

FOCUS

Ireland

Annual Report 2018



**Challenging
homelessness.
Changing lives.**

Thanks to our funders and supporters we changed the lives of over 15,500 people in 2018.

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Foreword

I am proud to say that Focus Ireland helped over 500 families to secure a home last year and to escape the nightmare of being homeless.



I now sometimes feel there are no words left to describe the deepening homelessness crisis. Since I founded Focus Ireland in 1985 I never dreamt I would witness the situation being as out of control as it is now.

As I write this, there are now a record total of over 10,300 people homeless. It is really heart-breaking that nearly 4,000 of these are children. The Government's response on the issue of homelessness has been that it takes time to end this crisis. These children don't have time. They are been robbed of their childhoods and damaged by every day spent homeless. There are also many more individuals and families homeless. They often feel hopeless but we must not. It is our job to give them hope. It is our job to support them while they are homeless and to help them to find a way home.

I am proud to say that Focus Ireland – in partnership with the State and our supporters – helped over 500 families to secure a home in 2018. As a country, we have a duty to look after all our citizens, especially those who are most vulnerable. We must cherish all of our children equally and ensure that no child suffers from being homeless for long periods of time. We must work towards ensuring that every child has a place to call home.

Focus Ireland is always working hard to continue to develop realistic policy solutions to help end homelessness. We do this work through over 80 frontline services across the country and our commitment to building homes. While the crisis is continuing, the situation would be even worse without the vital services and housing we provide.

Focus Ireland helped a record number of over 15,500 people last year who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. We now provide 1,172 homes around the country that Focus Ireland owns or manages. This amazing work is done in partnership with the State and through the support of our generous donors. It fills me with great pride that we are making a difference, as we really are challenging homelessness and changing lives.

While Focus Ireland works very well with the Government in delivering homes, we must also acknowledge that their overall Rebuilding Ireland strategy is not working. There are no clear plans in place to tackle family or youth homelessness. The present policy is far too market-driven and the market never has and never will eliminate homelessness or provide homes for the people who can't afford to buy. There needs to be a radical change in policy, and the government and local authorities must take responsibility for the provision of local authority housing. We urgently need a more ambitious strategy to tackle this issue. This includes actively building more social housing, ensuring that bank restructuring does not come at the cost of mass homelessness, taxing those who hoard building land and protecting the rights of tenants facing eviction.

I am very concerned about the Government's continued focus on the delivery of family hubs rather than permanent homes. The Government admits that hubs are only a 'first response' but there is still no sign of them delivering a long-term second plan to deal with the crisis we are facing. We need a detailed sub-strategy on family homelessness that would include a guarantee that no family would be homeless for more than six months.

This crisis must be ended. We must continue to provide a voice for the many people and families who are voiceless. Focus Ireland will not rest until they are heard and we must not rest until they find a home.

Sr Stanislaus Kennedy

About Focus Ireland

Focus Ireland works with people who are homeless or at risk of losing their homes across Ireland. We are of the belief that homelessness is wrong. Wrong because it is a failure of society that creates victims out of ordinary people and robs them of their potential. Wrong because it can be prevented and solved but it is allowed to continue, thereby undermining our society.

Focus Ireland Directors

Sr Stanislaus Kennedy
(Founder and Life President)
Mr Michael Layde
(Chairman – Appointed 30th December 2018)
Mr. Gerry Danaher
(Chairman – Resigned 30th December 2018)
Mr John Moloney
Mr Declan O’Flaherty
Ms Anna Lee
Mr Andrew Gunne
(Appointed 14th March 2019)
Ms Susan O’Connell
Mr Conor Jones
(Appointed 25th February 2019)
Mr. Tony Fahey
(Appointed 14th March 2019)
Ms. Triona O’Conner
(Worker Director – Appointed 27th July 2018 – Resigned 30th November 2018)
Ms. Suzanne Quin
(Resigned 30th November 2018)
Ms Pauline Burke
(Resigned 20th April 2018)

Registered No:
106149

Registered Charity No:
CHY 7220

CRA Number:
20015107

Focus Housing Association Directors

Mr Diarmuid Burke
(Chairman)
Mr Declan O’Flaherty
Ms Anna Lee
Mr Andrew Gunne
(Appointed 25th February 2019)
Mr Mark Dunleavy
(Appointed 25th February 2019)
Ms Patricia Crisp
(Appointed 25th February 2019)
Ms Fionnuala Meehan
(Appointed 8th March 2019)

Registered No:
133953

Registered Charity No:
CHY 9040

CRA Number:
20022624

Chief Executive Officer

Mr Ashley Balbirnie
(Resigned 29th March 2018)
Mr Pat Dennigan
(Appointed 29th March 2018)

Secretary and Registered Office

Mr Kevin Gregory
(Appointed 30th July 2018)
Mr Pat Dennigan
(Resigned 30th July 2018)
9-12 High Street
Dublin 8

Auditors

Deloitte Ireland LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm
Deloitte & Touche House
Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 2

Solicitors

Arthur Cox, Ferrys Solicitors,
McCann FitzGerald,
Mason Hayes & Curran,
Clohessy Minihane,
MM Halley & Sons,
Holmes O’Malley Sexton,
O’Donnell Breen-Walsh
O’Donoghue, Hogan Dowling,
Byrne Wallace & Kicullen
and Associates

Bankers

Bank of Ireland
Allied Irish Bank plc
Ulster Bank Ireland Limited,
Housing Finance Agency

2018

Impact by Numbers

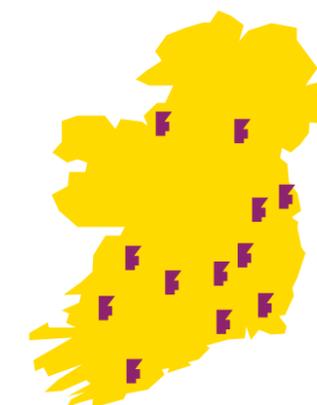


Focus Ireland’s strategy outlines that the real solutions to this crisis lie in preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place and ensuring that they are helped to stay in their home once they have found one.

These are the two areas of work that will remain central to our work in the coming years.



In 2018, 89% of every euro received was spent directly on our services to combat and prevent homelessness.



Services and Housing Nationwide

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| Carlow | Limerick |
| Clare | Monaghan |
| Cork | Sligo |
| Dublin | Tipperary |
| Kildare | Waterford |
| Kilkenny | Wexford |

Overview

In Focus Ireland, we continue to believe that this housing and homelessness crisis can be ended.

Pat Dennigan
CEO
Focus Ireland



On the face of it, 2018 was a bleak year. More men, women and children experienced homelessness than ever before. More emergency shelters and family hubs opened across the country. While more homes were built than in recent years, it was still far short of what people need. Sometimes I couldn't help feeling that, as a nation, we seem to have come to believe that nothing much can be done to end this human catastrophe.

But, in Focus Ireland, we continue to believe that this housing and homelessness crisis can be ended. And this Annual Report sets out the part we played in making that happen. Throughout 2018, our skilled and dedicated staff continued to deliver services which helped to change the lives of thousands of people across the country.

After serving for four years as Finance and Property Director, I was honoured to be appointed as CEO in March 2018. Like everyone in Focus Ireland I am proud that in 2018 we helped nearly 1,000 households to leave homelessness behind as they moved in to their new homes. In 2018 we also helped prevent 664 households to avoid becoming homeless because of our prevention services, including our youth housing services. Focus Housing also delivered 176 homes in 2018.

Throughout the organisation, Focus Ireland continued to build on our belief that the two most effective responses to homelessness are prevention and supporting sustained exist into a new home.

Where people are at risk of homelessness, we aim to make contact with them as early as possible to ensure that they have our support to keep the home they have.

To achieve this, we have increased the range of our Advice and Information services over recent years, while also investing in training for our staff and in partnerships with diverse organisations like Community Information Centres, Bord Gáis Energy, the Mercy Law Centre, PILA and A&L Goodbody.

Where people become homeless, we support them to move out of homelessness as quickly as possible. We now work with local authorities across the country – Carlow, Clare, Cork, Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Limerick, Monaghan, Sligo, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford – to achieve this goal. The new home may be in the private rental sector or social rental housing owned by local authorities or Approved Housing Bodies. A total of 176 households – families, couples and single people – find their new home in Focus Housing owned properties.

The support we received from local authorities, Tusla and the HSE is vital to our work. But that is only half the story; we would not be able to deliver these core services or explore innovative ways of tackling homelessness without the support of people across the country and the generous support they give to our work. We have also been working with a range of corporate partners to demonstrate that their corporate social responsibility investments can have lasting impacts by working with us to develop these services. 2018 proved a particularly successful year in developing such partnerships and furthering our belief that, while ending the housing and homeless crisis is a project that must be led by Government, it will require every strand of our society to deliver. Thanks to this generosity and the passion of our fundraising team, 2018 saw donations from individual members of the public, from trusts and from the business sector to grow again in 2018.

As incoming CEO, I have been given a clear mission by the Focus Ireland board to build on our philosophy of not only changing lives through our front-line services, but also challenging homelessness itself through our evidence-based policy work.

We will remain a reliable and consistent advocate for people at the margins of our society. Many of the policies that we have pioneered have been taken up by Government, but often this takes too long and the full potential benefit is lost. As the crisis continues, we are committed to building deeper partnerships with local and national Government, so that our insights and knowledge can more effectively contribute to lasting solutions.

Focus Ireland works to help anyone who faces homelessness, but we have considerable experience and skills which allow us to work particularly effectively with young adults, families and people who have complex needs. This year our annual report is organised around the work we do in these areas. Focus Ireland is totally committed to transparency and accountability about every aspect of our work and our Annual Report plays a key role in that – setting out for public scrutiny all the statistics which describe our work and our success. Ultimately, though, the success of our work must be judged by our impact on the lives of people, and we hope that this structure will convey what is most important to us – the fact that the people we strive to help are human beings and not statistics.

Pat Dennigan

Focus Ireland provided 480 homes in the last three years.

2016



135
homes

2017



184
homes

2018



176
homes

Family Homelessness

As the level of family homelessness continued to rise in 2018, Focus Ireland re-doubled its efforts to support families to avoid homelessness or to find and sustain a new home.

In Focus Ireland we know that the most effective challenge to homelessness is to prevent it happening in the first place. We run a range of services to prevent family homelessness, each one responding to the known needs of different families. We know that every family's story is different and, if we can help people early enough, we can often help them overcome the issues that are threatening to make them homeless.

Preventing Family Homelessness
Our Dublin Family Homeless Prevention Service¹ has been developed to support families living in private rented accommodation who can be supported to acquire the skills and confidence to sustain their current tenancy. Meanwhile, our Tenancy Sustainment Prevention Service (TSS Prevention)² has worked with a range of City and County Councils across the country to develop specialized Advice and Information services within council offices to prevent people becoming homeless and also to facilitate families and individuals to integrate into their local community. In 2018 150 households were prevented from losing their home through tenancy sustainment (prevention) services across the country.

The Focus Ireland Family Homeless Action Team³ (FHAT) continued to be the lead service working with homeless families, supporting 911 families, including 1,609 children, who were living in a range of family hubs and commercial hotels across Dublin.

The objective of FHAT is to support families to move out of homelessness into secure long-term homes. When families are overwhelmed by the trauma of homelessness, it is much harder for them to find and sustain a new home, so the FHAT takes a multidisciplinary approach. The team works with families to develop 'accommodation pathways' to assist them to find a home and to reduce the chance of them becoming homeless again. The service has the flexibility to respond to the unique needs of each family and thus ensure that the family as a whole is listened to, including advocating for the voice of the child in securing child-centred supports.

As the family homelessness crisis continues to spread outside of Dublin, Focus Ireland provided 'own-door' emergency accommodation for families with Limerick Council and worked

with councils in the South East to develop innovative and effective approaches to the crisis.

Finding a New Home

For many families, finding a new affordable home is enough and they can put homelessness behind them. For others, the continued support of a skilled case manager can make a real difference in helping them to settle into their home and ensure the tenancy works out. A key part of the support we provide involves supporting families in gaining skills and confidence to manage their own home and relationships.

Outside of Dublin, this approach is called Tenancy Sustainment (TSS), and Focus Ireland TSS services provided support to 178 families, with 331 children, in partnership with various different City and County Councils.

In Dublin, Focus Ireland provides this support through Support to Living Independently (SLI).⁴ In 2018 our SLI service supported 210 families with 395 children. Supporting these families to make their new tenancy work involved 1,818 home visits during the year.

Challenging Family Homelessness

A key element of our support for families is to commission high-quality research to deepen our understanding of the causes of homelessness and the practices and policies which are most effective in ending it. During 2018 we published 'Young Families in the Homeless Crisis: Challenges and Solutions' by Dr Sharon Lambert et al. of University College Cork. Young parents (aged between 18 and 25) make up a quarter of homeless parents, and around half of these have never lived separately from their own parents. This report was an exploration of the experiences and needs of these young parents whose first step away from their own family home had led them and their children into homelessness.

We also published five further papers in the 'Insights into Family Homelessness' series, which continued to be the most significant contribution to our understanding of the dynamics of family homelessness in Ireland. The Insights research highlighted that the single largest cause of families becoming homeless was their landlords evicting them in

order to sell the property. As this action is entirely legal under the current legislation, Focus Ireland continued its campaign to change the residential tenancies legislation to put a moratorium on such evictions until the homeless crisis can be brought under control. If this measure had been in place in 2018, we estimate that at least 350 families and over 500 children would not have faced the trauma of homelessness during the year.

As family homelessness increases, the Coffee Shop has become a key point of contact with this group, as it has been for over 30 years for single homeless people. During 2018 our customers alerted us to the problems that were emerging from trying to meet such a wide range of needs in one place. Internal discussion identified the need for separate provision for families, and the board has committed to establishing a new Family Services Centre, which will cater to the specific support needs of vulnerable homeless families. Future reports will chart the success of this innovative and important project.

Peer Researchers

An important feature of our research programme has been the involvement of researchers with live experience of homelessness. A highlight of this work was the acceptance by the European Observatory on Homelessness of a paper by the peer researchers for their prestigious Annual Research Conference. Two of the three peer researchers delivered the paper in Budapest in September.

1. The Dublin Family Homeless Prevention Service is funded through a partnership with Bord Gáis Energy; for details see the Financial Report.
2. Our Tenancy Sustainment Prevention Services are funded by local authorities and private funders.
3. The Family Homeless Action Team is primarily funded by the Dublin Region Homeless Executive, with essential additional funding from donations. Child Support Workers in the team are funded by the HSE and Tusla. For details see the Financial Report.
4. The SLI is a programme fully funded by the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive and is delivered in partnership with the Peter McVerry Trust and private donations.

In Focus Ireland we know that the most effective challenge to homelessness is to prevent it happening in the first place.

I hope you grow

The Focus Ireland Family Team works to support children and their families who are homeless and to help them secure a home.

A key part of this work is to help parents to protect children from the damage that can be caused by homelessness. Our team includes specialist childcare workers, and their work includes ensuring that the children get a chance to enjoy recreational and creative activities.

As part of this work, in 2018 some of the children experiencing homelessness launched their own book *I Hope You Grow*, which was published by Kids' Own (Ireland's only dedicated publisher of books by children for children) in partnership with Focus Ireland.

In November it was great to see 15 children (and their families) gathered at Dublin's Mansion House to launch their unique book in which they talk about their lives and experiences of homelessness in the midst of a housing crisis. However, this project is not just about homelessness. The project aimed to ensure that the children enjoyed themselves while exploring their creative skills and learning new skills.

The book – which aims to reach an audience of children all over Ireland – contains a blend of poetry, stories, artwork and photography generated during a series of workshops.

In summer 2018 writer Mary Branley and visual artist Maree Hensey worked with the group of children, all of whom were experiencing homelessness, supporting them to develop the work that would subsequently be brought together into this special publication.

Irina, 11, spoke about taking part in this special project: 'I loved taking part. It was great meeting all the other children as they know what it's like to be homeless. It is not easy. It is not nice living in a hotel but we want to give hope to other children in this situation by telling our stories. We want to show all children are the same whether they are at home or currently homeless.'

“It is not nice living in a hotel but we want to give hope to other children in this situation by telling our stories.”

Irina, 11



The book is available to purchase from Kids' Own's website: www.kidsown.ie/shop with 50% of proceeds going to support children and families who are homeless.



Kayleigh Green, Irina Bogdan, Octavian Bogdan, Jordan Leonard and Calum Hughes look at the book from Focus Ireland. Photo: Photo: Leon Farrell/Photocall Ireland.

During the process, the children made observations, and told joyful stories about their holidays and families:

“All day you don't get time to rest, you have to pack and pack and pack. I had no idea where I was going.”

Amir, 8

I live in a hotel. The good thing is my dad has a job there. Orange is my nan's favourite colour and it reminds me of her.

Calum, aged 8

The park was near where we lived but we had to move. The guy was selling the house so we all had to move. It was like a piece of glass shattering. It's sad and you feel like you might not see your cousins again. All day you don't get time to rest, you have to pack and pack and pack. I had no idea where I was going.

Amir, aged 8

The green of the grass is bright and rich and full of bright flowers scattered around the edge, creating a beautiful portrait of calmness and serenity. Even the flap of the butterfly wings and

the gentle buzzing of the bees as they fly from flower to flower add to the peaceful nature of the garden.”

Jordan, aged 10

I was born in Moldova near Romania, but people speak Russian there. I am fluent in Romanian and I am learning Irish here. That means I speak three languages fluently, and I'm learning Irish. In Moldova, I had five chickens and they flew away, sadly. One turtle, eight kittens, three parrots (they barely spoke Russian).

Irina, aged 11

This project was commissioned by Focus Ireland, with funding support from Bord Gáis Energy and was delivered by Kids' Own Publishing Partnership.

This project brought together a group of children who had one thing in common: they have all lived in temporary accommodation. This gave them a shared understanding of each other's lives and a commonality which created a support system for one another.

These junior artists, writers and poets knew that this book would help other children who were living in temporary accommodation not to feel alone and to help them look for some of the good things that were happening in their lives.

Youth Homelessness

Since the current homeless crisis started in 2014, the number of homeless young people has more than doubled.

Of course, young people feel the impact of the overall housing crisis along with every other age group, but they also face additional barriers to securing rented accommodation or social housing.

Vulnerable young people – such as those who grew up in care – run a higher risk of being homeless. International evidence shows that an experience of homelessness at this stage in life increases the risk of being homeless throughout adulthood. Young vulnerable adults often have support needs which are quite distinct from the needs of mature adults, but youth homelessness and the needs of young people have been largely forgotten. Focus Ireland has developed a range of skills and expertise in working with young homeless people.

206

young people were accommodated in Focus Ireland Youth Housing or Aftercare Residential Services during 2018

As with all our services, prevention is the starting point of our work with young people. If we can help to prevent people becoming homeless in the first place we can help change the course of their lives.

Prevention

Dr Paula Mayock and Sarah Parker's research, commissioned by Focus Ireland, which was published in 2014, demonstrates that one cause of youth homelessness is family conflict between teenagers and their families, which can often lead to long-term homelessness. In response to this evidence, Focus Ireland sourced independent funding to set up a pilot **Family Mediation Service**⁵. Working in collaboration with Tusla, we quickly established the effectiveness of this service and Tusla has funded the expansion and development of the service. This innovative service supported 24 young people at high risk of homelessness to stay in the family home during 2018. These successes are the result of intensive family mediation which can defuse a crisis and help families to rebuild relationships.

Youth Housing

In recent years, Focus Ireland has developed a range of **Youth Housing Services**, which vary in the level of support, depending on the needs of the young person – including the development of our internationally innovative **Housing First for Youth (HF4Y)** services. These services work with young people aged 18–26 years who are in unstable or emergency accommodation and for young people at risk of homelessness coming from state care. We achieved this by developing safe, affordable and supported housing to assist young people in their transition to healthy independence. By providing holistic and integrated support that reflects their changing needs, we can support young people in personal development and the attainment of independent living skills. This enables young people to make a positive move to appropriate sustainable accommodation. Focus Ireland's goal is to ensure young people never experience homelessness.

Aftercare

One of our key services in this area continues to be Aftercare⁶, in which skilled aftercare workers support young people who grew up in state care to move into independent adulthood. In Dublin, we provide supported residential accommodation for some young people, while for others our aftercare workers provide support in finding and maintaining accommodation in the private rented sector. In 2018 Aftercare Residential Services Dublin housed 32 young people in two locations in Dublin. As the housing crisis in Dublin deepens, an increasing number of the young care leavers we work with end up living in emergency homeless accommodation or other unsuitable places. This continues to be of very grave concern to the organisation.

In Waterford and Limerick we made further progress in adopting a Housing First for Youth approach to this work. In Waterford,⁷ services supported 30 young people into 22 permanent tenancies, while in Limerick,

our Youth Housing Service⁸ helped 37 young people to secure and maintain tenancies of their own, enabling them to live independently. Cork Youth Housing currently operates a scattered-site transitional housing model, and provided accommodation for 40 young vulnerable people in 2018. The Cork and Limerick project also provides an Outreach Service to young people who were not housed through the project, but is regarded as vital to the success of the project due to its flexible nature.

For many years, Focus Ireland has argued for a stream of housing supply which is specifically ring-fenced for vulnerable young people leaving care. Funding for such housing was one of the most welcome features of Rebuilding Ireland and the scheme that resulted – called 'Tusla CAS' – got off the ground in 2018. Focus Housing - working with Tusla and local authorities - has purchased 44 separate apartments across the country to be rented by young people leaving

care who would otherwise face homelessness. Over the years, if sustained by Government funds, this programme has the potential to build up a substantial housing stock and provide unprecedented security for young vulnerable adults who grew up in care as they mature into independent living.

Challenging Youth Homelessness

Focus Ireland was an active participant in the FEANTSA Youth programme and the European Housing First HF4Y project, sharing our innovative work and bringing international best practice to Ireland. Lisa O'Brien of our Waterford services represented FEANTSA Youth on the FEANTSA Administrative Council. One of the most significant developments of 2018 was the formal launch of a broad-based Coalition to End Youth Homelessness. Focus Ireland is one of the founding members of this Coalition and helped develop the Coalition's platform with its key demand for a new Strategy to End Youth Homelessness.

Focus Ireland has developed a range of Youth Housing Services, which vary in the level of support, depending on the needs of the young person.



5. Family Mediation Services are funded by Tusla (The Child and Family Agency) and by donations.
6. Focus Ireland Aftercare services in Dublin and the South East are funded by Tusla (The Child and Family Agency) and private donations.
7. Waterford HF4Y is funded by Tusla, Waterford City and County Council and charitable donations
8. Limerick Youth Housing Service is a partnership between Limerick City and County Council, Tusla and Focus Ireland, with additional funding from charitable donations.

The Coffee Shop

The Focus Ireland Coffee Shop in Dublin is where Focus Ireland began and it continues to be a first point of contact for people who are homeless in Dublin. In 2018 the Coffee Shop supported 7,645 adults with services ranging from inexpensive nutritious meals to access to expert legal advice on complex issues. As noted in the Family Homelessness section, it has become increasingly difficult to meet the needs of families and individuals with complex problems from a single premises and the organisation is now seeking to establish a new Family Services Centre. When this centre opens, it will allow the Coffee Shop to better respond to the complex needs of some homeless adults.

Single People with Complex Needs

As the housing crisis deepens, an increasing number of people with complex mental health, addiction and behavioural challenges are finding themselves pushed into homelessness.

As the housing crisis deepens, an increasing number of people with complex mental health, addiction and behavioural challenges are finding themselves pushed into homelessness. And as more and more people remain homeless for longer periods, the problems these people face worsen.

Responding to the needs of people with complex problems has always been a central part of the Focus Ireland mission; we have always seen the limitations of providing emergency accommodation and have pioneered a range of housing led approaches – long-term supported housing, tenancy sustainment and Housing First.

Housing First

During 2018 Focus Ireland continued to be one of Ireland's leading providers of Housing First, with an independently assessed level of quality and fidelity to the core principles of the highly successful international model. The Dublin Housing First service⁹ works with the most marginalised people, many of whom are sleeping on the streets and have been repeatedly failed by previous interventions. This approach is about responding to the person's need with understanding and

compassion and, crucially, providing access to a home as the first stage in the process, with intensive supports provided to help sustain the new tenancy.

The team works every day and night of the year, across the greater Dublin area.

Our approach differs from traditional outreach, in that we are working, not to offer treatment or a bed in a hostel, but an appropriate long-term housing solution with support. In 2018 we supported 142 people who had experienced the immense trauma of sleeping rough, sometimes for years on end, to move into and sustain a tenancy in their own home, with on-going support. In 2018 we supported over 170 people, a total of over 80 people have homes due to the work of our Housing First Programme. The tenants continued to have a remarkable success rate with our support, with nine out of every ten tenancies continuing successfully.

Building on our success in Dublin, Focus Ireland has secured the Housing First tenders in Limerick, the South East and in Cork¹⁰ (where we will partner with Cork Simon), and will seek to provide the services elsewhere, either on our own or with relevant partners.

Focus Ireland is committed to sharing our experience and promoting good practice in Housing First in a collaborative way. To further this objective, Focus Ireland is a founder member and Chair of the European Housing First Hub, which is dedicated to promoting and scaling up high-quality Housing First programmes across the EU. To further this work in Ireland, we initiated the Irish Housing First Good Practice Platform, where all organisations which are committed to Housing First can share experience and skills.

Focus Ireland helped to lead the development of an EU-wide Housing First 'Train the Trainers' programme, and five staff from a range of Irish organisations are now accredited Housing First trainers.

9. Dublin Housing First is funded by the Dublin Region Homeless Executive and delivered in partnership with the Peter McVerry Trust.

10. The Housing First services in Limerick, the South East and Cork are funded by the relevant local authorities as part of the Government's National Housing First Action Plan.



7,645

In 2018 the Coffee Shop supported 7,645 people

Focus Housing Association

The delivery of housing remains a core part of our strategy and is still a cornerstone in our work of challenging homelessness and changing lives.

In 2018 we delivered 176 homes through a combination of long-term leasing, acquisitions, short-term leases and tenancies managed by Focus Ireland.

We now provide 1,172 homes around the country and are on track to deliver 750 homes over the course of the current five-year plan to 2020.

That's a doubling of long-term homes provided over a five-year period.

There were also significant developments in governance in 2018, with further clarification and separation between the roles and governance of Focus Ireland and Focus Housing. By the end of 2018 the two bodies operated as two separate legal entities, which play distinct but collaborative roles in the shared objective of challenging homelessness and changing lives.

Through the Focus Housing Association we lease and manage properties in the following areas across the country: Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council, Fingal County Council and in counties Kildare, Carlow, Wexford, Kilkenny, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Clare, Sligo. Focus Ireland provides tenancy support and other services as required to the tenants of all these homes.

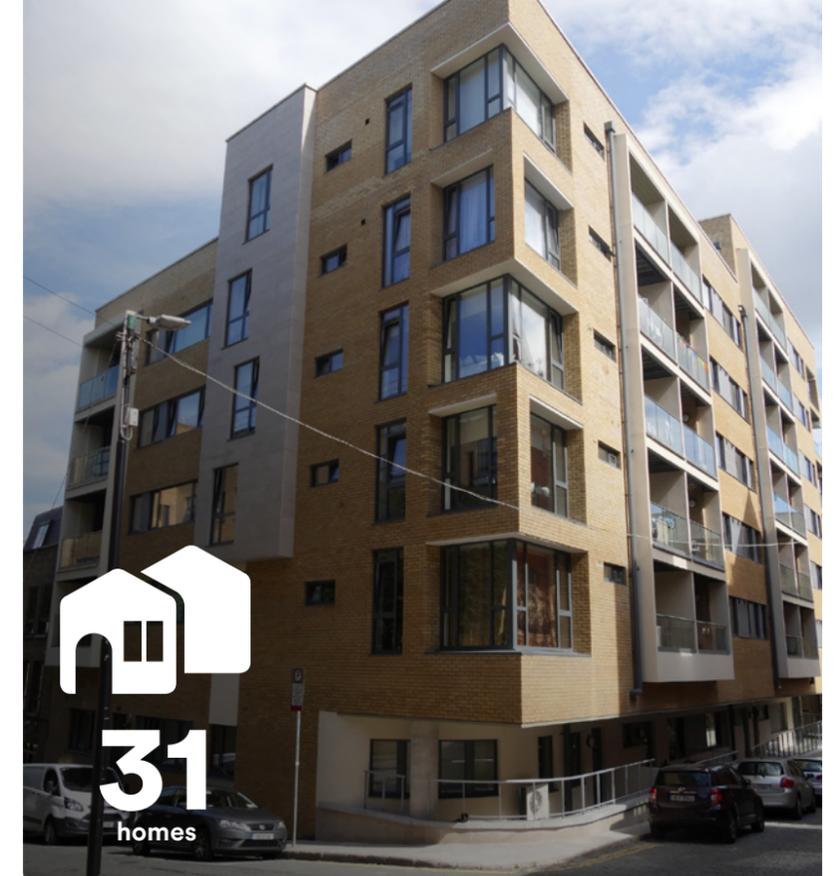
What happens after people leave homelessness?

Focus Ireland's commitment to evaluating the effectiveness of our own services was demonstrated in the publication of 'Are you still ok? – Housing tenancy sustainment among Focus Ireland customers', which verified whether tenancies were still in place six months after customers disengaged from Focus Ireland services. Ninety-five per cent of respondents remained in secure housing after six months.

John's Lane West

By the end of 2018 our major John's Lane West development was nearing completion, with a move-in date in early 2019. The site, which was purchased by Focus Ireland over 20 years ago, has previously provided youth services, food services and, for a few years, emergency hostel beds, but it has always been the intention that it should provide real homes. The building now provides 16 one-bed, 10 two-bed and 5 three-bed homes and is a 'bricks and mortar' manifestation of our belief that it is better to provide homes than emergency beds. People living in the new development will be supported to live independently which is sometimes only a dream for people who were previously homeless.

The new development was built with the support of the Department of Housing, Dublin City Council, as well as financial support from the Housing Finance Agency and also with assistance from generous donors to Focus Ireland. The project was also a tribute to the hard work of those involved with the Focus Ireland property team and staff across all our departments.



Focus Ireland's development John's Lane West in Dublin will provide 31 homes in partnership with the State.

Grange Cohan Waterford

During the year we finished a complete energy-efficiency retro-fit of our estate in Grange Cohan using the SEAI Community Fund. This included new doors and windows, cavity insulation, new air-to-water heat pumps, LED lighting and solid fuel stoves. There were also lighting and heating upgrades in the crèche and office areas. BGE were our energy partners. Prior to the works, the average BER ratings

of the properties were D1 to E2, with the lowest rating being F. Following the works, the average ratings are B1–B2, with the lowest rating being C1. This has not only had a positive impact on our tenants' comfort and utility costs but has also led to an increased pride in the estate, with many tenants placing planters in their gardens. It is intended to add to this initiative next year with funds budgeted for additional landscaping works.

Focus Ireland Housing development at Grange Cohan in Waterford.



Focus Ireland will continue to work across Ireland and we will remain committed to delivering homes to help tackle the housing and homelessness crisis nationwide.

Brian's Story

Brian Somers (47) from Dublin tells how he got clean from drugs over 10 years ago and how Focus Ireland helped him to secure a home and to move on in life.

Brian now works as an Assertive In-reach Homeless Case Manager with Coolmine Rehab Centre and helps others on their path to recovery.

"I started off with solvent abuse when I was a kid. This gradually led to me using class A drugs, imprisonment and homelessness.

When my eldest daughter was a year old I tried to get clean for the first time. It didn't last and I was back to my old selfish self. It's not a nice feeling going in circles as your health and addiction gets worse. You give up on yourself and accept there's no way out.

Then 11 years ago a friend of mine went into treatment. He told me about 12 step meetings and I began a journey with Coolmine, where I attended the Drug-Free Day Programme. I immersed myself in my recovery with like-minded people and graduated from the programme after 1 year.

I was nine months clean and in emergency accommodation when I received the news that I was going to be housed. I had a

meeting with Focus Ireland and I knew I was going to be alright with their support. I was given a housing support worker who drew up a budget plan. She told me to keep receipts and always pay my rent and ESB first. This was great advice which I still do.

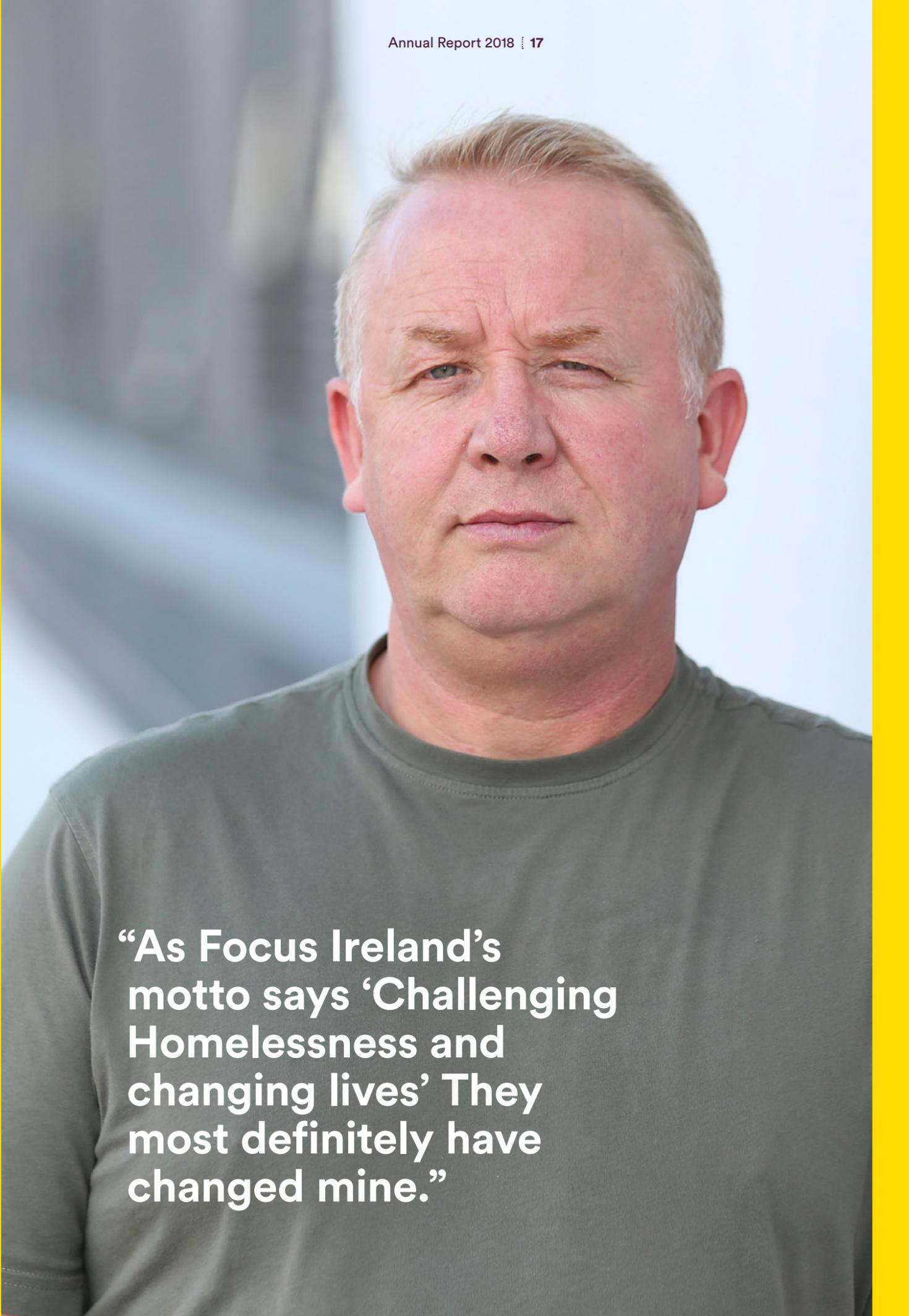
After I moved in I decided to educate myself which was tough as it was so long since school. The amount of support I received from Focus Ireland was brilliant. I soon became Caretaker in the property where I live and completed a degree and got accredited as an addiction counsellor. In between all that I became a father again. Sadly the relationship with the mother didn't last but I now have two beautiful girls.

Life on life's terms is never easy. Just because I turned my life around it doesn't mean I'm exempt from hardships. My brother Thomas (43) had a heart attack two years ago and died four days later. My youngest daughter was only 4 and was with him when he took sick. This was hard on her and all the family. I couldn't have received any better support from Focus Ireland.

Emilia my key worker helped get me through this. Two years on I am glad we all seem to be coping ok. Emilia still phones from time to time to ask how I am. Of course I always say "Yeah, I'm grand". She asks: "Are you sure?" "And then the real stuff comes out. Emilia and Focus Ireland have been a rock for me through the hard times.

More recently my eldest daughter's Mum and Grandmother both passed away nearly in the same week. Soon after this I got confirmation from Dublin City Council that I've been accepted to transfer to 2-bed accommodation. I nearly cried as I believed Shannon's mum was responsible for this and is up there looking after us. This means my two girls can share a room and the little one can have sleep overs with her pals.

In the near future I will be starting a new chapter. I don't know yet who will be in it but I would like to thank Focus Ireland and Emilia from the bottom of my heart."



"As Focus Ireland's motto says 'Challenging Homelessness and changing lives' They most definitely have changed mine."

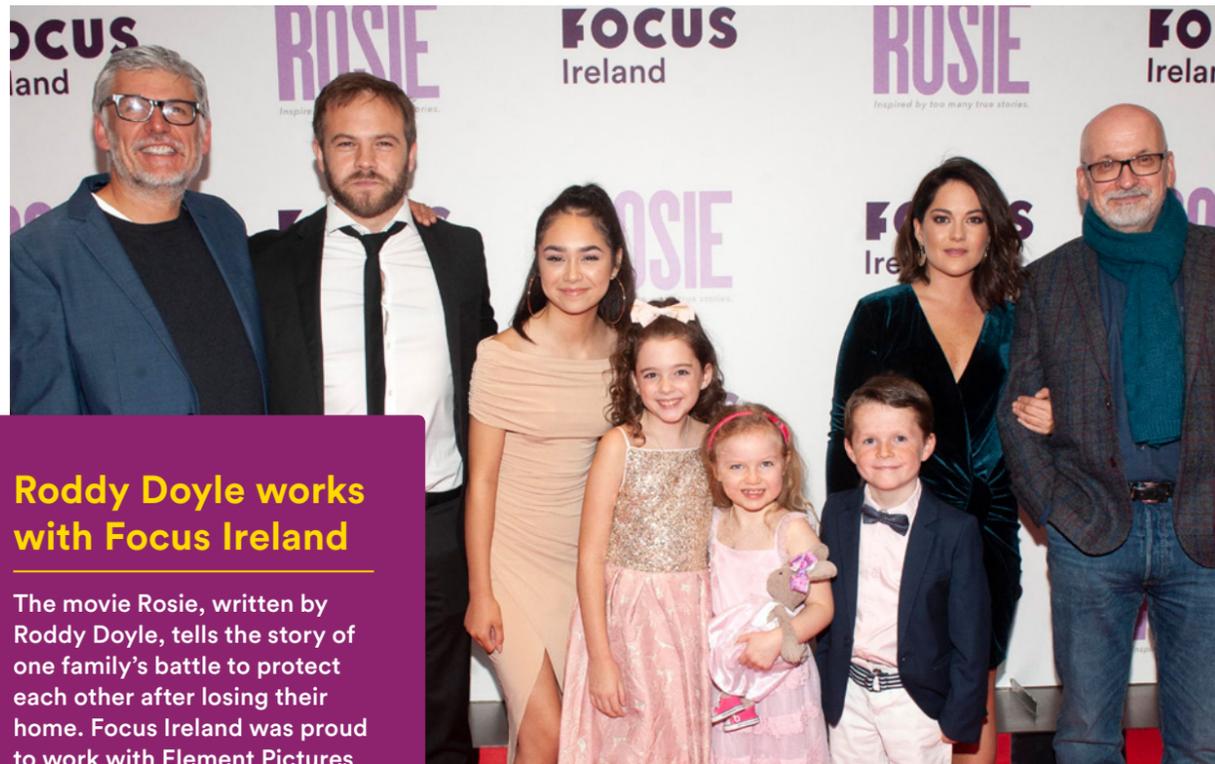
Media Coverage

Focus Ireland works hard through the media to keep the issue of homelessness on the agenda while advocating or the changes required to end the crisis.

We also work to ensure the people who use our services have a voice and can tell their own powerful stories to breakdown stereotypes about people who are homeless.

Traditional media coverage achieved a record audience of over 670 million in 2018, which works out as an Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) of more than €7.5 million for the year (excluding

our extensive broadcast coverage). Meanwhile, on social media, our audience reach on Facebook for 2018 was 16.5 million and we also achieved nearly 4 million unique impressions on Twitter.



Roddy Doyle works with Focus Ireland

The movie Rosie, written by Roddy Doyle, tells the story of one family's battle to protect each other after losing their home. Focus Ireland was proud to work with Element Pictures & Director Paddy Breathnach to assist in this excellent film showing the human face of the crisis.

The Director & team worked with our staff and met with families who were homeless while developing the script & shooting Rosie. The European Premiere was held in association with Focus Ireland in the Light House Cinema in Dublin in Sept 2018.

Challenging Homelessness - Fundraising

Corporate, Major Donors, Trusts and Foundations

In 2018 a total of 347 companies supported our work through corporate partnerships, donations, employee giving and fundraising along with payroll giving. Over €900,000 was raised through our Shine a Light Night sleep out with over 100 business leaders and over 650 employees sleeping out for one night in support of people who are homeless.

2018 saw the third year of our strategic partnership with Bord Gáis Energy, who committed €1.2 million in funding over three years to Focus Ireland to help prevent

family homelessness. Through the partnership we have worked with over 8,400 people and prevented over 2000 families from becoming homeless. We are delighted to announce that this special relationship has been extended for a further three years bringing the total investment from Bord Gáis Energy to €2.4m.

2018 also saw the start of a new two year partnership with Applegreen who raised €79k to help prevent young people from becoming homeless. The highlight of the partnership has been the Applegreen Ball in October.

We appreciated the ongoing commitment of the members of Focus Ireland's giving circles – Women's Philanthropy Circle and Key Circle – which are now in their fourth year, who continue to support young people and families in the escalating crisis.

The second year of our partnership with the Social Innovation Fund Ireland has successfully continued to help Focus Ireland with the development of the Preparation for Education, Training and Employment programme (PETE) across the country.

PETE

Housing is essential, but it is not the only thing needed to help people leave homelessness behind for good. People also need access to education, training and employment. Our employment programme, which supports young care-leavers into employment, also continued its great work during the year and helped 39 people. Meanwhile, our PETE (Preparation for Education, Training and Employment) service worked with 434 people in 2018.



In 2018 we were overwhelmed by the support of Ireland's Business Community for Shine a Light Night as more than €900k was raised across Ireland by businesses and communities 'Giving one night to change a lifetime'.

Community Fundraisers and Beloved Shops:

Communities across Ireland increased their support of Focus Ireland throughout 2018, with many community based groups, clubs, schools and 3rd Level Institutions getting more involved. Many thousands of individuals made time to help us challenge homelessness by raising vital funds for our projects, around the country.

The diversify of the fundraising events and activities which our supporters created and took part in were amazing and very adventurous like over overseas

hikes and treks such as the Camino challenge , Waterford Greenway or our Kilimanjaro Trek! Other events ranged from table quizzes, sleep-outs, marathons, fun runs, dance competitions, talent shows, Beloved shop takeovers, fashion shows, bake sales, Carol Singing, Christmas Jumper Days, Concerts like Rock Against Homelessness and many, many more.

A huge thank you to all who volunteered and donated to our Beloved shops, and to those who participated in the hundreds of community events that took place.



347

companies supported our work through corporate partnerships, donations, employee giving and fundraising along with payroll giving in 2018

Individual donors

More than 23,000 individual donors from across Ireland supported our work in 2018. We continue to be inspired by the commitment and dedication of our supporters, who have responded to appeals, given regular monthly donations, supported our advocacy campaigns and shared our message across social media platforms.

We were delighted to meet with more than 75 of our supporters at our 'donor care' events throughout the year. Our events are hugely important to us as they give our supporters the chance to come in to our offices to meet with and hear directly from our frontline staff about the impact they make possible.

We were honoured to receive 37 gifts made in wills from individuals across Ireland, including properties which had been bequeathed to Focus Ireland. Gifts in wills are a powerful way that supporters can make a lasting difference into the future for the people we support.

We want to thank all of our supporters for the impact they make possible – and for lending their voice to help us advocate on behalf of the people we support.



The Boomtown Rats at the INM Rock Against Homelessness in the Olympia in aid of Focus Ireland which is an annual highlight. Thanks to the Sunday Independent & INM for the great support.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Accounts

The financial results for the year are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The surplus achieved in the year was driven by a combination of achieving a significant level of Fundraising income in conjunction with prudent cost management.

Fundraising activities included working with our corporate partners, supporting those who choose to fundraise for us and organising national events and campaigns.

Each year the generosity of our supporters amazes us. Without them we simply could not do it. 2,000 additional people signed up to support Focus Ireland with a monthly direct debit donation in 2018.

Focus Ireland also operates 'Beloved' retail shops located in Malahide, Dublin and Douglas, Cork. The purpose of these stores is to help raise awareness and funds to support the work carried out by Focus Ireland.

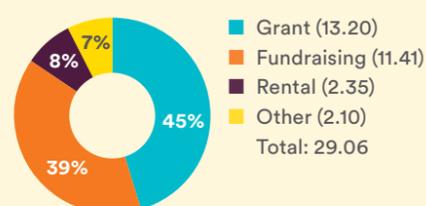
Grant income grew during the year as new services were started and others expanded due to demand. Grant income

now accounts for 45% (2017:44%) of total income.

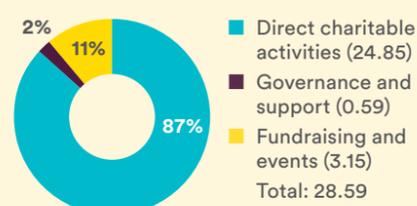
Focus Ireland continued to deliver our housing programme with our property portfolio increasing by just over €16m in the year. 176 new housing units were acquired through various channels such as CAS, Housing Finance Agency, the private rented market and managed properties.

In the past number of years the organisation has invested significantly in provision of both Services and Housing to counteract the effects of the economic recession. As a budgetary strategy the Board had decided, in the interests of organisational stability and sustainability, to concentrate on replenishing the reserves of the organisation with the aim of building a reserve by the end of 2018 of 13 weeks. This was surpassed due to an exceptional two years of fundraising being achieved and we finished 2018 with 18 weeks reserve. This reduces to 15 weeks when we excluding the reserves committed to various projects as outlined by our designated reserve.

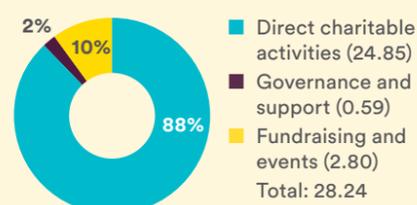
Mix of Income (€m)



Mix of Expenditure (€m)



Mix of Expenditure (Excluding Retail, €m)



Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities

For the financial year ended 31 December 2018

	2018	2018	2018	2017	2017	2017
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
	€	€	€	€	€	€
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	10,023,802	1,383,815	11,407,617	10,446,570	1,478,897	11,925,467
Charitable activities	-	13,197,619	13,197,619	-	12,709,515	12,709,515
Other	4,443,891	3,468	4,447,359	3,997,972	12,430	4,010,402
Total income	14,467,693	14,584,902	29,052,595	14,444,542	14,200,842	28,645,384
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	3,152,300	-	3,152,300	2,758,241	-	2,758,241
Charitable activities	11,516,463	13,535,362	25,051,825	9,059,114	14,121,865	23,180,979
Interest on borrowings	386,199	-	386,199	315,880	-	315,880
Total expenditure	15,054,962	13,535,362	28,590,324	12,133,235	14,121,865	26,255,100
Net income	(587,269)	1,049,540	462,271	2,311,307	78,977	2,390,284
Taxation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year	(587,269)	1,049,540	462,271	2,311,307	78,977	2,390,284

There are no other recognised gains or losses other than those listed above and the net income for the financial year. All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

Restricted funds are resources that are held and maintained separately from other funds. This is in recognition of the circumstances in which the resources were originally received, which determine the way these resources are to be treated.

Unrestricted fund resources held by a charity consist of money and other assets that can be used for any of the charitable aims of the charity. The use of unrestricted funds is not restricted to any particular charitable purpose of the charity.

To review Focus Ireland's full Financial Report please go to bit.ly/2018FOCUS

Consolidated Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2018

	2018	2017
	€	€
Fixed assets		
Fixed assets - properties	102,259,785	86,144,733
Other tangible assets	148,217	137,698
Total fixed assets	102,408,002	86,282,431
Current assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	10,562,882	8,089,378
Debtors	1,826,037	2,752,150
Total current assets	12,388,919	10,841,528
Liabilities		
Creditors: amounts falling due within one financial year	(5,854,552)	(5,907,777)
Net current assets	6,534,367	4,933,751
Total assets less current liabilities	108,942,369	91,216,182
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one financial year		
Capital Assistance Scheme Loans	(73,362,458)	(63,598,297)
Capital Advanced Leasing Facility Loans	(3,267,168)	(1,607,088)
Bank Loans	(13,848,021)	(8,008,346)
Total creditors falling due after more than one year	(90,477,647)	(73,213,731)
Net assets	18,464,722	18,002,451
The funds of the charity		
Restricted income funds	3,471,456	2,421,916
Unrestricted funds	7,501,351	8,078,003
Capital grants and donations	3,301,650	3,312,267
Unrestricted capital reserves	2,590,265	2,590,265
Designated funds	1,600,000	1,600,000
	18,464,722	18,002,451

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