

**ANA LIFFEY
DRUG PROJECT
ANNUAL REPORT
2013**

Chairperson's Report



I'd like to start off my 2013 report by remembering our former and long-time Chairperson, Dr David Poole, who passed away in January 2014 and is sadly missed by all at the Ana Liffey. David had taken a step back from his active membership on the Council of Management in 2013. David's wisdom and compassion are greatly missed.

From a service delivery perspective, in 2013 we continued to bed down developments instigated in previous years; notably our conversion from a local project in Dublin to a national presence. It was also a year of continued pressure on our resources which unfortunately has continued into 2014. We managed our resources to ensure we could safely meet the needs of our service users, our financial challenges and the growing need for greater accountability and transparency. These issues remain of central concern.

In terms of organisational development, 2013 was the year that we launched our Poole Volunteer Programme. This is now successfully up and running and providing a valuable contribution to our services. Also in 2013, the Director began a concerted effort to raise the profile of the Ana Liffey and build stronger relationships with our public representatives, funders and with the media. I view these initiatives as necessary to raise awareness of drug issues and to inform our multiple stakeholders of our work and of the needs of the sector. Towards the end of 2013 we sought to recruit some new members to our Council of Management. I greatly value the history and commitment of our long-standing members, but we should always look to combine this with new and fresh ideas to ensure that we don't become too rigid or siloed in our thinking. We need to continually look at the skills that we have and consider how we can improve. This search led to us welcoming three new Council of Management members in early 2014 – Roddy Maguire, Brian Dalton, and Joan O'Flynn. I am delighted to have them on board.

As we move forward, my goals as Chairperson are for the organisation to sign off as being fully compliant with the Governance Code and to continue to ensure that we manage our resources in an efficient and responsible manner in accordance with our mission statement. Our strategy is also up for review in 2014, and in relation to this, key priority areas are likely to be a focus on fundraising and improvements in resource management. We have now experienced more than five years of cutbacks and it is not realistic that we can continually 'do more with less' year on year. We need to diversify our funding base which may also involve creative and progressive ways of thinking about service development and delivery at the Ana Liffey. We also need to ensure that our operational processes are aligned and supportive of our strategy and the people engaging with them.



'Abbey Street' taken by a member of the Ana Liffey Stabilisation Group Photography Project.

This is nothing new for us; from the outset we have been pioneers in the delivery of low threshold services and are constantly looking at ways to improve.

I would like to thank Tony Duffin, Dawn Russell, Michael Moriarty and all the staff and volunteers for their hard work and commitment in 2013. I recognize that our work is challenging by nature and it is not made easier by continued economic challenges. I also want to extend my thanks to staff who left us in 2013. In particular, I wish to extend my personal thanks to Gloria Kearns, with whom I had a working relationship over the years when I was Treasurer of the organisation. Thanks are also due to my colleagues on the Council of Management for their commitment and time given to support the work of the Ana Liffey.

Finally, I would like to finish up by saying how proud I am that the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, has agreed to become our Patron. This is a reflection of the standing and reputation of our organisation as a whole which includes the contribution of every person within that organisation over many years. We are grateful for the long-standing support of our former patron Dr Maeve Hillary who has a long history with the Ana Liffey. We look forward now to the support of our new patron as we meet the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Dr Deirdre McQuillan
September 2014

Treasurer's Report



Like many organisations in the sector, recent years have seen the Ana Liffey Drug Project having to achieve more with less resources. The organisation's focus has been on maintaining front line services, and we are deeply indebted to the staff of the project whose ongoing dedication is critical in delivering a high level and standard of service to our service users.

While individual aspects of our funding were reduced in 2013, total income increased from €1,896,806 to €2,167,248 due to an increase in activities in both the Midlands and Midwest Regions. The Company largely broke even in 2013 recording a slight operating deficit of €1,457.

Towards the end of 2013 further reductions to our budget were confirmed for 2014 and the Council of Management are very conscious that in the current economic environment further cuts in years to come cannot be ruled out. In this context, cost control is key to maintaining the delivery of services. Difficult decisions have been made to ensure that the organisation can continue to maintain front line services.

The Council of Management is determined to ensure that it operates to the highest standards of corporate governance. We have well documented procedures and systems and they are adhered to by all concerned. This high level of professionalism will be maintained by the company. We now intend to review our processes to ensure that we can sign off as being compliant with the Governance Code and SORP.

We are likely to continue to face challenges but through good governance and solid performance we believe that we are well-placed to meet those challenges in future years.

Richard Guiney
Treasurer
September 2014

Director's Report



I want to start by thanking everyone who contributed to the Ana Liffey in 2013. The economic downturn has impacted seriously on our service provision. Once again, in 2013, we found ourselves having to do more with less. I am proud to say that everyone has done their part in this regard. First and foremost, thanks are due to our staff team. Without their dedication and support, meeting the challenges of recent times would have been much more difficult, and the impacts on the lives of those who use our services would undoubtedly have been worse. Thanks are also due to our Council of Management, who contribute on a fully voluntary basis. Leading in a recession is difficult. There are difficult decisions which have to be made. Choices are often stark and unappealing. As Director, I'm indebted to the Council of Management for their stewardship and support. Thanks are also due to our funders and donors, who provide the resources necessary to run the organisation. Similarly, thanks to our volunteers and students, who give their time and energy - their contribution has proven to be both helpful and meaningful. Last, but by no means least, thanks are due to those who use our services. In many ways, those who come to the Ana Liffey have been affected most of all by the economic recession. Many of the vital services they require - treatment, housing, healthcare - have become even harder to access.

In total, over 2,750 individuals accessed our services in 2013. Of these, 64 were young people using drugs who we worked with through our Under 18's service, an increase of 28 on 2012. We provided over 58,000 staff hours in 2013, augmented by almost 3,500 volunteer and student hours. We recorded over 29,000 service user contacts, nearly 2,000 of which were through our Needle and Syringe Programmes. We had over 1,000 attendances at our harm reduction, stabilisation and treatment options groups. Our web presence continued to grow, with over 100,000 unique Irish visits to the drugs.ie and aldp.ie websites during 2013.





'Cyclist' taken by a member of the Ana Liffey Stabilisation Group Photography Project.

Outside direct service delivery, we continued to work on strengthening the organisation for the future and progressing our strategic priorities. We have identified the key legal issues in introducing Medically Supervised Injecting Centres in Ireland and are working in a systematic way to create an environment in which such services could be a reality for Ireland. We have developed plans for, and are eager to deliver on, a low threshold residential stabilisation service.

Looking forward to 2014 and beyond, there is no doubt that further challenges lie ahead. Late 2013 saw the continuation of imposed cutbacks. In total, the organisation suffered the loss of €226,440 in statutory funding in 2013, representing 10.4% of our total 2013 income. Clearly, losses such as these on the back of repeated cuts inevitably impact on service delivery.

However, there is also much to be positive about. As damaging to organisations like the Ana Liffey as recessions are, they also provide opportunities – opportunities to work smarter, to think innovatively and to foster partnerships. Throughout 2013, we continued to build relationships with our partner agencies. We continued to work on developing new models of service delivery, new ways of ensuring that the people who use our services can be reached and supported. We developed online tools for the sector. We worked in partnership with key statutory agencies to identify and support those who most need our services. We look forward to the years to come, and to continuing to develop and grow as an organisation.

Finally, it is with sadness I wish to note the passing of Dr David Poole on 30th January 2014. I worked closely with David for many years, and he gave an inestimable amount to the Ana Liffey. He was an excellent person and I miss his wisdom and humanity.

Tony Duffin
Director
November 2014

Kevin's Story

Kevin first accessed our services in 2009. He was sleeping rough at the time, and using heroin. Kevin worked hard with his key worker to change his life. He was successful in stabilising his lifestyle and secured a place on a college course. Despite his progress, he struggled with maintaining his stability and unfortunately he relapsed. Over time, his situation deteriorated. He fell into homelessness and chaotic drug use once more. He knew the doors of Ana Liffey would still be open to him so he began working with us again, in our drop-in service. As he was either staying on the streets or in emergency accommodation, in addition to using drugs, Kevin's days were marked by pressure to secure a bed for the evening and secure drugs to prevent withdrawal. He would leave his hostel and come to our drop-in at 10am, where he would stay until around 11am. He would then leave to go and beg for between four to five hours to get money for drugs and accommodation. He was injecting heroin a minimum of three times a day, usually in one of the alleyways in the city centre. He always picked private spots away from the public eye and was conscious of disposing his used injecting equipment safely. He regularly accessed the Ana Liffey Needle and Syringe Programme for clean injecting equipment and bins to dispose of his needles safely.

***“He would beg for between four to five hours to get money for drugs and accommodation. He was injecting heroin a minimum of three times a day, usually in one of the alleyways in the city centre.*”**

After a number of months, we realised that we weren't meeting Kevin's needs as a service user. The imperatives of drugs and accommodation in his life meant that he found it difficult to engage with structured, on site services. It became clear that we would need to tailor our service. We discussed the issue with Kevin, and worked out a schedule which would work for him, and which we could factor in to our existing street outreach work. By doing this, we were able to support Kevin to make positive change again – he has recently been accepted onto a Suboxone treatment programme and is committed to addressing the issues in his life.

Jason's Story

Jason is sixteen. He was referred to Ana Liffey's Midlands Team by the HSE Child and Adult Mental Health Service for support with a cannabis addiction.

We met with Jason, and with his consent, we made contact with his parents and explained our service to them. Jason and his parents were positive about the support we could offer. We began supporting Jason through structured case management, provided on outreach to his home.

As we got to know Jason, he opened up to us about his drug use. Jason was a polydrug user, frequently mixing benzodiazepines, alcohol and cannabis. We met Jason regularly and he worked with us through a number of issues. First, he wanted to plan for safer drug use as he didn't feel he was ready to stop. Next, he began to identify his reasons for drug use and to look at ways in which he could reduce his drug taking. Finally, Jason became committed to making positive and significant changes in his life. He committed fully to his care plan and, in addition to our case management support, began working with our Family Therapist.

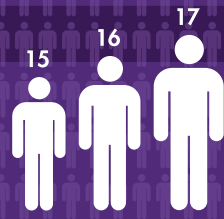
**“I spend five hours to get money for drugs
injecting heroin a minimum of three
times a day in the alleyways in the city centre.”**

Jason's road was rocky, despite his motivation to change. He overdosed and was admitted to hospital. We visited him regularly in hospital to help him stay engaged, feel supported and to enable him to continue working with us. Again, Jason acknowledged his lifestyle wasn't working for him, his drug use was out of control and he wanted change. He decided that he would like to access residential treatment. We referred Jason to the Aislinn Treatment Centre in Kilkenny and worked closely with him around his safety and relapse prevention while he waited for a bed to come up. Jason availed of a detox and successfully completed the programme.

Today, Jason still contacts us every so often to let us know how he's getting on. He is working with his psychiatrist and mental health support nurse. Jason has stabilised his lifestyle and is now participating on a training course. He is now living with his parents and they get support from our Family Therapy service on how best to support Jason in his life.

Please note the names of the clients have been changed to protect their identities.

2,756 the number of clients we worked with in 2013



64

the number of active drug users under eighteen years old that we worked with in 2013



58,443

the number of staff hours available in 2013



25

Number of volunteers and students



3,476

the number of hours donated by volunteers and students in 2013



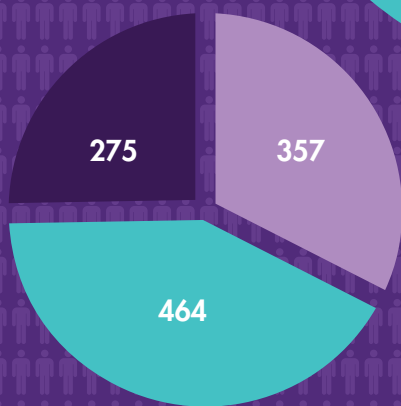
29,413

the number of client contacts in 2013



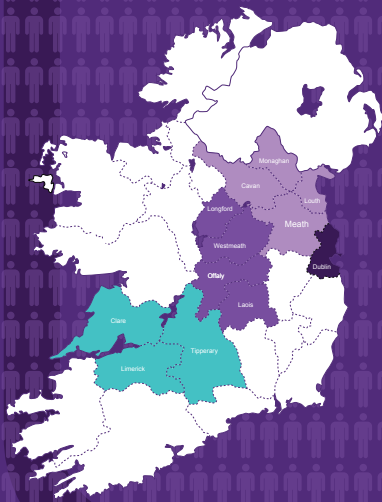
477

Coolmine assessments in 2013



Group Attendances

- Harm Reduction
- Stabilisation
- Treatment Options



1,994

the number of Needle and Syringe Programme interventions in 2013



544,675

the number of visits to aldp.ie and drugs.ie in 2013*

*107,715 in Irish web traffic





ana liffey drug project
ACTION • PREVENTION • SUPPORT

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