

SIMON
COMMUNITY
NORTHERN
IRELAND

ANNUAL REVIEW
2006/07

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT



Lindsay Conway OBE
Chairman
Simon Community
Northern Ireland

The voices of those who are homeless are seldom heard or listened to. Yet for me, this year it has been more important than ever, to listen to what those who experience homelessness have to say about their lives. During the year the Semple Review into Affordable Housing was published. As part of this review Simon Community NI service users had the opportunity to express their thoughts about their future housing options. While feedback was challenging it came as no surprise that of the thirty people who took part in this consultation, only one person thought that they would ever own a home. The recommendations from the Semple Review are therefore very welcome particularly the re-commitment to the value and worth of social housing within the spectrum of housing provision. It is essential for homeless people that the new Assembly supports this commitment through the provision of adequate resources.

We in Simon Community NI also appreciate that listening to those who are homeless and how we respond to their needs is as equally important for us. During the year much progress was made on the development of a strategy on service user involvement, we have called this initiative "Sussed". One of key objectives is to set up a service user forum. As Chairperson I look forward to the forum playing a productive and active role in the development of the organisation. I see 'Sussed' as a reaffirmation to placing homeless people at the centre of the "Community". Placing homeless people at the centre of what we do has also been evident in how we continue to reach out to those with complex problems. For example the Saintfield Road hostel staff were presented with our annual Lowry Thompson team award for its work with people with addiction issues. The individual award went to a member of the human resources department demonstrating the important role that our "backroom" staff play in supporting homeless people.

Partnerships are as crucial as ever for our work to be carried out effectively. This year saw new relationships being formed such as the funding by Eastern Drug and Alcohol Community Team to support a nurse led harm reduction service for chronic drinkers in Bangor and Newtownards. Our partnerships with health and social services, grant making bodies and the business community are vital in assisting the Simon Community to address homelessness. In this regard the continued support from NIHE has been invaluable both from a financial and strategic perspective. We are aware that for the future resources will be tighter and hard choices about funding allocations may need to be made. Simon Community will be working with all our key partners to ensure that those who are most vulnerable continue to be supported no matter what lies ahead.

SERVICE PROVISION

2006/2007 has been another incredibly busy year for the Simon Community NI. This is highlighted in the range of services offered to families and single people throughout Northern Ireland:

- 11 Direct Access Hostels
- 9 move on facilities - accommodation aimed at individuals who are preparing to live independently within the community
- 3 Family Hostels
- 1 Foyer
- Accommodation for young people leaving care
- 3 Floating Support Services
- 1 Nurse led Harm Reduction Service
- 3 Vocational Training Programmes
- Homelessness Prevention and Awareness Raising Programmes

This resulted in:

160 adults and 132 children being accommodated in our family supported accommodation.

3,748 single people approaching Simon Community for accommodation with 1,067 households being admitted to temporary accommodation.

125 households being supported by our floating support services, which aims to support tenancies in the community.

219 people being offered training and support through the vocational employment programmes Engage, Forum Theatre and Outspoken.

22 new tenancies being created by our Rent Guarantee Scheme.

In addition during 2006-2007 Simon Community NI has continued to focus on making its services even more relevant to the needs of homeless people. The effort has included making our services accessible to the vast majority of those who present, as homeless.

SERVICE PROVISION

Occupancy for the year averaged at 90% across all accommodation units with eleven projects exceeding that level.

There was also a significant reduction in those asked to leave due to the use of alcohol and other substances. Particular focus has been placed on a training programme for managing alcohol issues within our accommodation units.

The nurse led harm reduction service has also been commissioned to support those with chronic alcohol problems in the South East Trust area. Funding has also been secured to establish a similar service in the Northern Health & Social Services Board area.

The Saintfield Road team were awarded the annual Lowry Thompson Award, for their approach to those with complex needs particularly substance users.

The Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework is the foundation upon which our services are assessed externally. With the introduction of new support planning and needs assessment tools, we are aiming to achieve level B Supporting People quality assessment framework compliance by March 2008. This contractual compliance is also underpinned by Simon Community's success in retaining its ISO 9001/2000 award in March 2007.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Conway Court Family Service in West Belfast was launched and went into full operation this year providing temporary accommodation for 24 families. Floating Support Services in South Down and Lisburn also went into full operation.

During 2006 Simon Community assumed responsibility for two former Novas projects in Ballymena and Twinbrook. Preliminary work focused on the consolidation of these services. In December 2006 NIHE revealed its strategic intention to withdraw homelessness service from the Dunclug estate in Ballymena. Simon Community have been working closely with NIHE to secure a solution to replace these services. This has resulted in a decision to decant the service for single homeless people to Mill House in Ballymena and establish a community-based service for homeless families.

Our Derry City service decanted from Bondshill to Clooney Terrace on the Waterside following full planning permission being awarded to refurbish the Bondshill site. Simon Community are working in partnership with Ulidia Housing Association on this project.

Our Clifton Park Avenue service for single homeless people similarly decanted to a property in Cliftonville Avenue. Work began with Open Door and Clanmill Housing Association to finalise plans for the refurbishment of the Clifton Park site. We continue to identify land to replace our service in Downpatrick.

A major restructuring occurred in the Fundraising Department with the responsibility of the function being assumed by Director of Finance and Facilities. Major achievements included the securing of a Big Lottery award to support our Safe Moves Homelessness Prevention Programme, 27 new volunteers recruited for our Charity Shops, and Direct Marketing income being in excess of £232,000. The Fundraising Team also ran successful events including the Annual May Ball, Belfast City Marathon, Lisburn Half Marathon and 'Christmas Greetings' Campaign where local companies support a press based awareness raising message.

Significant support was received from the business community. Particular thanks must go to our hard working Corporate Committee.

IMAGE DIARY



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1 Check It Out (Sexual Health Event)
Homelessness Awareness Week 2006
(Service Users with DJ Robert Ferguson)

2 Annual Golf Day – September 2006
(Corporate Four Ball)

3 Service User Event – Homelessness Awareness Week 2006
(Guest speakers with Service Users at Croke Park Stadium)

4 Annual Gala Ball (City Hall) – May 2006
(Hazel Bell Board Member, Gordon Atkinson Board member, Carol O'Bryan Chief Executive, Sue Ward Board member, Kevin Butler Board member)

5 Launch of Simon Community Billboard Campaign – 29th January 2007 (Lindsay Conway Chairman Simon Community, Joanne E Grant Chief Executive JC Decaux, Carol O'Bryan Chief Executive Simon Community, David Carroll Development Director Simon Community)

6 Annual Lowry Thompson Awards
(Staff from Saintfield Road Project receiving Award from Cllr. Brian Hanvey Deputy Mayor Castlereagh & Mrs. May Thompson)

7 NVQ Level 2 & 3 Awards – Certificate presentation for staff completing course. Back row left-right (Brian Clarke HR Manager, Diane Rogan Downpatrick, Assessor Phil Millar. Front row left-right (Barbara McDowell Barbican, Arlene Irvine Lisburn, Helen Hughes HR Director, Mary Fullerton Cliftonville Avenue)

8 Engage Celebration – 22nd May 2007
(Sir Reg Empey MLA, Minister for Employment and Learning with residents who participated in the programme)



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INFLUENCING PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

Homelessness Awareness Week 2006 included a major conference on Poverty and Housing, a service user event in Croke Park, Dublin and a joint event with the Family Planning Association on Sexual Health.

A position paper on Social Housing was produced in June 2006 which was timely in the light of Sir John Semple's Housing Affordability Review.

Simon Community launched its Billboard campaign "As Property Booms" supported by JC Decaux, which aimed to bring attention to the need for a significant increase in the social housing stock. This campaign received a huge degree of coverage.

The organisation worked with the Voluntary Housing Sector Policy Forum to campaign on policy issues, and continued its links with the political parties in the run up to devolution. Simon Community NI takes a lead in this group and much effort went into the campaign to prevent the transfer of the Supporting People fund to the new council structure under the Review of Public Administration.

The Education Unit continues its work in Greater Belfast and the North East region to raise awareness amongst school children, community groups and professionals on homelessness issues. As part of this work 87 workshops were delivered. The prize winner of the first Shirley Morrow Award for creative writing was Lauren Gourley, 6th former from Bloomfield Collegiate.

GOVERNANCE

2006/07 - 2nd year of Strategic Plan.

Simon Community NI is on target to achieve the Strategic Plan outcomes. In relation to legislation the organisation has managed the introduction of the workplace ban on smoking and review of the organisations data protection policy.

An internal conference was held on how Service Users can be more involved in the running of the organisation, this contributed to the draft strategy on Service User Involvement "Sussed".

Work continued with the Board of Directors on a comprehensive training plan through the Chairs and Chief Executive. The organisation has inputted to the work of CO3 (Chief Officer 3rd Sector) in relation to good governance.

Simon Community NI were awarded the Employer of Choice Award for its work on supporting staff achieve a work life balance. Training continues to be a priority with the Leadership Excellence Programme being launched in January 2006 and 22 staff working towards NVQ III awards. Significantly turnover of Support Staff was reduced by 25% on 2005/2006. A staff consultation council was also established.

ACCOUNTS

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2007

Statement of financial activities can also be found on our website - www.simoncommunity.org

	Notes	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2007 £	Total 2006 £
Incoming resources					
Incoming resources for generated funds					
Voluntary income					
- Grants	2	712,582	37,739	750,321	614,630
- Gifts and donations		-	337,947	337,947	333,295
- Legacies		-	68,226	68,226	52,235
Activities for generating funds					
- Charitable shop income		-	170,273	170,273	160,445
- Training suite and rental income		-	15,733	15,733	13,193
Investment income		-	59,930	59,930	57,126
Incoming resources from charitable activities					
Accommodation and support charges	3	22,673	5,577,063	5,599,736	4,335,251
Total incoming resources/income		735,255	6,266,911	7,002,166	5,566,175
Resources expended					
Cost of generating funds					
- Charitable shop expenses		-	119,627	119,627	123,581
- General fundraising & publicity costs		-	179,076	179,076	213,075
		-	298,703	298,703	336,656
Charitable activities					
- Influencing policy & practice		-	38,087	38,087	31,201
- Accommodation based support		179,310	5,135,822	5,315,132	4,344,649
- Community based support		20,560	414,438	434,998	276,064
- Education related services		407,029	-	407,029	409,762
Governance costs					
		-	56,515	56,515	56,728
Total resources expended/expenses	5	606,899	5,943,565	6,550,464	5,455,060
Net incoming resources before transfers	4	128,356	323,346	451,702	111,115
Gross transfers between funds	12/13	(58,903)	58,903	-	-
Net incoming resources after transfers/net income		69,453	382,249	451,702	111,115
Funds at 1 April 2006		137,804	1,925,078	2,062,882	1,951,767
Funds at 31 March 2007		207,257	2,307,327	2,514,584	2,062,882

All amounts above relate to continuing operations of the Community.

The Community has no recognised gains and losses other than those included in the results above, and therefore no separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has been presented.

Balance Sheet at 31 March 2007

	Notes	2007 £	2006 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	8	774,445	762,997
Current assets			
Debtors	9	687,579	686,521
Cash at bank and in hand		1,754,476	1,235,975
		2,442,055	1,922,496
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(701,916)	(622,611)
Net current assets		1,740,139	1,299,885
Net assets	11	2,514,584	2,062,882
Income funds			
Unrestricted			
General	12	1,681,463	1,395,220
Designated	12	625,864	529,858
		2,307,327	1,925,078
Restricted	13	207,257	137,804
Total funds		2,514,584	2,062,882

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 30th August 2007 and were signed on its behalf by:



T. Adair
Company Secretary



T. Campbell
Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS //

Lindsay Conway OBE	Chairman
Niall Sheridan	Vice Chairman
Tom Adair	Company Secretary
Therese Campbell	Appointed Treasurer Sept 06
John Ashe	Retired Oct 06
Gordon Atkinson, MBE	
Hazel Bell	
Kevin Butler	
Fergus Devitt	Retired Feb 07
Michael Henderson	
Jim Orme	
Sue Ward	Resigned from Treasurer Sept 06

SENIOR MANAGEMENT //

Carol O'Bryan MSW	Chief Executive
Feargal Lynn RMN	Director Housing & Support Services (Resigned 02/03/07)
Patrick McGettigan	Director Housing & Support Services (Took up post on 03/03/07)
David Carroll CQSW	Director Development
Ciara O'Hagan ACA	Director Financial & Facilities Management
Helen Hughes MCIPD	Director Human Resources

CORPORATE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE //

Tommy Rodgers F.I.F.P	Chairman
Sir George Quigley C.B.E	
Graeme McNeill	
Joanne E Grant	
Linda Brown	
Noel Brady	
Peter Russell	
Philip Cheevers	

SIMON COMMUNITY WORKING GROUPS //

Employer of Choice Working Group
Health and Safety Advisory Committee
Information and Consultation Council
Multi-Cultural Working Group
Service User Research Group
Staff Training and Development Group
Quality Working Group

**simon
community**
Northern Ireland
Addressing Homelessness

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EMPLOYER OF CHOICE



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

