

PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LIVING

Personal Development Route



ANNUAL REPORT



CORK FOYER

2012

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Management Committee Members

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Cork City Enterprise Board
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Member of Blackpool Community
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90 Great William O'Brien Street
Blackpool

Sgt John O'Connor
An Garda Síochána
Mayfield Garda Station
Mayfield
Cork

“I would like to pay special mention to the three departing Board members; Eric O'Connor, John Fitzgibbon and Tony Halton. Their dedication and expertise has been extremely beneficial to the service. I also wish to take this opportunity to welcome the three new Board members; Ger McCarthy, Fiona Long and Bill Dunlea. I am confident that their valuable contribution will leave the Foyer in a stronger position moving forward”.

Dave Cody
Chairman



Chairman



With an increasing number of organisations and individuals competing for diminishing funding, the spotlight will focus on those who can deliver the services that have the most visible and tangible impact on peoples' lives and local issues. That's why this year's Annual Report focuses on the achievements that have made a real difference to the lives of people that we serve and those that have supported the Foyers valuable work.

I hope our report will also demonstrate how the Foyer is beginning to embrace 'Open Talent' and 'Working Assets' – two relatively new Foyer Federation campaigns. Both initiatives aim to help staff and residents identify the talents and assets embedded within each and every young person and use them to positive effect to prepare for the world of independence, work and learning. The whole new approach of focusing on the future potential of a resident rather than their past problems is inspiring new ideas throughout the service, whilst strengthening personal self resilience.

Offering an efficient and valued service that provides opportunity for all our service users remains our number one priority. We are facing and responding to the challenges by continually scrutinising our service, whilst remaining conscious of the impact that the financial squeeze is also having on our residents. The young people that we help are some of the most vulnerable and any changes, let alone reductions to their welfare benefits, can make it more difficult for them to keep their heads above water and harm our ability to succeed.

As well as saluting the achievements of our service users and the tireless work of the staff in these tough times, my sincere thanks go to all our Board members for their continued voluntary support and efforts. As always, we remain extremely grateful to our core funders; the City of Cork Vocational Education Committee, Health Service Executive and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government who continue to place their trust and confidence in our service and reputation.

I also wish to record my heartfelt appreciation to the Pobal Dormant Accounts Fund who, through recognition, kindly extended their funding of the Garden Project from two years to three years. Even though their funding is due to cease early next year, we can reflect with great pride the very high number service users who participated in the Garden and achieved Fetac awards. The success of the programme is a testament to all involved and far surpassed any initial expectations.

Finally, I would like to conclude on a high note by announcing that the Sisters of Mercy Solidarity Trust Fund have recognised the value of the Garden Project and have agreed to fund nine Fetac accredited horticulture programmes to the benefit of the homeless services and other marginalised groups. Their generous funding will allow the Garden Project to continue its excellent work throughout 2013.

We hope you enjoy reading this report.

Providing Stability through Housing Supports

Compassion, Respect, Inclusiveness, Empowerment, Justice, Honesty and Excellence are all placed at the core of the Foyer philosophy and its daily work. Now edging towards its seventh year of operation, the Foyer has never lost sight of its core values and reflects on them regularly when tailoring its services to meet external demands and the needs of the individuals that we support.

Adopting a very close partnership approach with the voluntary and statutory sector is crucial in enabling our residents to move onto a fulfilling independent life in the community. Since opening in March 2006, the Foyer has supported 212 young people, averaging at approximately 32 young people per year leaving the service. From these approximately two thirds of all young people move on in a planned manner.

Some barriers faced by young applicants:

The €100 jobseekers payment for people aged 18-21 presents a huge barrier for young people trying to secure and maintain independent accommodation.

After rent and bills, young people are left with less than €55 per week to live on, which requires a very strict budget plan and lots of self discipline.

For some young people another barrier is their inability to qualify for social housing. This means

Foyer Facts about Applicants

We witnessed a sharp increase in housing applications during 2012 with 70 young people applying to the service.

Male applicants **48**

Female applicants **22**

Age of applicants 18 to 20: **31**
21 to 25: **39**

Ethnic origin of applicants:

White Irish **66 (94.29%)**

White British **1 (1.43%)**

Black African **1 (1.43%)**

Eastern European **1 (1.43%)**

German **1 (1.43%)**

From the housing applications received only 4 people were previously living in an area outside of Cork City or Cork County.

Number of successful applicants **29**

Number of unsuccessful applicants **14**

Number of applicants not eligible **01**

Number of applications withdrawn **26**



J's Story

Just after New Year I was kicked out of my flat. I wasn't allowed time so I had to sleep on the couch at my friends place. After a week or so, I had no other option but to go to a City Centre homeless hostel. This was a bad place for me. I was the youngest in there and some of the older people were heavy heroin addicts. I couldn't be around them at all.

After two months in there I was offered a place at the Foyer. This place was completely different to the hostel. The staff and residents are easy to get on with and I started playing football with the Foyer team.

Since I moved into the Foyer, I went back to school and did my Leaving Cert. I am now doing a course in St John's and I am about to move into a flat provided by Sophia Housing.

I've been in the Foyer almost 10 months and will never forget the place for all the friends I've made and the staff for helping me get my life back on track

J.



that they are often unable to claim Rent Allowance and may have to remain in an emergency hostel for a period of time before becoming eligible.

Ruairí O'Farrell | Project Worker

A total of 24 agencies referred young people during 2012 which included:

Liberty Street House for Young People out of Home

Edel House

Cork Simon Community

Probation Service

St Vincent's Hostel

Homeless Persons Unit

Social Services

Dine With Me

Providing Stability through Housing Supports

The Foyer is not just about providing accommodation. Residents must be willing to buy into the whole package, which also includes the support and training on offer, both internally and externally. This holistic approach allows the Foyer to accurately assess and agree a tailored Support Plan to meet the complex needs or aspirations of each young person.

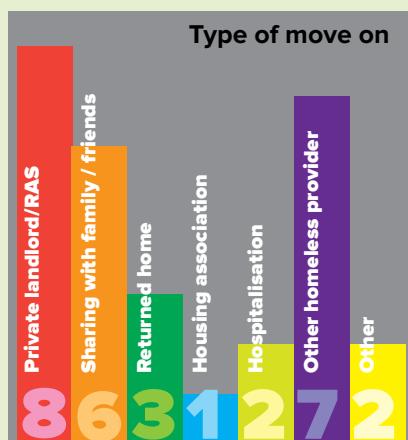
With a comfortable, structured and supportive environment to live in, each resident can begin to re-build their lives and self worth. For many Foyer residents this may require them to face and address their underlying issues before even contemplating education, training or resettlement. Others simply have the motivation and ambition within them to take progressive steps from day one.

Foyer Facts about Residents

Total residents	28	Ethnic origin of residents:
Male residents:	19	White Irish 26 (92.86%)
Female residents:	9	Black African 1 (3.57%)
Age of residents:	18 to 20: 15 21 to 25: 13	German 1 (3.57%)
No. of residents with a registered disability:	7	

Foyer Facts about Resettlement

Number of residents that moved on	29
Planned manner	19
Unplanned manner	10
Average length of stay	6.75 months





From the 28 residents supported during 2012, 25 experienced a breakdown with their family, 13 were unable to maintain private rented accommodation for a variety of reasons and 12 had been in the care system at some point.

Note: Individual residents have been recorded under more than one category.

Some core issues on entry:

Offending	9
Diagnosed mental health condition	5
Drug issues	7
Alcohol issues	6
Learning disability	6
Physical disability	1



Darren's Story

Before coming to the Foyer I was drinking too much and I was down and out. My drugs and alcohol councillor referred me to the Foyer where I have found peace and comfort.

I am no longer drinking or taking drugs and I am using the gym membership regularly. I feel that it is the support coming from the staff that has made me take good steps to get my life back together. I am also doing my education here and feel that it is my stepping stone to becoming a Youth Worker once I complete college.

Thanks to the staff and tutors within the Foyer I feel that I can move forward in life and they have given me vision for my future and helped me to reach for it. I feel that I will be ready to live on my own and pursue my education by the end of the year. I will always be thankful to the Foyer, especially to the staff.

D.

Providing Stability through Housing Supports



The Foyer ultimately aims to provide a wide range move on options, whilst taking into account the young person's preferences and their current commitments. We therefore maintain daily links with Cork City Council Housing Department, Housing Associations and the Private Rented Sector.

The length of time a resident may live at the Foyer varies greatly. Some young people feel confident and equipped to move on from the Foyer after several months, others may require substantially longer. Either way, every young person will find the move to independent living exciting but daunting at the same time.

The knowledge, experience and confidence a young person gains whilst living at the Foyer will greatly assist them to handle the transition into independent living and beyond. No matter which option they choose to elect, the Foyer will continue to support a young person through this transitional and often unsettling period by offering information, advice and practical support, all of which will decrease as soon as practicably possible.

Some barriers faced when young people resettle

Some residents may not get a deposit if they have had one before, this means that they would need to save up for the four weeks deposit upfront before they can move on. This can prove difficult especially for those on the lesser jobseekers amount of €100 per week. Residents also have to save to buy pots and pans, cutlery and bedding as moving in grants are no longer available.

Residents may not be used to paying for gas and electricity so we can advise and help them to set up a household budgeting scheme whereby they can put away small amounts each week to pay towards these bills.

Finally, young people often feel isolated and lonely when they first live on their own. Therefore, outreach support, regular contact with the Foyer and involvement with local activities etc remains vital.

Susan Edwards | Project Worker

Developing Talents through Internal Training Programmes and Activities



A Week of Internal Training

The Cork Foyer offers residents the opportunity for personal and educational development through its internal training programme. Residents are offered up to 19 hours training a week. The training aims to improve a residents educational and employment

prospects and develop an essential set of skills needed for independent living. There is a wide range of accredited and non-accredited classes provided in the FOYER. Training is provided in partnership with City of Cork VEC, ABLES, and Cork YMCA.

Some barriers faced by current residents:

Some of the barriers that affect our residents are linked to education or employment. A high percentage of residents are early school leavers or have had a negative experience at school. Most residents would prefer courses that are practical, hands on and skill based. There are too few of these courses and this leads to long waiting lists.

Some residents who have secured part time employment have felt that the reduction to their benefits, especially Rent Allowance, has been too punishing. Therefore, some residents have decided that it is not financially viable to continue with their employment.

Developing Talents through Internal Training Programmes and Activities

Residents' Internal Training Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
ABLES ITABE & Fetac <i>With Lorraine</i> 11.30am - 1.30pm Training Room	Cookery & ABLES <i>With Ger & Imelda</i> 10:30am – 1:30pm Training Room	ABLES Fetac/ITABE <i>with Lorraine</i> 12.30pm – 3.30pm Computer Room	Cookery With Geraldine 11.30am -1.30pm Training Room	Horticulture With Denis 11am-1pm Garden
	ABLES <i>with Lorraine</i> 4pm – 6pm Training Room	YMCA Fast Forward <i>with John</i> 2pm – 4pm Training Room	Fetac Modules <i>with Lorraine</i> 1pm – 4pm Training Room	
		Animation With Naomi 4.30pm-6.30pm Training Room	Computers with Martina 3-5pm Computer Room	



ABLES

Adult basic literacy education service, provides residents with training in basic literacy, career preparation, mathematics, communications, personal effectiveness, computer literacy, computer applications and the literacy component of the culinary skills module. All programmes offered by ABLES can be sent off for accreditation by Fetac.

Cork YMCA

Provide training to Foyer residents in the practical aspect of the culinary skills programme and a life skills course known as Fast Forward.

Activities throughout the year



Fishing -The One That Got Away!

Residents and staff enjoyed a great day out fishing. Everyone was a bit apprehensive about the weather. However, it turned out to be a lovely day with calm seas as the boat left Crosshaven for some deep sea fishing about 15 miles off the coast.

The residents were given a quick tutoring session on how to cast off, baiting and reeling in. A good variety of fish were caught on the day including; mackerel, whiting, cod and loads of ling. When the residents tired of fishing, they were allowed to steer the boat to new waters.

Everyone enjoyed themselves and came back to the Foyer with stories about Richard's 30 pound ling that got away!

Residents Module Completions 2012

Culinary Skills	13
General Learning Level II	8
Communication	8
Career Preparation	5
Computer Literacy	4
Healthy Food Made Easy	6
Computer Applications	4
ITABE	13
Personal Effectiveness	4
Mathematics	4
Horticulture	18

During 2012, 15 residents secured external education or training, and 6 residents commenced full/part time or voluntary employment.

Visit from Spike



Boxing champion was a great hit with Foyer Residents and Staff. Gary Spike O'Sullivan BUI Irish Middleweight Champion and AFO American Light Middleweight Champion served up a few tips when he dropped into one of Geraldine's twice weekly cooking sessions.

Gary talked about his daily training routine and the level of commitment required being a champion boxer, including his strict diet and healthy eating regime. Gary brought his belts along and openly answered questions fired at him by both residents and staff. [cont'd over →](#)

Developing Talents through Internal Training Programmes and Activities cont'd

Animation

Animation Space, with the support of Cork Foyer, has been teaching animation skills to a group of young residents over the last year or so. Out of this general project, a more specific project idea was proposed by the young people themselves. Three female residents proposed that we facilitate their production of an animated movie, based on their experiences of self-harm and suicide. They hoped to tell their story and communicate their personal experiences, in the hope that awareness would be raised, and a greater understanding of the issues would be reached by other people. And, specifically, that anyone feeling



or experiencing a similar situation would, on seeing the animation, feel less alone, and feel that there was a way out, and seek help. This specific project is facilitated by Animation Space, financially supported by ESB Electricaid Ireland, Mayfield Action on Suicide, and otherwise

supported by Cork Foyer, Cork Graffiti Theatre and a number of individuals involved in creative writing and multimedia production. Animation Space facilitators (Naomi and Alice) hope to continue to facilitate the production and distribution (including on the Foyer and other websites and social media platforms) of the animation in the coming months.

Events throughout the year



The Cork Foyer's annual family fun day, in conjunction with The 9th Lifelong Learning Festival, took place on April 1st. The day was a resounding success; we were delighted to see a large turnout of families. There was loads to do and see; the children got to get up close with the pet animals from the AgriAware Mobile Farm and our own mini pet farm. We had tigers, bunnies, princesses and

Family Fun Day 2012

spidermen walking around holding swords, giraffes, puppies and mice thanks to the face painter and balloon modeler.

All the adults had their gardening questions answered by our horticulturists and tours of the allotments and greenhouse ran throughout the day. Refreshments were served in the seasonal Garden Cafe and some fantastic entertainment was provided by Mayfield Brass Band and the Dowtcha Puppet Show.

A big thank you must go to the residents of the Cork Foyer who worked very hard in March renovating the mini pet farm and on the day helped with setting up, the animals and parking. Without their help the day couldn't have been as enjoyable as it was.



Award Ceremony

Lord Mayor Cllr. John Buttmer presented certificates of completion and participation at the Cork Foyer's annual awards ceremony held on the 4th of October. The award ceremony, in its third year, was held in partnership with Churchfield Community Trust.

Certificates were awarded for a variety of FETAC courses including horticulture, culinary skills, literacy, numeracy and computers. The awards day celebrated the achievements of Cork Foyer residents as well as participants from other homeless services, Blackpool Tenants Association, Cope, Brothers of Charity, Threshold, Traveller Visibility Group and Bessboro.

The number of people who avail of the training provided at the Foyer is increasing year on year. This year 44 trainees received awards with the majority of people receiving certificates for more than one achievement.

When we stop and take into account what many have been through in their lives and some of the daily challenges faced by trainees, it becomes obvious that the real success are the trainees and their commitment to learning.

These achievements would not have been made possible without the dedication of a number of tutors. A big thank you must be said to Denis Murphy, Conor McCormack and Petra Bakker who delivered a fantastic horticulture programme. Appreciation must also be shown to all at ABLES Community Adult Literacy Group, Fiona, Imelda, Lorraine, Martina, Geraldine and especially Patsy Horgan who has now retired, without whom the training programme delivered in the Cork Foyer would not be the success it is today.



Promoting Opportunity through Recognising Open Talents and Working Assets



The Garden Project

The Garden Project is proving to be a real asset to the Foyer. It allows our residents and the service users from other homeless services and disadvantaged groups to have direct contact with the general public. More importantly, it is providing a range of opportunities from working in the cafe, organising events, maintaining the grounds, attending horticulture courses or helping to care for the pets in the mini farm.

The generous funding provided by Pobal has placed the Foyer in an enviable position during the past 3 years. **Amazingly, the Foyer horticulture programme has been able to accommodate 194 learners from which 85 FETAC qualifications have been achieved.**

As usual, the trainees and staff celebrated their achievements by holding an end of year outdoor awards presentation in October.

With newly polished skills and knowledge gained from the horticulture courses, staff and residents formed a Ground Force Team and expanded their work into the community.

Embracing the ethos of Open Talents and Working Assets – two relatively new Foyer Federation initiatives, the team took part in a number of Blarney Tidy Towns projects over a 3 month period, including the RTE Dirty Old Towns weekend challenge and a revamp of Clogheen Milcon roundabout. The team also worked hard during the summer

months, improving areas in Nash's Boreen and Blackpool.

Mindful of how we were going to keep the Garden Project operating beyond Pobal funding, the staff team and residents needed to come up with new ideas and inspiration to move forward. Thankfully, the Sisters of Mercy Solidarity Trust Fund provided a much needed life line and agreed to fund the horticulture training programme throughout 2013.

After attending an Open Talent Workshop held in Manchester, the Foyer Management team returned to Cork fully equipped to revisit the principles of the Working Assets and Open Talent initiatives to build on the Foyers past successes and drive forward a totally new initiative.

A small group of interested residents and staff was formed to identify the assets and talents that we already had in place and made a simple list. On that list included:

Good sized allotments

Garden cafe and large greenhouse

A horticulturist and cooking tutor

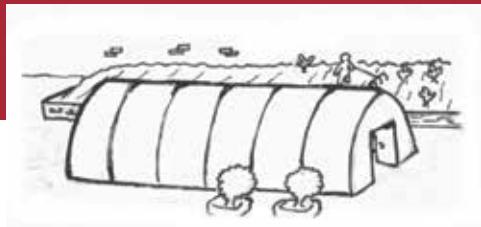
Reasonable sized kitchens

Residents who have achieved qualifications in the kitchen and garden

A team with bags of enthusiasm

A team willing to work hard and voluntarily

A management team willing to take a risk



How I've put my talents to use

Produce/Shop/City Hall



Within the Foyer, I used my talents of cooking to help make some products and then used my sales talents to sell them in the City Hall, where we had a stall to sell the products. We will continue to make these products and sell them in a shop on the grounds of the Foyer which we will open soon.

Anne Marie

Art-Designing a cover for the Annual Report



I used my artistic talents to design a map of the buildings for the annual report. I enjoyed completing this task and putting my artistic talents to good use on this project. I completed the map by doing a series of small drawings and compiling them together.

Rob

The obvious ingredients were there all the time! Richie croppered up with the idea, why don't we make our own jam and stuff to sell. Within minutes a list of products emerged – ambitious I know, but with the above assets and talents we could be on to a winner.

An action plan was drawn up and the tasks were shared out. As soon as the EHO approved the Foyer training kitchen, the preparation team set about perfecting their products – guess who the guinea pigs were!

Cork City Council agreed to let the Foyer hold a table top sale of the products outside of the staff canteen at lunch time. The team worked tirelessly from the early hours of the morning to prepare the fresh products like soda bread and pate etc. I am pleased to say that we sold out within a few hours and received a number of compliments from the Council. With this in mind, we decided to return with more products, including numerous Christmas hampers.

With another sell out day, we rewarded the team with some Christmas vouchers. After purchasing all of the equipment and ingredients etc., we made an outright profit of €830.

What next?

With a taste of immediate success we decided to upscale and open a mini seasonal garden shop in the glasshouse to compliment the cafe. One of our partner agencies, Churchfield Community Trust, agreed to do the necessary renovation work and turn the end section of the glasshouse into a small shop. With more table top sales planned the Foyer is now in a good position to purchase its initial stock and put together a float for the shop.

With a professionally designed brand name of City Farm Shop, Blackpool, the staff and residents can't wait to get the shop up and running in the spring.



City Farm

BLACKPOOL



ARTISAN FOOD
FROM
THE HEART
OF THE CITY



Fun day out at City Farm



Staff Team

Barry Waddingham	Foyer Manager
Sharon O'Flynn	Deputy Foyer Manager & Trg Coordinator
Susan Edwards	Project Worker
Ruairi O'Farrell	Project Worker
Catherine McAdoo	Administrator
Richard Meagher	Night Premises Supervisor – Job Share
Patrick Fitzsimmons	Night Premises Supervisor – Job Share
Jeremiah Slattery	Night Premises Supervisor – Job Share
Paul Carroll	Night Premises Supervisor - Job Share

The core staff team are supported by a dedicated Bank of Relief Support Workers:

Phil O'Reagan	Daniel McIntyre	Paul Carroll
Trish Jones	Denis Murphy	Jeremiah Slattery
Patrick Fitzsimmons	Pat Horgan	Conor McCormack

About Sharon O' Flynn Deputy Manager & Training Coordinator

I began working with young people as an out of hours Youth Drugs Project Worker in Waterford City. I worked there for two years after qualifying from Waterford Institute of Technology in Applied Social Studies. Before starting work in the Cork Foyer I was working in Limerick City as a Youth Worker. My longing to return to Cork and my interest in working with homeless people, made the position of Training Coordinator/Deputy Manager in the Cork Foyer ideal.

Every day is different in the Foyer; and I really enjoy that, I could be facilitating a Garden Project meeting in the morning and be doing a review meeting with a resident in the afternoon or covering the reception during the evening shift.

Before starting in the Foyer I was unsure of how you could work with young people with such different needs and abilities from each other in the one setting. I soon realised the reason the Foyer works for many young adults is that it takes each resident as an individual and develops support plans, training schedules and life skills programmes around them using the residents own talents, skills and abilities to better their lives.

I have learnt a lot in the past few months, from staff, residents and facilitators. I am often left in awe of some of the young adults residing in the Foyer, who have been through tough times and are now re-engaging in education, training and/or employment though the experiences in their past have left them homeless.

Cork Foyer

Income and Expenditure Summary as of 1st January 2013

Foyer General Account:

Income

Rent & Miscellaneous Income	€100,635.00
Health Service Executive	€289,907.00
Department of Heritage, Environment, & Local Government	€207,614.00
Total Income	€598,156.00

Expenditure

Payroll	€484,960.00
Heating & Lighting	€29,498.00
Establishment & Supported Housing Management Costs	€18,449.00
Repairs & Maintenance	€44,407.00
Miscellaneous	€6,296.00
Professional Fees	€3,861.00
Telephone	€4,899.00
Printing, Stationery, Advertising & Postage	€9,061.00
Total Expenditure	€601,431.00

Foyer Garden Project

Balance as at 1st January 2012	€12,407.00
Total Income	€40,031.00
Total Expenditure	€42,329.00
Balance as of 1st January 2013	€10,109.00

Foyer Resident Hardship / Participation

Balance as at 1st January 2012	€9,886.00
Total Income	€7,710.00
Total Expenditure	€8,784.00
Balance as of 1st January 2013	€8,812.00

Capital Replacement / Development Account

Balance as at 1st January 2012	€127,160.00
Total Income	€0.00
Total Expenditure	€0.00
Balance as of 1st January 2013	€127,160.00

Certified By:



John Hallahan

Management Accountant, Cork City Council

Support Journey



ABLES Training Route



Personal Development Route

Support Journey

YMCA Training Route

Community & Enterprise Route

Activity Route

ABLES Training Route

Housing Journey

Housing Journey

Cork Foyer is a Cork City Council Housing and Community Initiative



Independence
Community Welfare Officer
Confidence

