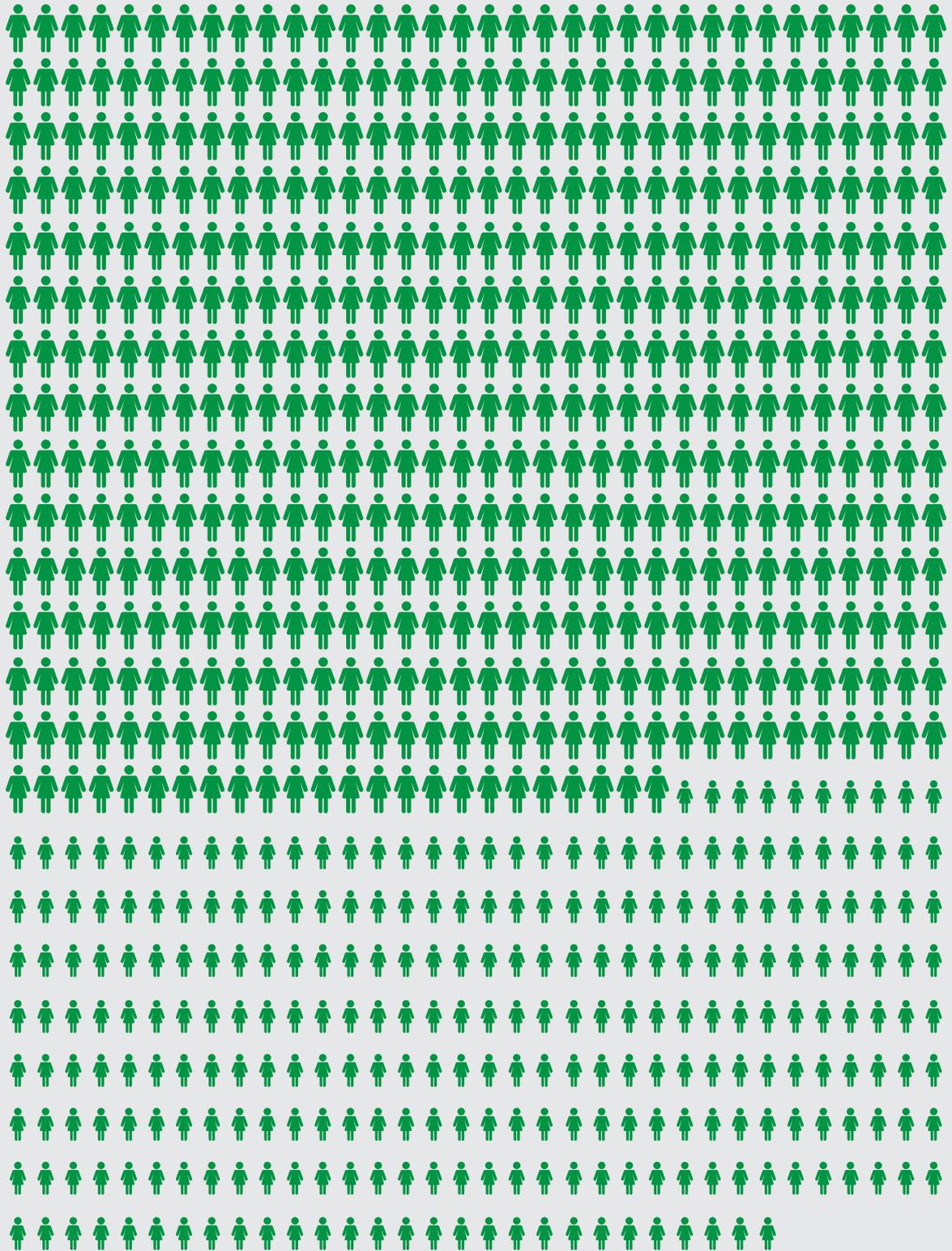
We supported a total of 776 women and children during the year and had to turn away 375 women and 281 children from our emergency shelter primarily because we did not have beds available. For those who had a bed in Edel House the length of stay was much longer than in previous years and 19% of residents stayed longer than three months. Six families and seven single women stayed more than six months which is too long for anyone to be forced to stay in emergency accommodation.

Our work to redevelop Edel House continued and we will lodge our planning application early in 2016. This much needed improvement to the accommodation in Edel House is long overdue and we look forward to the day when we can offer decent living conditions.

The current housing crisis began in 2013, and the availability of housing continued to deteriorate during 2015. It is likely that 2016 will not be much better because of the timescale involved in housing construction. In the last quarter of 2015 we were granted funding from Cork City Council to support the families who were living in hotels and bed & breakfast accommodation to ensure that they were not isolated and that their housing assessment and other social needs were met.

In the pages which follow you will find the details of the activities of the various sections of our service. Our Teenage Residential Service accommodated twenty-one teenage girls aged between 16 and 19 years of age. Twenty-nine women and girls attended our Education and Development Employability

We supported a total of 773 women and children during the year!



Introduction

Skills programme. Our Support and Advocacy service received eighty-nine new referrals and worked with a total of 368 women and children. Supported Housing at Baile an Aoire now house thirteen women who were homeless in a nurturing and caring environment.

The women and girls who we serve come from a background of social exclusion, loneliness and isolation and may have mental health, alcohol or drug addiction and learning difficulties may also be a concern. Low income and poverty is a significant contributing factor to their situation as well as the chaos that affected their lives and made them homeless. Meeting their needs is at the centre of our mission and staff and volunteers as always gave their full commitment in very difficult circumstances.

We continued to be part of a number of statutory and voluntary groups dedicated to helping those who have lost their home or are in danger of losing their home. Through active participation in these groups we contribute and collaborate across the city and county to fulfill our mission. We are members of the Cork Homeless Forum and Regional Homeless Forum. We participate in the Cork Youth out of Home Forum, Cork Homeless Network and Cork Social Housing Forum. We are an Approved Housing Body and members of The Irish Council for Social Housing.

Our main funders are Tusla, HSE, Cork City Council and Cork ETB and we thank them for their ongoing support. Our friends in The Combined Counties Association continue to do a fantastic job in organising our annual church gate collection and we are very grateful to them. We wish to thank all the other people who helped us financially and who donated much needed supplies to meet the increased needs of those who lost or were in danger of losing their home.

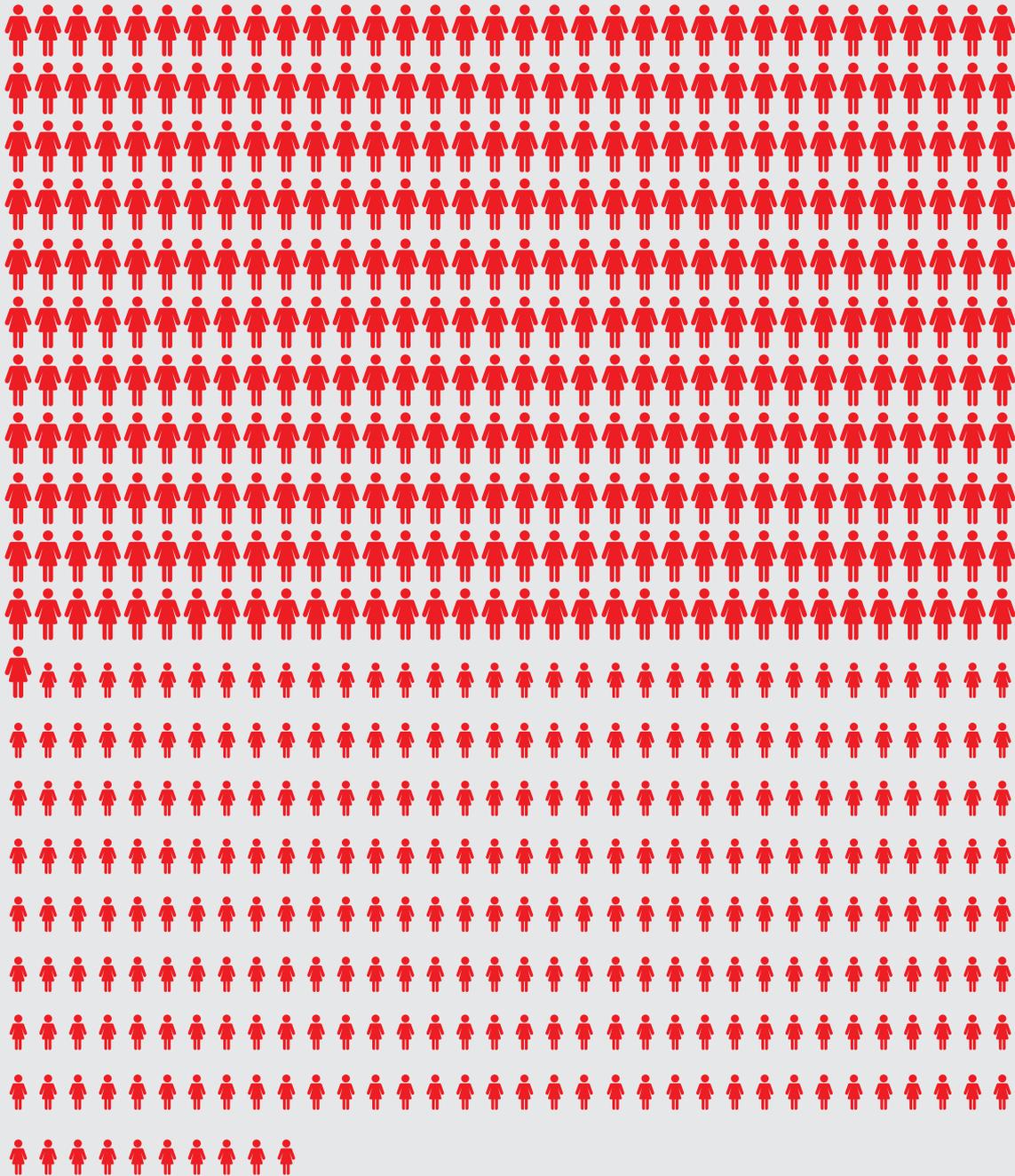
In conclusion we would like to thank our Directors, Managers, Staff and Volunteers for the wonderful dedication and commitment they have shown in what has been one of the most challenging years to date for our organisation. The resilience shown throughout the organisation in the face of a very difficult and challenging year is testament to the commitment and dedication in helping some of the most marginalised women and children in our city and county.

Sister Jane Murphy
Mission Leader

Miriam de Barra
*Chair of the Board
of Directors*

Tony O Riordan
Chief Executive

We had to turn away 375 women and 281 children from our emergency shelter primarily because we did not have beds available.



Highlights

»2015 is the third consecutive year of full occupancy in Edel House with some stays lasting over six months – the definition of long term homelessness. This is against a backdrop of increasing waiting lists, lack of housing, cuts to services and loneliness and isolation for women and children stuck in an ever deepening crisis.«



Edel House

2015 was the third consecutive year of virtually full occupancy for Edel House our Emergency Accommodation Centre.

- Edel House admitted two-hundred women and eighty-one children in 2015.
- Accommodation was at full capacity for the year. Six families and seven single women were accommodated for over six months in 2015. This is far longer than any individual should stay in an emergency facility and is a particularly long period of time for any child to have to live under these circumstances.
- Three hundred and seventy-five women and two hundred and eighty-one children were refused admission to Edel House in 2015; of those, three hundred women were refused due to emergency accommodation being full.

300

THREE HUNDRED WOMEN COULD NOT BE ACCOMMODATED AT EDEL HOUSE BECAUSE THERE WERE NO BEDS AVAILABLE.

In the last quarter of 2015, in conjunction with Cork City Council, we offered support to families and single women staying in B&Bs and hotels, while they were waiting for a unit to become available in Edel House.

This initiative was in response to the dramatic increase in the number of people who could not access Emergency Accommodation; an average of twenty were resident in B&Bs and hotels every night.

In 2015, the Volunteer Programme was further developed by staff to recruit, train, place and support volunteers. As a result, homework clubs, housing clinics, walking groups, bingo, coffee morning, cookery classes, and children's activities were provided by volunteers for the women and children in Edel House. These activities provide a much needed respite from the daily routine of emergency accommodation living. The recruitment of new volunteers is an ongoing process to help meet the needs of the deepening crisis in homelessness in Ireland.

FOR A CHILD WHO, IN A FAMILY UNIT, MAY HAVE TO SLEEP WITH UP TO FIVE SIBLINGS IN THE SAME SMALL ROOM, SIX MONTHS IS AN EXCEPTIONALLY LONG TIME TO SPEND IN EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION...

WOMEN AND
CHILDREN AWAILED
OF OUR SERVICES
IN 2015

776



500



276

ONGOING SUPPORT
AND ADVOCACY



189



179



368

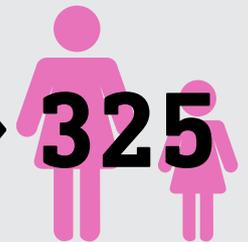
EDEL HOUSE EMERGENCY
ACCOMMODATION



228



97



325

EDUCATION &
DEVELOPMENT



49

LONG TERM
SUPPORTED HOUSING



13

RESIDENTIAL CARE
FOR TEENAGE GIRLS



21

» A 28% rise in housing support issues, a 38% increase in financial difficulties, a 33% increase in family issues and a 15% rise in mental health issues marked some of the effects of the homeless crisis in 2015' «



Bruac

Our Education & Development programme offers fresh educational opportunities to women who for a variety of reasons are unable to access mainstream education. Our approach is to place an equal emphasis on personal as well as educational development.

In 2015, twenty-nine women, ranging in ages from fifteen to thirty, participated in the Education & Development, Employability Skills programme. Four learners from Edel House participated on a full-time basis. Thirty-eight QQI component module (subject) certificates were awarded with Three Major Awards in Employability Skills. Eleven learners progressed to Further Education and/or employment.

Education & Development is now also an officially approved VTCT Centre (Vocational Training Charitable Trust). Of twenty who participated in the Nail Art Course, seventeen students received VTCT Nail Art Certification.

New developments include a personal development programme for trainees to improve and maintain positive mental health and the establishment of a horticultural module in Crop Production. Staff from our Education and Development centre continue to offer support in Edel House every Thursday evening through a variety of activities and classes.



Riverview

A total of twenty-one young people were accommodated at Riverview in 2015. Fourteen of these were under eighteen. The main challenges and difficulties which resulted is the girls being admitted to Riverview were family conflict, personal safety and life skills issues.

The two social clubs for girls which Riverview staff have developed organised a Sky Dive. They "encouraged" Sister Jane to take to the skies and to raise money to support the activities in these clubs. The event was a great success and you can read more about it further on in this report. Focus Groups, designed to involve users more in improving service delivery, were also initiated leading to the launching of a new Service Users Newsletter.



Hearth

Support & Advocacy help women and children who have been homeless or at risk of homelessness to live independent lives in their own home. Types of support offered include accompaniment to meetings, befriending, advocacy, and courses on Health, Being Well, WRAP, Literacy and Parenting.

Eighty-nine new referrals were received in 2015 by a relatively small team of only six workers. There was a significant increase across a number of key areas where support was needed during 2015; a 28% rise in housing support issues, a 38% increase in financial difficulties, a 33% increase in family issues and a 15% rise in mental health issues marked some of the effects of the homeless crisis in 2015.

The Support & Advocacy team continued to increase social group activities during 2015. Activities to combat loneliness and isolation included Social Dinner Nights, a Saturday Morning Breakfast Club and Saturday Afternoon Outings. An information morning also took place for all staff featuring three service user presentations as part of an initiative to increase service user involvement. The Children's Summer Scheme with many outings and activities took place over two weeks in July.



Baile an Aoire

Our houses in Baile an Aoire offer long-term security, support and care to single women who are in vulnerable situations or living with issues such as mental health or addiction difficulties and who otherwise may not be able to live independently. Thirteen new residents, referred by Good Shepherd Cork, have become part of the Supported Housing community and the integration of these and the existing residents was very successful.

In 2015 Legal formalities to transfer the site and houses of Supported Housing from the Good Shepherd Sisters to Good Shepherd Cork began with the approval of The Charities Regulatory Authority.

Strategic Plan 2015/2017

» FROM IDEAS INTO ACTION «

We continued to work on a large number of the goals we set in our current strategic plan. There are four major elements to this plan and progress was made in a number of areas under the four strategic objectives which we set.

Some areas of particular note are:

- ▶ New brand developed and a change to our company name to "Good Shepherd Cork" put in motion.
- ▶ Decision to have a full time fundraising executive and a part time communications executive recruited for the start of 2016.
- ▶ More focus on advocacy for the women and children we serve.
- ▶ Volunteer program enhanced.
- ▶ Edel House development progressing steadily.
- ▶ Baile an Aoire transfer approved by the Charity Regulator.
- ▶ Response to "Housing First" developed
- ▶ Service user involvement through focus and discussion groups.
- ▶ More in house social and other activities to combat isolation and loneliness.
- ▶ Shadowing sessions held throughout the service to ensure all staff had a full understanding of the "continuum of care" provided.
- ▶ Training on a number of topical areas such as challenging behaviour and resilience.

thank
you!

Thank You for supporting

Edel House
Caring for homeless
Women and Children
in Cork

**GOOD
SHEPHERD
CORK**

First a Home, then help

Strategic Plan 2015/2017

Our Board of Directors

The Directors who served on our Board during 2015 are listed below.



Ms Miriam DeBarra
(Chair)



Mr Tony O'Riordan
(CEO)



Mr Garvan Corkery



Sr. Jane Murphy



Ms Ann Marie
O'Sullivan



Ms Brigitte Mintern
(appointed 17/11/2015)
Company Secretary



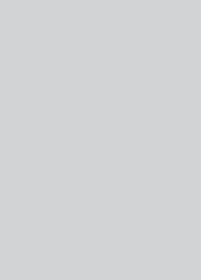
Sr Ethna McDermott



Mr Paddy Caffrey



Mr Brendan Lenihan
(appointed 21/01/2015)



Mr Jim Mulcahy

Mr Seamus
O'Connell (retired
15/06/2015)

All of our Directors are volunteers and do not receive any remuneration or expenses for devoting their time and talent to our service. We are extremely grateful to them for their commitment and generosity with their talents and time.

Board Attendance

There were ten Board meetings held in 2014 with an overall Directors attendance rate of 72%.

Employees

The total number of employees is 39. Payroll including pension costs accounted for 82% of total expenditure. The salary paid to our CEO remained unchanged at €77,000 with a 4% contribution to a pension fund.



Much work remains to be done but we have got off to a very good start. Sincere thanks to all our staff for the commitment and dedication to achieving the goals in our strategic plan.



EDEL HOUSE

» We appointed an Outreach Worker to combat the isolation of women and children resident in hotels and B&Bs «

Emergency Accommodation for Women and Children

Edel House operated to full capacity throughout an ever deepening housing and homeless crisis in 2015. Three hundred and twenty-five women and children were resident during the year

Staff put enormous effort and energy into contending with the constant flow of women and children seeking emergency accommodation. The new reality of homeless women and children living in bed and breakfast accommodation and significant waiting lists for accommodation in Edel House added to the pressures. A total of three hundred and seventy-five women and two hundred and eighty-one children were refused admission to Edel House in 2015. Three hundred of these were refused simply because there was no bed available.

Admissions & Occupancy Statistics

Bed nights available	16060
Bed nights used	15723
Occupancy	98%
Admissions Women	228
Admissions Children	97
Refusals Women	375
Refusals Children	281

*bed night = bed available for use

Six families and seven single women were accommodated for a period longer than six months. Living in emergency accommodation for six months or longer meets the governments official definition of long term homelessness. People who have lived under these conditions for such an extended period need extra support. For a child who, in a family unit, may have to sleep with up to five siblings in the same room, this is an exceptionally long period of time; far longer than any individual should have to stay in an emergency facility.

Length of Stay for People Discharged

Less than a week	69	33.5%
Less than a month	51	24.8%
Less than two months	30	14.6%
Less than 3 months	17	8.3%
Greater than 3 months	39	18.9%
Total	206	100.0%

SIX FAMILIES AND SEVEN SINGLE WOMEN WERE ACCOMMODATED FOR A PERIOD LONGER THAN SIX MONTHS.



The search for a home for many women and children begins well before they find themselves homeless. The shortage of accommodation can give rise to a sense of hopelessness particularly for those who cannot afford private rented accommodation. Some families are forced to move in with relatives or friends and overcrowding may become a problem bringing about strained relationships.

Emergency accommodation is not a solution to homelessness, however Edel house does provide a welcoming and supportive environment for the women and children who live there. Life in a Bed & Breakfast or Hotel, can often be lonely and isolated. The uncertainty of room availability each night, the disturbance of being moved from location to location is often stressful and unsettling for adults and particularly traumatic for children.

In late 2015, a dramatic increase in the number of people who could not access Emergency Accommodation meant that an average of twenty were resident in B&Bs and hotels every night. In conjunction with Cork City Council, we were able to offer support to these families and single women while they were waiting for a unit to become available in Edel House. An Outreach Worker was appointed to support these women and children and to ensure that they were supported socially and emotionally and that their housing applications and associated forms were all in order.

Our Child Care Worker continued to offer a full range of services to ensure that children's social, psychological and physical wellbeing was maintained while living in emergency accommodation. Practical day to day supports such as help scheduling homework were often needed by children. Care was also taken to ensure that they continued to be socially integrated. We operate very firmly by the principles of "Children First" and where necessary referrals were made to government agencies such as Tusla, if concerns arose. Staff generally are on the look out for signs of emotional trauma or distress in the women and children who reside with us.

In 2015, our Volunteer Programme was updated by staff in Edel House to recruit, train, place and support volunteers. As a result, homework clubs, housing clinics, walking groups, bingo, coffee mornings, cookery classes, and children's activities, all provided by volunteers for the women and children in Edel House all had very beneficial impacts. The recruitment of new volunteers is essential and is continually progressed in order to meet the ever increasing demands for support in this area.

BRUAC

EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

» Our approach is to place an equal emphasis on personal as well as educational development.«

Our Education & Development programme offers fresh educational opportunities to women and girls who for a variety of reasons are unable to access mainstream education. Our approach is to place an equal emphasis on personal as well as educational development.

A total of twenty-nine learners enrolled in our LTI formal QQI Employability Skills Award programme and twenty in our Nail Art Courses, in 2015.

We were approved as an official VTCT centre (Vocational Training Charitable Trust) last year, which allowed us to deliver the Nail Art Level 1 Certificate. There was a high standard of nail art produced by all of the women on the VTCT Nail Art Course

VTCT is a U.K. based, government-approved awarding organisation and one of the leading examining boards in the Beauty Industry. It is at the forefront of developing the vocational system of qualifications in the UK and operates in more than eight hundred centres worldwide.

VTCT is also a charitable organisation whose objective is to develop and provide high quality education and qualifications for the service industry.

There was a considerable amount of work involved in obtaining endorsement as a VTCT centre, which is testament to the work of the tutor and the high standard of nail art produced by all of the students participating in the programme. Women involved in the training are given an introduction to learning and can enhance their beauty skills further at The Cork Training Centre or enrol in some of the other modules taught at Good Shepherd Cork, Education & Development

Employability Skills Programme

The women and girls who attend our education and development programme often have had difficulties in the formal school setting. Our teaching staff work in a person centred way, concentrating on the needs of the individual and finding ways to engage beyond the traditional classroom approach. In 2015, a Personal Development Programme was established to complement the more academic work which proved a popular Friday activity. Women attending the centre also enjoyed participating in the Wellness Recovery Action Plan, which looks at ways of improving and maintaining positive mental health.





Individual learners issues identified during 2015

Adult Homeless Services	50%
Child protection order	25%
Known substance users	18.75%
Mental health services	31%
English as a second language	18.75%
Literacy (% Of 17 learners tested)	65%

In addition to a large number of Irish students a range of other ethnic groups and nationalities were welcomed at our Educational & Development centre in 2015. Members of the Travelling and Roma communities as well as girls from Poland, Portugal, Ethiopia, Bangladesh and Nigeria worked together in to achieve their QQI certificates in a wide range of subjects and to learn valuable social and life skills.

Another weekly activity enjoyed was horse riding, where learners benefitted from the therapeutic effects of working with animals.

Horticultural Module

A Horticulture module was established and folders will be submitted in the Crop Production module in next year's QQI submission. We have been able to use the fresh produce in our own kitchen. This has been a positive development in terms of physical and mental health.

An Open Day took place in Spring when the Deputy Lord Mayor, Cllr. Mick Nugent presented learners with certificates and had a tour of the centre. There was great excitement preparing for the day and everyone enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and celebration of successes.

RIVERVIEW

RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR TEENAGE GIRLS

» The main challenges and difficulties which resulted in girls being admitted to Riverview were family conflict, personal safety and life skills issues. «

Staff at Riverview work to meet the complex needs of homeless teenage girls by understanding and unravelling the issues which brought them into residential care in the first place, and then, on a one to one basis, planning a way forward to meet the challenges they face.

Of the total of twenty-one young people accommodated during the year, fourteen were under 18 years of age and the other seven between 18 and 19.

The ultimate goal is to help girls achieve greater resilience and wellbeing through life skills, social and emotional supports to equip them for stable independent living, or if possible, reunite them with their families.

The issues facing the residents of Riverview and those receiving long term support and advocacy ranged from mental health problems, addiction issues, financial difficulties and the need for regular psychological and emotional support.



The "Being Well" WRAP workshop, which took place in January of 2015, developed a number of wellness tools to help promote positive mental health. A First Aid course was also completed by some service users in April.

The launch of a Service Users Newsletter took place as a result of Focus Group initiatives whereby the views of service users are actively sought in order to provide opportunities for input and involvement in Good Shepherd Cork service delivery.

This awareness programme for secondary schools offers insight into how people become homeless and tackles assumptions that young people may have about homelessness. The project goes from strength to strength with six visits to different schools in 2015.

Challenges facing girls who were supported at Residential Care in 2015

**NON-ENGAGEMENT
IN SCHOOL/DAY
PROGRAMMES**

**ANXIETY,
STRESS AND
MENTAL HEALTH**

**SEPARATED FROM
FAMILY DUE TO
LACK OF HOUSING**

SELF-HARMING

**DRUG AND
ALCOHOL ISSUES**



ACTIVITIES IN 2015



Training:	WRAP Training completed First Aid Training Completed
School Presentation Visits:	Six school visits to various schools
Afternoon Tea and Launch of Newsletter:	Service User Newsletter launched in Riverview on 27th April
Residents Focus Group:	Focus Group held with Riverview Residents – 18th May
Riverview Open Day:	Riverview Presentation to Services – 20th May
Courtmacsherry Ladies Club Presentation	Clubs went to Courtmacsherry and demonstrated Arts, Crafts and Cooking.
Christmas Fair Night Out:	Christmas Fair where members of our clubs displayed homemade Christmas crafts and Riverview hosted an open day to visitors. Also provided refreshments to those who attended.
Christmas Club Meal Out:	Staff members took the girls of the clubs out for a meal to celebrate Christmas



Throughout the year, staff engaged with Riverview Residents providing social activities including:

Beauty Nights – Hair and Nails

Trips to the cinema

Meals out

Cooking

SUPPORT & ADVOCACY - HEARTH

»Lack of affordable and accessible housing and cuts to other services have placed a higher demand on Support & Advocacy services.«

Lack of affordable and accessible housing and cuts to other services have placed a higher demand on Support & Advocacy services. The service offering of the Support & Advocacy Team is tailored to each woman and child presenting to the service. Activities and initiatives are service user led, empowering women to play an active role in their progress. The team offer a flexible approach and all support is delivered in a confidential and non-judgemental manner.

Types of support offered

- One to one support meetings in women'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
- One to one support meetings in clients 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
- Courses on Being Well, Cooking, Healthy Eating, Literacy, Parenting, Sexual Health and WRAP





ACTIVITIES TO COMBAT SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS. SOME OF THE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OFFERED DURING 2015 INCLUDED:

SATURDAY
MORNING
BREAKFAST CLUB

SOCIAL COFFEE
MORNINGS

SUMMER DAY
TRIPS FOR SINGLE
WOMEN

SUMMER SCHEME
FOR CHILDREN

TRIPS TO THE
CINEMA AND CORK
OPERA HOUSE

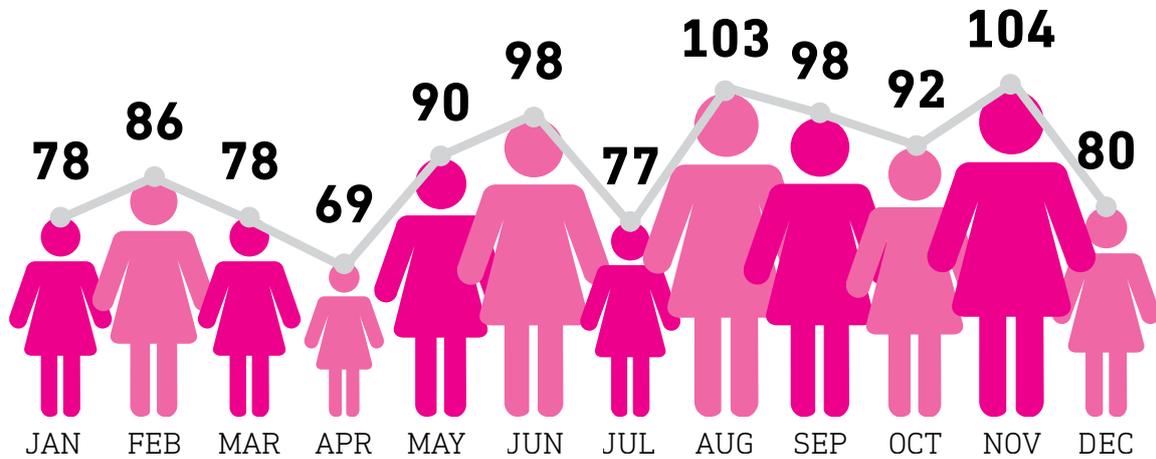
MORNING
WALKING GROUP

WEEKEND
OUTINGS

AFTERNOON
SUPPER CLUB

CHRISTMAS
PARTY

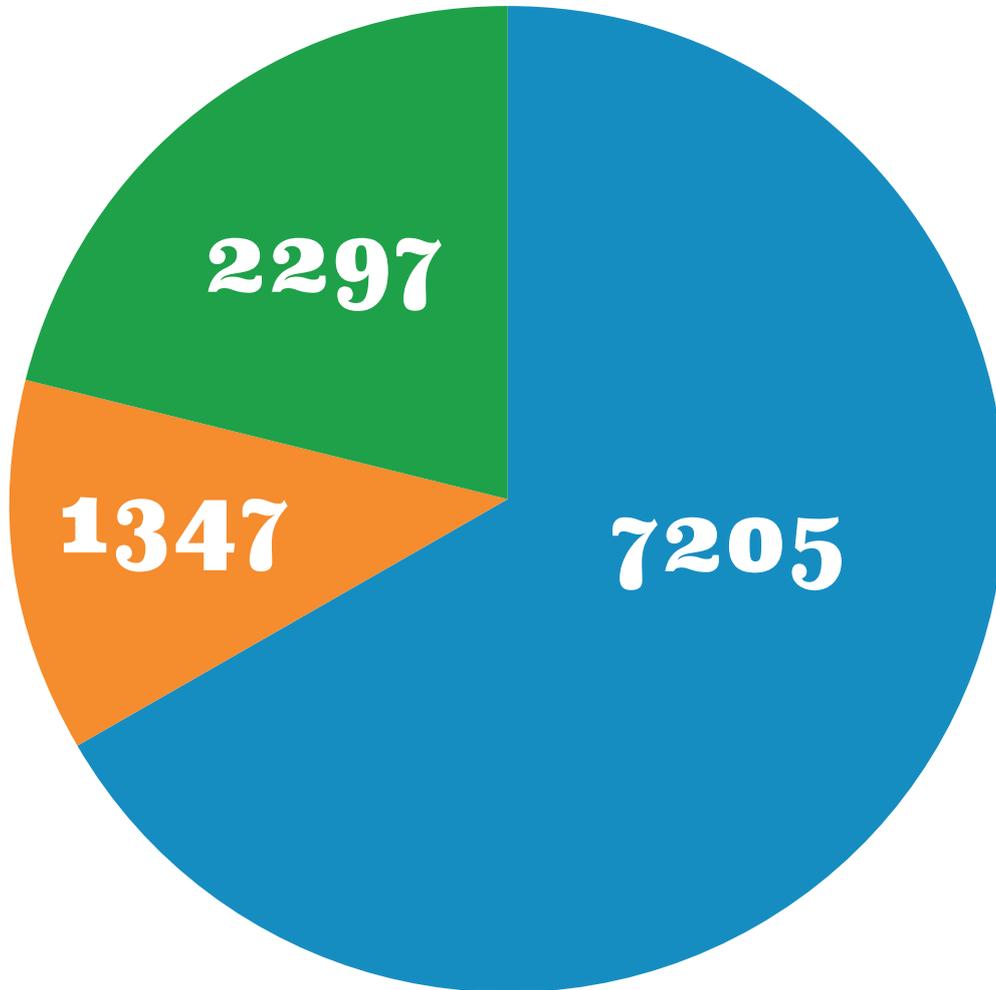
Number of Clients Supported Each Month (2015)



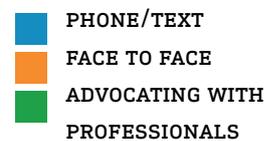
The Support & Advocacy team received 89 new referrals in 2015. Even though the Service comprises a small team of 6 (including part time workers), the above chart illustrates the high number of clients the service supported during 2015. In total we supported 189 adults and 179 children during 2015.



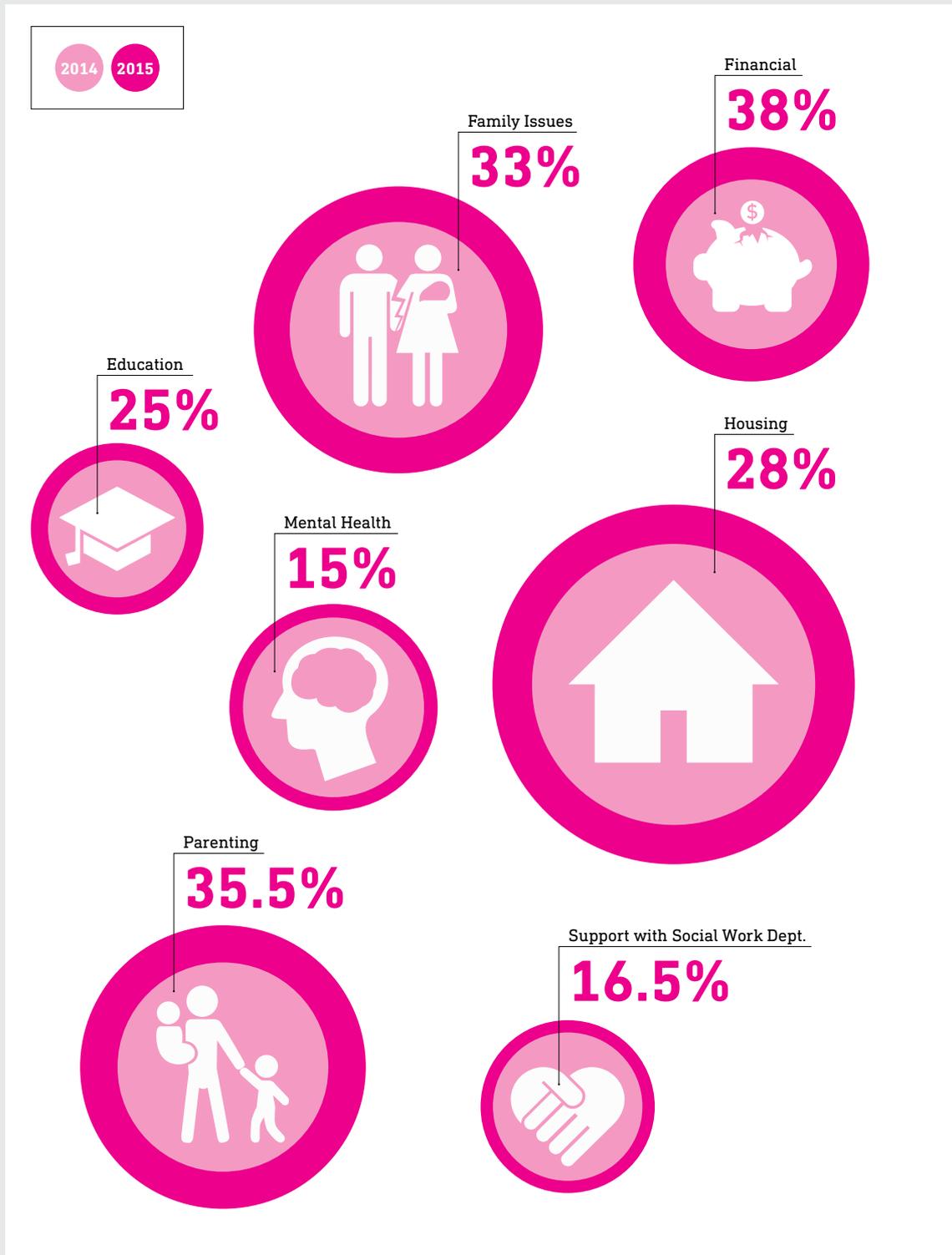
Number of Clients Supported Each Month (2015)



The number of contacts the Support & Advocacy team had with clients increased significantly in 2015 compared to the previous year. In 2015 there were a total of 7205 phone and text contacts with clients which represented a 14% increase on the 2014 phone contacts. Contact with other relevant professionals also increased by 10.5% compared to the previous year figures.



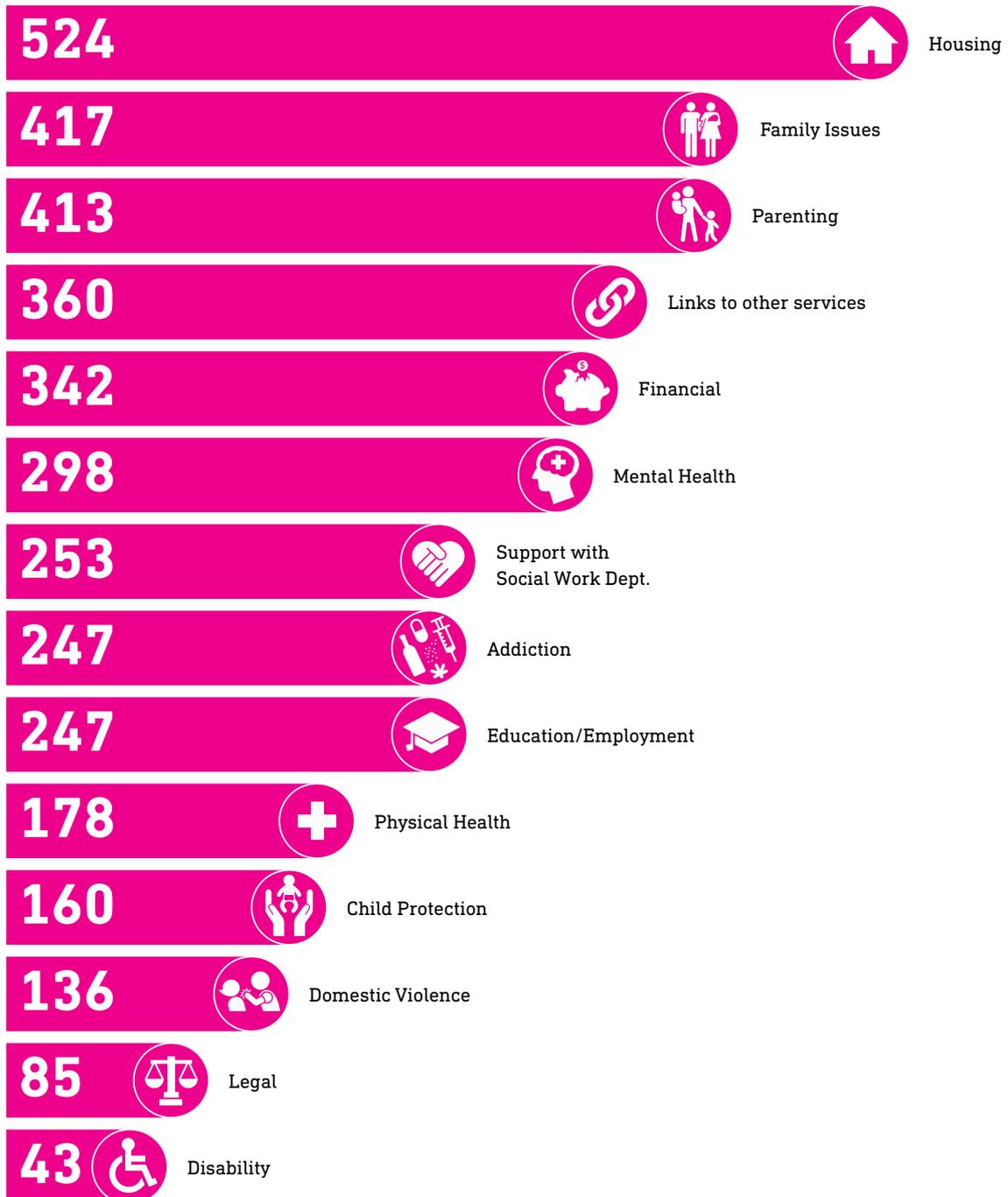
A breakdown of each issue and the number of service users requiring support in 2015

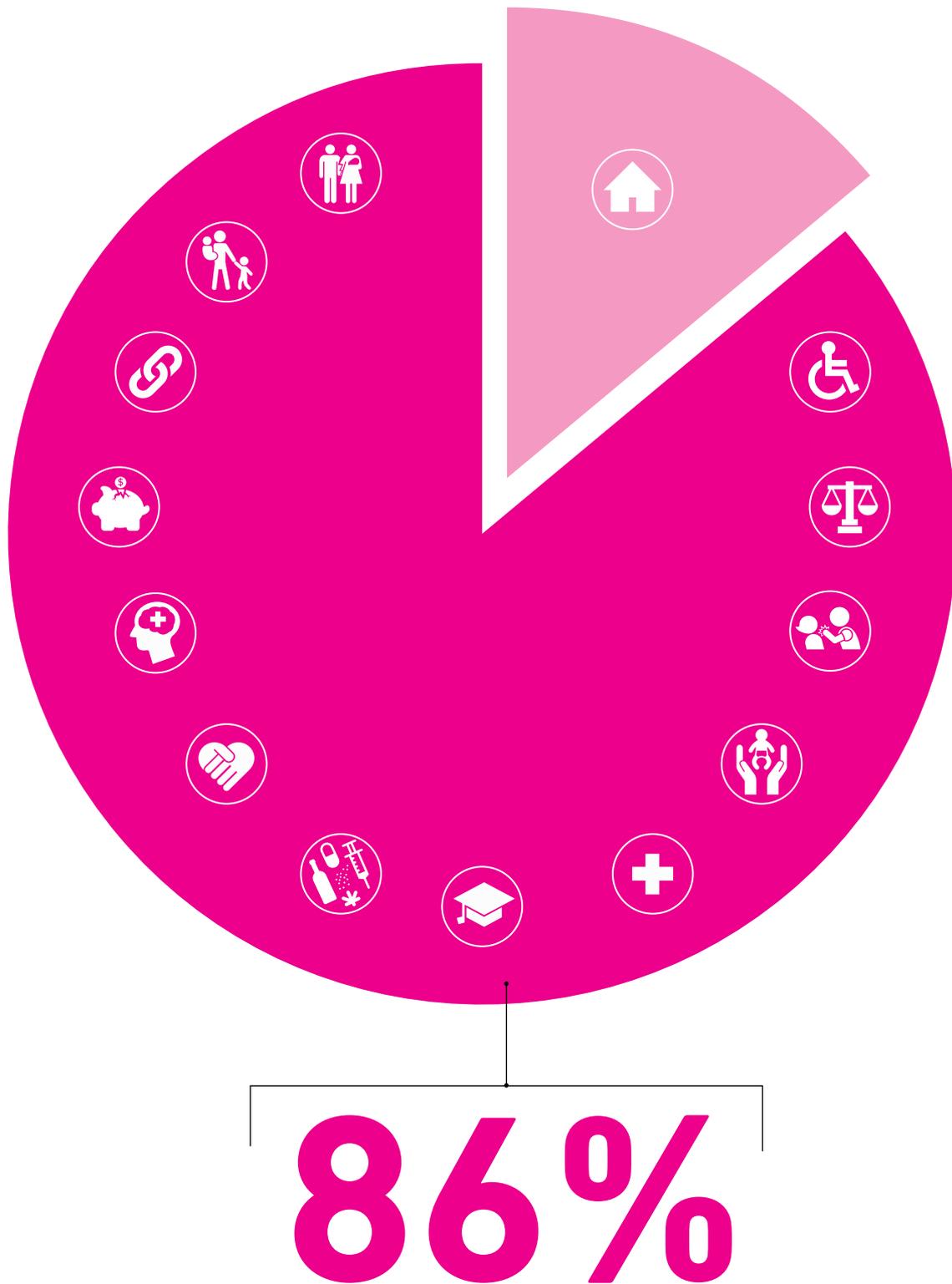


The above graphic highlights the significant increase across a number of key areas that required support during the year.

Although support was required across a broad range of issues, lack of affordable and accessible housing and cuts to other social and statutory services has placed a higher demand on Support & Advocacy services. Five hundred and twenty-four interventions were needed in relation to housing issues in 2015, making it the number one issue requiring support for last year.

A breakdown of each issue and the number of service users requiring support in 2015





of the interventions made were to assist women facing issues IN ADDITION to the immediate priority of housing.



2015 New Developments

The Support & Advocacy Team increased the social group activities on offer during 2015, in particular during the evenings and weekends, as social isolation and loneliness continue to be an issue for a large number of women and children. On offer were Social Nights where staff and service users cooked dinner together, a Saturday Morning Breakfast Club and Saturday Afternoon Outings, such as cinema trips and lunches out.

WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) continued to be offered to service users in 2015. WRAP training helps participants to identify personal resources which can be used to develop Action Plans that can help in dealing with challenging situations. The pilot group that the Support & Advocacy Team ran at the end of 2014 was so successful that participants asked for follow up sessions whereby people could check in and review their progress. This demonstrates the significance of WRAP as an additional resource, as mental health continues to be one of the biggest issues affecting service users.

Increased Service User Involvement was one of the aims of our Strategic Plan. With this in mind, an information morning for staff and volunteers from all the different teams was held within Good Shepherd Cork. Three service users spoke and gave presentations highlighting their stories and experiences of our support. The event was a tremendous success, not only in giving users a voice, but also in providing feedback on Support & Advocacy services which will prove invaluable to future planning and development.

The Summer Scheme presents a unique opportunity for children, who would not otherwise get a summer holiday away from home, to participate in a variety of activities and trips.

The scheme took place over two weeks in July. Each week was planned and co-ordinated by staff to ensure a variety of both indoor and outdoor activities that were appropriate for the different age categories. The first week catered for children in the 5 – 9 age range, the second in the 10 – 12 age group.

There was great interest from both children and parents with twenty-two children attending in total. All participants received breakfast, lunch and snacks on each day.



Children's Summer Scheme

Sports
Activities

Cinema

Cork Bus
Tour

Arts &
Crafts

Fota
Wildlife

Bowling

Fitzgeralds
Park trip

Cork City
Gaol

Quazar

Board
Games

SuperMacs

Garryvoe
Beach

BAILE AN AOIRE SUPPORTED HOUSING

Good Shepherd Cork, Supported Housing provides long-term residential accommodation for vulnerable single women, who may need “low level” support to maintain a tenancy and enjoy the benefits of independent living as fully as possible. The service is continuously evolving to support each resident’s individual needs, choices, and decisions, in a way that ensures the best quality of life.

2015 was a year of ongoing development for Supported Housing. The official transfer of the “Baile an Aoire” site and houses from Good Shepherd Sisters to Good Shepherd Cork commenced. As part of the overall development, empty houses were refurbished and new tenants took up residence. Thirteen new residents, referred primarily by Good Shepherd Cork, have become part of the Supported Housing community and the integration of these and the existing residents was very successful .





Supported Housing-New Initiatives

Following the success of initiatives taken in 2014, even more activities were organised in 2015. These activities were undertaken with the enthusiastic support and involvement of all the staff and included the following;

- Coffee Morning
- Day trip to Crosshaven
- Cork City Bus Tour
- Day trip to Killarney
- Social Evening and Summer BBQ
- Picnic to Ardmore
- Christmas Party
- Knitting Club
- Family Involvement
- Birthday Parties
- Volunteers. The Baking Class
- WRAP – Wellness, Response, Action Plan; two staff trained in this. WRAP is used to promote mental health wellness among residents
- Social Evening/Bingo Night
- DVD Night
- Library — available for residents to borrow books or DVDs

Service Objectives

1. To create a holistic environment, which provides an integrated approach to meet the needs of individual residents.
2. To treat all residents with dignity and respect.
3. To facilitate and encourage contact between each resident and her family and friends.
4. To promote best practice at all times to meet the needs of the vulnerable elderly.
5. To provide programmes for both health care and recreation.
6. To encourage hobbies and interests on the part of each resident.
7. To encourage involvement in the wider community.
8. To organise social outings for individuals and groups of residents.
9. To maintain contact with residents who have moved to services, such as nursing homes, that provide higher levels of care.
10. To optimise and continue the use of all facilities and houses in the Supported Housing complex, in particular to ensure full occupancy.

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES

Daredevil Fundraising Skydive

There was great excitement when Sr Jane Murphy (Mission Leader and Secretary to the Board) and cookery Tutor B'Anne Farrell agreed to undertake a Skydive to raise funds for the two clubs which organise activities for the girls and young women who are using our services or have used our services in the past.

A great amount of planning went into organisation of this daredevil challenge. After the necessary paperwork was completed and all preliminary medical checks were in order a date was set in May at Skydive Ireland, located just outside Kilkenny.

Sister Jane really entered into the spirit of the occasion by dressing in full leathers and travelling on the back of a Honda Goldwing driven by Brendan Dunne.

Although, disappointingly for the two adventurers (and their busload of supporters) their skydive had to be rescheduled twice due to bad weather conditions. They did eventually



Sr Jane and B'Anne with supporters before the journey to Kilkenny for the Skydive

get to rise to the occasion, however, at the end of August when at 4.30 in the afternoon the doors of their small plane opened and, despite a feeling of initial terror, as described by Sr Jane, they launched themselves into a never-to-be-forgotten freefall.

Asked how she felt when her feet touched Earth again, she mused, *"It was a wonderful experience"* described Sr Jane. *"You are attached to an instructor who has done about eleven sky dives that day alone, so you feel you are in very good hands!"*

Sincere thanks to all those who donated, the skydive raised a worthy €6,000.



**»FUNNILY, THE SENSATION
WHEN I LANDED WAS THAT
OF WALKING ON AIR!«**

Notable Activities

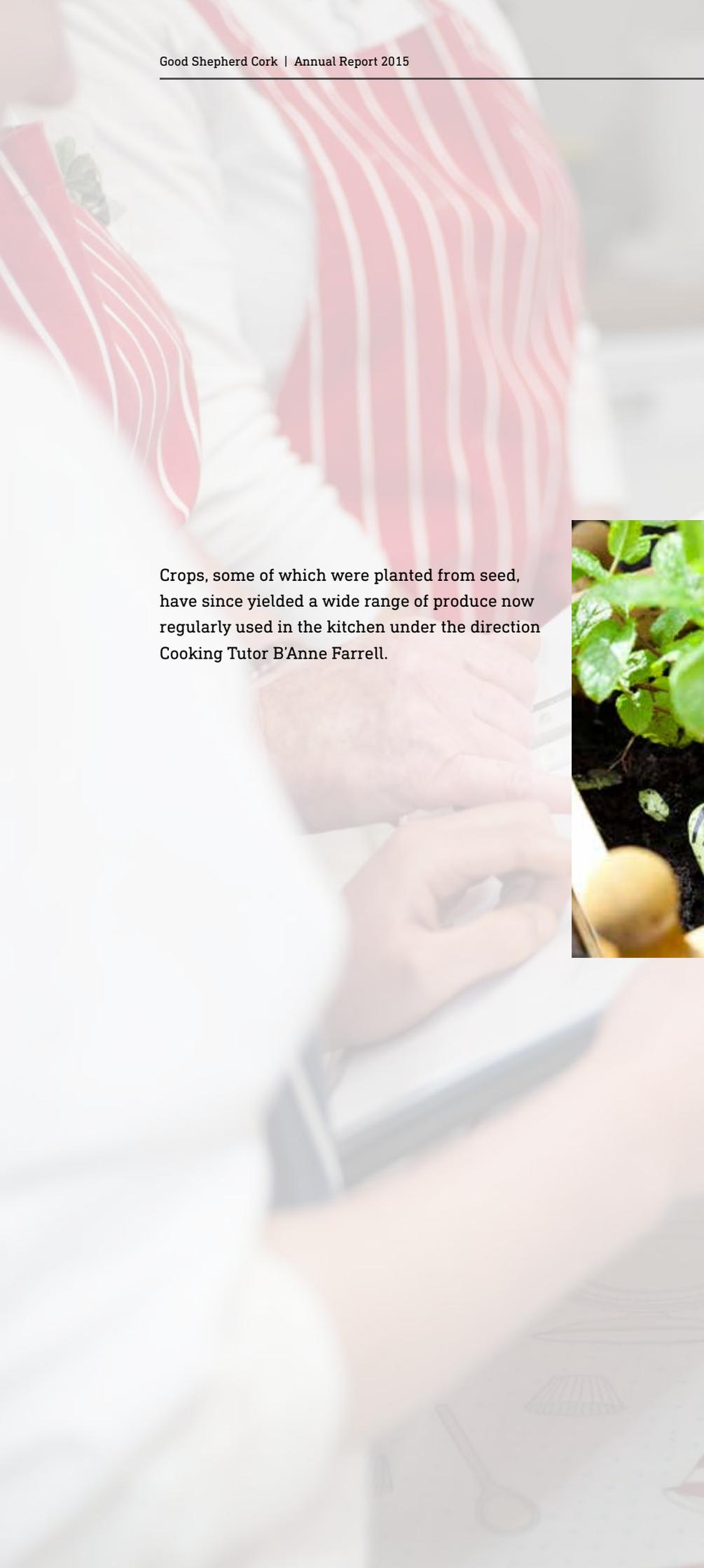


Official Garden Opening at Bruac our Education and Development centre

Agriculture Minister Simon Coveney officially launched our new Garden on 23rd March of 2015 coinciding with Cork's 12th Lifelong Learning Festival. The event was well attended by past and present learners, and women from Support & Advocacy service who planted a new orchard around the grounds as part of the initiative. Led by Mary Wallace, Horticultural Tutor, this exciting new project provided an invaluable experience for our trainees. With funding from Grow It Yourself International, Cork City Council, and Cork ETB, and help from Churchfield Community Trust to prepare the garden this initiative has proved to be a great success with all of the learners.



Minister Simon Coveney was clearly impressed with the garden, which was in full bloom on the day and tweeted as follows:



Crops, some of which were planted from seed, have since yielded a wide range of produce now regularly used in the kitchen under the direction of Cooking Tutor B'Anne Farrell.



MISSION

Through trusting relationships, we help women and children who are vulnerable to homelessness to live more fulfilled and self-sufficient lives.

VISION

Our vision is a society where every woman and child enjoys a secure, safe and dignified home in a supportive environment.

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.

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.

Leadership

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

Social Justice

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

Collaboration & Partnership

We are open and responsive to the women and children we serve and to working with other agencies and organisations.

Heritage

Founded in Cork more than 40 years ago by Sr. Colette Hickey, a Good Shepherd Sister, we draw on a heritage of nearly 400 years of seeing and helping women and children who have been left behind, taking our name from the Good Shepherd of the Gospels.

T: 021 439 1188 | F: 021 427 4160 | E: info@goodshepherdcork.ie | Web: www.goodshepherdcork.ie
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Registered Office:
Bruac Eile, Redemption Road, Cork T23 C579.
Board of Directors:
Chair: Miriam De Barra; Brendan Lenihan; Ann-Marie O'Sullivan; Brigitte Mintern; Paddy Caffrey; Jim Mulcahy;
Sr. Jane Murphy; Garvan Corkery; Sr. Ethna McDermott