

The Homeless Agency
Annual Report 2006
Making it Home

**HOME
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agency

Acknowledgements

The Homeless Agency would like to thank the voluntary and statutory service providers for their invaluable support in making the achievements outlined in this report possible.

We would like to express special thanks to the members of the Homeless Agency Board, Consultative Forum, Members of the Networks, Steering and Working Groups, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Department of Health and Children, Cross Departmental Team on Homelessness, Health Service Executive, Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council, Voluntary Service Providers, the Homeless Network and all those who contributed their time to the work of the Homeless Agency.

The Homeless Agency Annual Report 2006 Making it Home

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Contents

Looking Back to 2006	1
About the Homeless Agency	3
Progress on Making it Home 2004 –2006	5
Strategic Aims of Making it Home 2004–2006	9
Board Members 2006 and Consultative Forum Members 2006	45
Homeless Agency Networks and Steering Groups	49
Funding	51



Looking Back to 2006

Cathal Morgan

Director · The Homeless Agency

The year 2006 was a very significant year for the Homeless Agency Partnership marking the final year of the action plan *Making it Home 2004–2006*. The Partnership encountered many barriers throughout the year, but strengthened interagency working overcame a number of these challenges in addressing the needs of people who are experiencing homelessness in Dublin.

The Homeless Agency Partnership is underpinned by a ten-year vision, which states that long-term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough will be eliminated in Dublin by 2010. The process for developing the third action plan *A Key to the Door 2007–2010* to work towards this vision took place in 2006. The process was very comprehensive and inclusive of all statutory and voluntary sector agencies providing services in Dublin in the area of homelessness and social inclusion. The consultation process that took place in 2006 was vital in ensuring that the balance between preventative and long-term solutions to homelessness is achievable and that all partners to the Homeless Agency arrangements have signed up to the vision and strategic aims set out in the plan.

A significant number of key actions in *Making it Home 2004–2006* were progressed and completed in 2006 including the development of strategies focusing on prevention, improvement of interventions when people become homeless and improvement on the learning, collation and accuracy of information available on homelessness.

A number of new initiatives were developed in 2006 including the Care and Case Management Strategy, Holistics Needs Assessment and the Safetynet Service.

We continued to extend the level of information on homelessness and also the responses that are in place to address it in Dublin. We conducted a numbers of presentations both on a national level and on a European level to generate further awareness about the issues affecting people who are at risk of homelessness. Our information resources including; LINK, CornerStone, Update, Homeless Agency website and library continued to be accessed by people sourcing information on homelessness in Dublin.

I would like to thank Dr Derval Howley for her tremendous work as director of the Homeless Agency until the end of 2006.

I would also like to extend our gratitude to the ongoing support of both voluntary and statutory organisations working together to achieve the vision of the Homeless Agency Partnership. This interagency working has resulted in significant challenges being met in addressing the needs of people who are homeless in Dublin. It is important that this level of commitment continues to ensure that all services involved in the partnership can work together effectively together towards the elimination of long-term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough.

Cathal Morgan

Director · The Homeless Agency



About the Homeless Agency

The Homeless Agency Partnership was established as part of the Government Strategy on Homelessness in 2001. The partnership is comprised of voluntary and statutory agencies, working together to implement agreed plans for the delivery of services to people who are experiencing homelessness, assisting them to move to appropriate long term housing and independence. The Homeless Agency is responsible for planning and coordination of the delivery of quality services for people who are experiencing homelessness in Dublin. It also carries out research and administers funding on behalf of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Health Service Executive.

Our Vision

- By 2010, long-term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough will be eliminated in Dublin.
- The risk of a person or family becoming homeless will be minimal due to effective preventative policies and services.
- Where it does occur, homelessness will be short-term and all people who are homeless will be assisted into appropriate housing and the realisation of their full potential and rights.

Our Mission

We have a three-part mission

- We address the current gaps and deficiencies in services and accommodation, including long-term housing, for people who are homeless in Dublin.
- We ensure that mainstream policies and services focus on preventing people from becoming homeless.

- We ensure that people who are experiencing homelessness can get the services they need. This ensures that:
 - they spend as little time as possible homeless, and
 - they are helped to sustainable long-term housing and independence.

Our Values and Principles

We work according to the values and principles below.

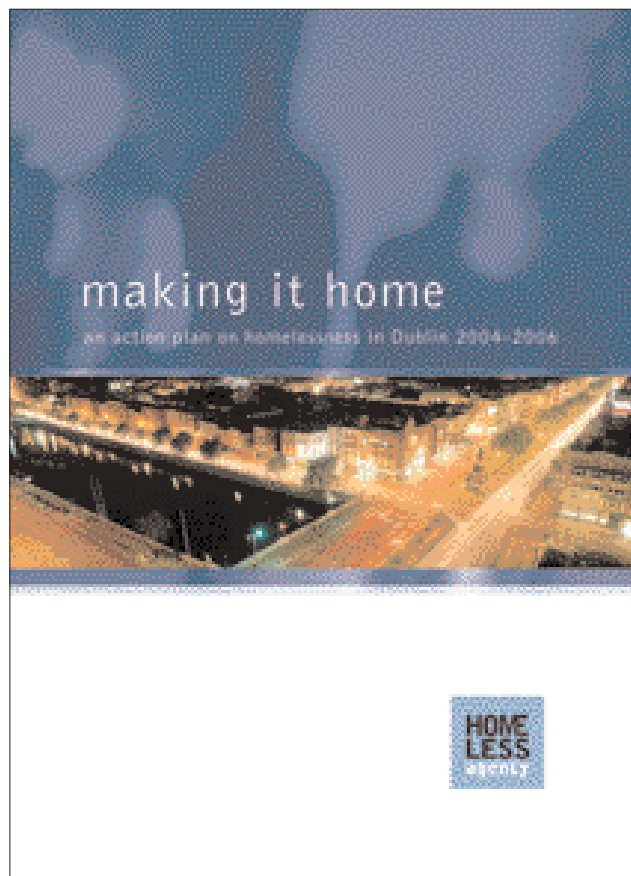
- Homelessness is solvable and preventable.
- Homelessness has as much to do with social exclusion as with housing.
- Every household is entitled to a place they can call home that is secure and appropriate to their needs and potential.
- People who become homeless are entitled to services of the highest quality.
- Each person is unique and must be valued as such.
- People who become homeless have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to have their beliefs and choices respected.
- We value the skills, experience and expertise of people providing services to people who are experiencing homelessness. Their input is important to how services are planned and developed.
- People who are homeless should be involved in decisions that affect them.

Making it Home 2004–2006

The structure of *Making it Home 2004–2006* was built around achieving the vision for 2010, similar to the previous action plan *Shaping the Future 2001–2003*.

In *Making it Home* the vision was supported by six strategic aims, these included:

- 1** Ensuring that services are effective in addressing the needs of people who are experiencing homelessness.
- 2** Providing effective leadership and coordination in the implementation of the action plan.
- 3** Reduction in the number of households who become homeless.
- 4** Improving information available on homelessness and the responses to it.
- 5** Ensuring that each local area develops effective responses to homelessness.
- 6** Increasing housing options for single people who are homeless.



Supporting the strategic aims were 43 objectives and 120 actions. The Homeless Agency's performance in completing these objectives and actions was externally reviewed in 2006.

The principle method of assessing the performance of *Making it Home* 2004–2006 was analysis of the 120 actions and the extent to which each had been achieved.

Due to the fact that the Homeless Agency is a partnership body, for some actions the lead agency was not the Homeless Agency itself, but other partner organisations. In most cases the other agency was one or more of the four Dublin local authorities and/or the Health Service Executive. The Homeless Agency was the sole or joint lead agency for 85 actions and the other agencies were the lead agencies for 35 actions.

Overall, the actions were assessed as:

- Completed or very substantially completed: more than 90% complete
- Considerable progress made: approximately 75% complete
- Significant progress made: approximately 50% complete
- Some progress made: approximately 25% complete
- Not done or very little progress made: less than 10% complete

When this assessment is applied to a continuous action it refers to the extent to which it is being implemented, since by definition a continuous action cannot be completed. So for example an action concerned with monitoring would be assessed by the extent to which all relevant aspects of the activity are being monitored.

The results of applying this classification to the 120 actions are shown in the table below:

Actions	Number	Percentage
Completed or very substantially completed: more than 90% complete	66	55%
Considerable progress made: approx 75% complete	16	13%
Significant progress made: approx 50% complete	25	21%
Some progress made: approx 25% complete	5	4%
Not done or very little progress made: less than 10% complete	8	7%
Total	120	100%

The table below breaks down these results by strategic aim.

Strategic Aim	Total no of actions	Completed or very substantially completed: more than 90% complete	At least 50% complete
1 Prevention	11	55%	100%
2 Leadership & Co-ordination	20	60%	100%
3 Ensure services are effective	19	42%	95%
4 Better data	14	57%	93%
5 Local response	47	60%	85%
6 More housing options	9	44%	56%

It can be seen that for five of the six strategic aims, all or nearly all actions were at least 50% complete. However, only just over half of the actions in Strategic Aim 2 were at least 50% complete.

The next table examines the actions that were less than 50% complete. The evaluator and the Homeless Agency staff identified the primary reason for the lack of progress.

Reason why action incomplete	No of actions
Unforeseen problems – action will not be completed	2
Action became redundant – will not be completed	5
Action delayed but will be completed	6
Total	13

The evaluator and Homeless Agency staff identified six core actions from the 120 actions set out in *Making it Home*, each of which represented a major initiative that would assist in the achievement of the vision. The extent to which these actions were achieved is indicated in the table below.

Comprehensive prevention policy	Completed
Source housing in private sector	Some progress made
Tenancy sustainment service	Completed
Assessment of needs of long-term hostel residents	Completed
Continue to develop primary health care initiatives	Considerable progress made
Local authority lettings to homeless households	Varied between local authorities

The limited progress made in sourcing housing in the private rented sector can be explained by the introduction and relatively slow implementation of the Rental Accommodation Scheme, as well as other blockages in the private rented sector. The need for long-term supports alongside tenancies was also identified, as a barrier to people with significant support needs gaining tenancies in the private rented sector.

While the progress made towards completing this action was disappointing, considerable progress was made in the realisation of other actions. In particular, the completion of a comprehensive prevention strategy and the establishment of a tenancy sustainment service both have the capacity to make a very significant impact on homelessness in years to come.

One local authority exceeded its target of allocations to homeless households, two local authorities did not reach their targets and one local authority did not have a target.



Strategic Aim 1

To ensure that services are effective in addressing the needs of people who are experiencing homelessness

There has been considerable progress in interagency working between statutory and voluntary organisations and this has manifested itself in a greater understanding of the respective constraints and opportunities that characterise different kinds of organisations, which in turn has led to more constructive dialogue and a commitment to addressing homelessness through partnership.

Funding for homeless services increased over the course of *Making it Home 2004–2006*. Without this, many crucial initiatives would not have happened. Funding is necessary but not sufficient for the achievement of the Homeless Agency's vision.

In 2006, the Homeless Agency continued to provide funding and support to the provision of the following services:

- four street outreach services including Dublin City Council Nightbus Service
- ten advice, food and information services
- 14 emergency accommodation services
- 21 transitional accommodation services
- 12 long-term supported housing services
- five settlement services
- four detox/rehab services

Emergency Evaluations

In 2006 evaluations were carried out in 16 emergency homeless services in the Dublin area. A steering group was set up in 2006 comprised of statutory and voluntary organisations concerned with homelessness in Dublin. Fieldwork on the evaluations was carried out between March and June 2006 and further fieldwork took place between September and December 2006. Continued work on the evaluations will take place in 2007, whereby a report examining recommendations will be developed on each individual service and will be implemented throughout homeless services thereafter.

Service Level Agreements

The Homeless Agency Partnership has adopted the quality standards set out in *Putting People First – A good practice handbook for homeless services*. In 2006, the Homeless Agency required that services monitor their progress in relation to service delivery in accordance with the strategic aims of *Making it Home 2004–2006*, key performance indicators and relevant quality standards as outlined.



Strategic Aim 2

Providing Effective Leadership and Coordination in the Implementation of the Action Plan

In 2006, the Homeless Agency commissioned a number of pieces of work focusing on key issues that are affecting people who are experiencing homelessness in Dublin.

Holistic Needs Assessment and Care Plan

In 2006, the Homeless Agency and the Health Service Executive developed a Holistic Needs Assessment Pilot and Care Plan. The aim of the assessment is to identify the current needs of the service users and begin to address those needs through services currently available, identifying gaps in current service provision and making recommendations for future service development to meet these needs.

In early 2006, a pilot was carried out in four services in Dublin including a total of 61 assessments being completed and 32 staff members being trained across the pilot projects.

The assessments captured the aspirations of individuals using homeless services including the wish to move out of homelessness and to live independently and also the interest in exploring training and employment opportunities. A steering group was set up to oversee the pilot and in September 2006 agreed that a structured roll out of the assessment tool would take place to introduce it to the rest of the homeless sector in Dublin. The strategy agreed and adopted by the sector was to train a nominated group of individuals from across homeless services to provide cross-sectoral training.

Training for Trainers course was developed to support the effective roll out of the assessment tool and associated care plan. The training took place in October and November in 2006. It was envisaged that nominated participants will provide one-day training courses to homeless services, with four courses to be provided by each trainer in 2007.

The training courses will be completed by May 2007, at this point all emergency services in Dublin will have received training in the Holistic Needs Assessment and implementation advisors will have been identified in each service. The next service area to be targeted will be settlement service providers and transitional housing providers and training courses will be provided for these services by December 2007.

One day training courses in early 2008 will target long-term supported housing and ancillary service providers including drug service providers and mental health service providers. In 2008 the one-day training course will also be mainstreamed as part of the Homeless Agency Learning and Performance Schedule. A panel of Trainers will be formed from those who participated in the Training for Trainers Course in 2007.

Care and Case Management

In 2006, The Homeless Agency Partnership committed to the implementation of a Care and Case Management system across homeless services in Dublin.

The distinction between Care and Case Management is as follows:

Care Management is the support provided to the Case Management process through sector wide planning, monitoring, evaluating and 'trouble-shooting'. The Care Manager is responsible for coordination, supporting Case Managers and dealing with barriers and blockages across and between sectors. This role is provided by the Homeless Agency's Integrated Services Coordinator.

Case Management is a process, which is used to holistically provide multiple services to an individual/ family, through the use of a detailed assessment and development of a care plan relevant to their distinct needs. The Case Manager is responsible for planning and management of individual cases within and across relevant organisations.

The Case Management Model will involve the development of a range of case management tools and processes, in consultation with service providers, which will improve the delivery of services. The following tools are currently in place or are being developed and include:

- Holistic Needs Assessment
- Risk Assessment
- Care Plan
- Job description of Care Manager and Case Manager
- Interagency protocols including; referral protocol, responsibilities and accountability agreement, case conference protocols, confidentiality agreements and data protection protocol, gaps and blocks protocol detailing external and internal supports, monitoring and evaluation mechanism, service user feedback mechanism and outcome measurement

These tools and processes will provide supports to the case management process and promote clarity, consistency and accountability in the responses of services to services to service users who may have a range of high support needs.

All services funded under the Homeless Agency arrangements have committed to implementation of the Holistic Needs Assessment and to work within a Care and Case Management Approach

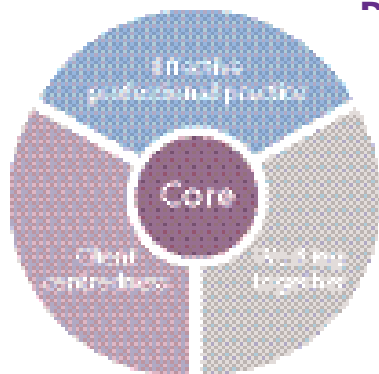
In the absence of agreed standardised ways to collaborate, the Care and Case Management strategy sets out to develop agreement across services about how they can collaborate more effectively. The Case management strategy will involve the development of a range of Case Management tools and processes, in consultation with service providers, which will improve the collaborative delivery of services.

The Homeless Agency's Integrated Services Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating this strategy: acting as a sectoral 'care manager' for the development and implementation of Care and Case Management processes within homeless services. The Integrated Services Co-ordinator has a co-ordinating role and will not get actively involved in individual cases as this will be the function of Case managers appointed by service providers

Rapid Needs Assessment

The Homeless Agency worked with the local area forums in inner city Dublin to pilot a project to conduct a rapid needs assessment of individuals who are mis-using alcohol and drugs in public spaces. Some of these individuals also have children.

The aim of the pilot was to work with the individuals involved to assess their needs and to link them with existing services. The Homeless Agency will receive details and outcomes from the pilot by the end of 2007.



Development of Competency Framework

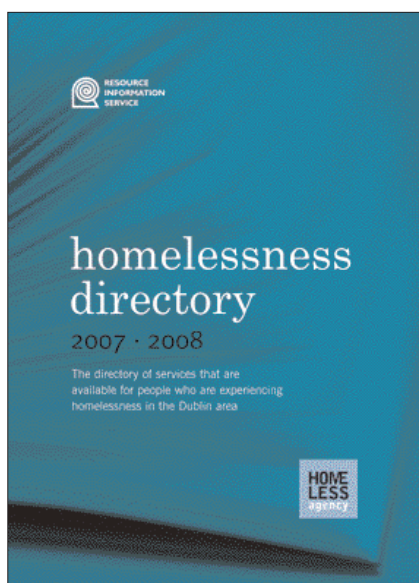
The Homeless Agency commissioned the development of a Competency Framework for homeless services in 2005 as part of the Learning and Performance Strategy 2005/2006. This framework was developed to underpin the vision of 'meeting the needs of homeless people by developing a quality workforce'. The Competency Framework was designed following extensive consultation and dedication from many workers at all levels within the sector. It outlines in detail the behaviours that people working within the sector would need to demonstrate in their roles to ensure that service users have access to a skilled and competent workforce who can meet the sectors real needs in an effective and holistic way.

Phase 2 of the Competency Framework commenced in August 2006. It benefited individual organisations and services, particularly with regard to recruitment procedures. Phase 2 of this project will be linked to recruitment and selection and will deliver clearly defined job descriptions, a range of assessment tools, guidelines manual for managers, workshops supporting the recruitment process and also an opportunity for organisations to share knowledge.

Phase 2 of the Competency Framework will be rolled out by March 2007 and will allow staff within homeless services to develop skills in the area of competencies and facilitation, learn best practice from leading specialists in the field of Competency Frameworks, have the opportunity for personal and professional development. The Competency Framework will bring a number of benefits to the organisation including a common language for performance across the sector and also a measurement process including key indications of what behaviours will be valued and recognised.

The rollout of the Competency Framework will take full cognisance of the roles as determined in the report 'Work Worth Doing' in which staffing in 140 homeless services throughout Ireland was reviewed. The rollout will align the Competency Framework competencies for all levels for the following roles across the sector as outlined in the report: Project Manager, Project Leader, Project Worker, Assistant Project Worker, Night Worker and Child Care Worker.

Development and Publication of Homelessness Directory 2007–2008



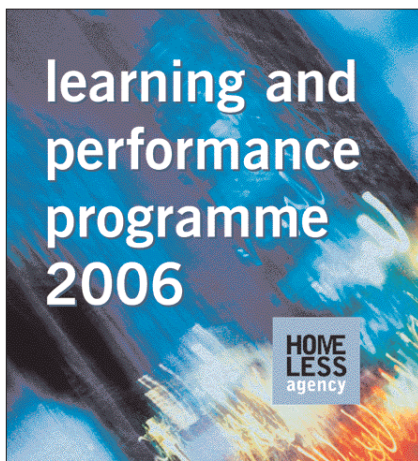
The Homelessness Directory 2007/2008 is the fourth edition of the directory of services for people who are experiencing homelessness in Dublin. The publication was completed and published in early December 2006 and includes a comprehensive listing of all specialist homeless services, for adults, families and young people, as well as information on mainstream and general services, which provide support to people who are experiencing homelessness.

The Directory provides up to date information on the range of services available including details on access criteria, referral procedures, staffing and support services offered. It also provides information on the rights and entitlements of people including income maintenance, accommodation and other services.

The Homelessness Directory provides information on over 200 accommodation, support and advice services. It is divided into three main sections. The first section provides general information on services that are available for people who are experiencing homelessness in Dublin including how services are organised and delivered, statutory responsibilities and entitlements for people who are homeless. The second and third section contains detailed information on accommodation and advice and support services. These two sections are in turn divided into sub sections for example the accommodation section is divided into emergency, transitional housing and long-term, with a special section on services for women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

The Homelessness Directory provides assistance to any person working with people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in the Dublin area. The Directory is regularly updated and the Homeless Agency welcomes information on any services omitted, and also any new services, which are planned for the future. The Directory can also be accessed on the Homeless Agency website on www.homelessagency.ie

Learning and Performance Programme 2006



As outlined in the 2005–2006 Learning and Performance Strategy the aim of Learning and Performance is to ensure that: *'Every person who is homeless has the right to expect that all staff and managers they come in contact with will have the skills and capacity to do their job well'*

In 2006, the Learning and Performance Team and Network have been committed to ensuring that all learning options provided are practical, effective, relevant and stimulating for workers within the homeless services sector.

From the feedback received from homeless services in 2006, via the participant module assessment forms, feedback via the Learning and Performance Network and individuals throughout the sector it is evident that the Learning and Performance Programme 2006 was experienced as being very informative, clear and effective in creating a real learning experience for workers within the homeless sector while also keeping participants interest.

The Learning and Performance Programme is designed to meet the needs of front line staff working within the homeless services sector. The Homeless Agency in conjunction with the Learning and Performance Network is engaged in ensuring that both the existing and emerging needs of the sector are met by providing learning options that are relevant to the needs of the participants who attend the modules. As an integral part of the programme participants are requested to complete pre and post module assessments. These assessments are vital when assessing the various aspects of the learning programme.

Rental Accommodation Scheme

The Homeless Agency met with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in March 2006 to discuss expansion of the Rental Accommodation Scheme to people who are experiencing homelessness. It was proposed that individuals would qualify for assistance on this scheme and would no longer need to be in receipt of rent supplement for the minimum requirement of 18 months.

Needs Assessment for EU10 Migrant Workers

The Homeless Agency in partnership with Merchants Quay Ireland carried out a rapid needs assessment to gather information relating to the numbers of EU10 nationals presenting as homeless, the profile of EU10 individuals accessing homeless services, to determine their requirements upon arriving in Ireland and more broadly to measure the impact on homeless services.

The assessment took place for one week starting on Monday December 4th 2006 whereby all non-Irish nationals experiencing homelessness during this period were invited to participate in study. The project included a questionnaire, focus groups and the commissioning

of a social researcher with Polish, Lithuanian and/or Latvian language skills, given that a high number of service users presenting to homeless services are from the EU10 states.

The assessment followed on from the *Away from Home and Homeless* report, whereby day and food homeless services have been reporting an increase in the number of people from the EU10 countries accessing their services. The assessment was carried out in order to inform ongoing service planning within the homeless sector.

The research findings will be analysed and report completed and published in 2007.

Garda Vetting

Dublin City Council agreed to coordinate vetting applications of new staff on behalf of homeless service providers within the Dublin region including the four local authorities. Dublin City Council nominated three staff from the Homeless Services Sector to act as 'Authorised Signatories' who would undergo training in vetting procedures by the end of 2006.

Development of A Key to the Door Action Plan 2007–2010

Moving on from Making it Home 2004–2006, the next action plan will run from 2007–2010. The focus of the new plan will be to work to achieve the vision, which is that by 2010, long term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough will be eliminated in Dublin. The risk of a person or family becoming homeless will be minimal due to effective preventative policies and services. Where it does occur, homelessness will be short term and all people who are homeless will be assisted into appropriate housing and the realisation of their full potential and rights as citizens.

The new action plan *A Key to the Door 2007–2010* will aim to ensure that all actions and initiatives undertaken by the Homeless Agency Partnership are focused on the achievement of the vision by 2010. The plan will have appropriate targets in addressing homelessness before 2010. The period 2007–2010 should see the further development of a sustainable, interacting network of homeless services that will continue to provide for service users needs.

A Key to the Door 2007–2010 will take recommendations from the evaluation of *Making it Home 2004–2006* and also feedback from service users, the Homeless Agency Board, Consultative Forum, Action Plan Steering Group, Local Authorities, Health Services Executive, Homeless Agency Networks and Working Groups, Voluntary and Statutory Organisations and Service Users.

The key strategic aims of the new action plan will focus on the prevention of homelessness for those at risk, the provision of effective services in each local area to address the accommodation, housing, health and other relevant needs of people who are homeless in that area and also ensuring sufficient long-term supports as required, for people who are homeless, especially single person households. The action plan will be published in early 2007.

The first round of open consultation days took place in June 2006, which focused on evaluating the implementation of *Making it Home Action Plan 2004–2006* and received feedback for priority actions for the new action plan.

The second round of open consultations took place on Friday September 1st and Tuesday September 5th 2006 and had a strong attendance from organisations working with people who are experiencing homelessness in Dublin. In addition to the consultations that took place with independent consultant Simon Brooke and various organisations on an individual basis, this was the second opportunity to discuss the proposed direction of the action plan. A full day consultation was held with the Board and Consultative Forum on September 18th to review the Action Plan.

Submissions

The Homeless Agency made a number of submissions to strategic plans of other organisations including:

- Submission to the Mental Health Commission on *A Vision for A Recovery Model in Irish Mental Health Services*
- Submission to the National Development Plan 2007–2010
- Submission to the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) on Improving the Delivery of Quality Public Services
- Submission to the Department of Health and Children Regarding the Proposal to Establish the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) and the Office of the Chief Inspector of Social Services
- Submission for consideration by the Dublin City Council's Central Area Forum Regarding Outreach and Day Services

European Context

The Homeless Agency was in contact with a number of organisations in Europe who are working with people who are experiencing homeless. Contact with European organisations and agencies allowed the Homeless Agency to share experiences of best practice and also further the knowledge base of the Agency in relation to how homelessness is addressed on a European level.

The Homeless Agency presented at the European Observatory on Homelessness Research Conference in Dundee, Scotland in March 2006 and focused on 'Intervention Strategy on Social Exclusion and Homelessness in Europe'.

The Agency participated in the Local Authorities Forum in Brussels, which was hosted by FEANTSA. It provided an opportunity for mutual learning about certain issues that were impacting on people who are homeless and homeless services across Europe.

The Homeless Agency also attended a meeting of senior civil servants responding to or eliminating homelessness, whereby representatives from the Irish Government Cross Departmental Team on Homelessness, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Health Service Executive and the voluntary sector also attended. This meeting provided an open platform for discussion with civil servants from other countries throughout Europe and the aim is to continue this forum.

Strategic Aim 3

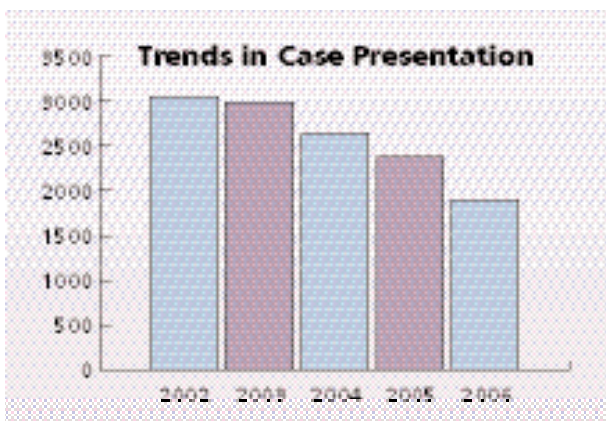
Reduction in the number of households who become homeless

The following is an overview of the number of cases presenting as homeless to the Homeless Persons Unit from 2002 to 2006.

Cases Presenting as New or Repeat to the Homeless Persons Unit – By Time

(Trends in Case Presentation 2002–2006)

Year	Cases	New/Rept	Adults	Children	People	SM	SW	Cpl	OPF	Cpl+Ch	Oth
2002	3049	N/A	3319	839	4158	2090	351	124	334	150	
2003	2988	N/A	3151	556	3707	2166	427	86	232	77	
2004	2642	1878/764	2683	564	3247	1941	290	68	202	57	84
2005	2377	1902/475	2446	595	3041	1625	309	83	238	54	68
2006	1895	1615/280	1958	541	2499	1240	299	81	183	37	55



Tenancy Sustainment

The Dublin City Tenancy Sustainment Service was set up in January 2006 to deliver a dedicated service to tenants at risk of homelessness, working to ensure their tenancies are sustained and homelessness prevented. A Homeless Agency Partnership Initiative, the service is contracted from and delivered by Dublin Simon Community.

The service works proactively with tenants in their own homes to ensure they break the cycle of homelessness and avoid returning to the streets. A team of 12 professionals work with those moving from a homeless situation into a new home, and those in existing tenancies that may be at risk. The service offers housing support with specialist interventions by co-ordinating with local community services and professionals.

The service had its first active cases in March 2006.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council and Fingal County Council now all employ Tenancy Sustainment Officers to support persons who are at risk of losing their homes.

Outreach

Among the people experiencing homelessness, there is a group who are either sleeping rough or who are at serious risk of sleeping rough. People in this group often present with high support needs (e.g. addiction and/or mental ill health). It is the task of street outreach services to help people in this group to become stable enough to be fully assessed and assisted into longer-term accommodation.

Various homeless services in Dublin work with those who are sleeping rough/at risk of sleeping rough. The Dublin City Council Homeless Services Night Bus plays a vital role in making contact with people and bringing them to accommodation. The Night Bus works in co-operation with the Homeless Persons Unit freephone service to identify those in need of the service on a nightly basis and works with a range of emergency accommodation providers who supply beds to Night Bus clients.

Dublin Simon Community, Focus Ireland and Merchants Quay Ireland provide street outreach services that are in contact with people who are sleeping rough or who spend a lot of time on the streets. The aim of these services is to meet people and to help them engage with accommodation and other services, with a view to moving into more stable accommodation and ultimately out of homelessness.

The Health Service Executive's Multi-Disciplinary Team works to link rough sleepers with health services.



Strategic Aim 4

Improving Information Available on Homelessness and the Responses to it

LINK

Dublin LINK is an Internet based database system, which is provided to core statutory and voluntary homeless services in Dublin. LINK is a shared system, which assists care and case management by recording basic information for homeless people accessing services in Dublin. Access to LINK is strictly controlled via banking level security combined with a user-level-access facility.

The Homeless Agency continued to provide training to core statutory and voluntary homeless services during 2006, and laid the plans for the future roll-out of a Train the Trainer programme which will enable nominated staff within Homeless Service to up skill on LINK and provide training to their colleagues in house.

During 2006 the Homeless Agency ran another Freedom of Information and Data Protection Training Seminar. To ensure continued compliance with these laws, representatives from The Office of the Data Protection Commissioner examined and approved protocols put in place around LINK.

Through the medium of the existing networks, the Homeless Agency began streamlining the data collection process on LINK. This involved a full examination of all data collected by LINK with a view to providing an easier to use streamlined LINK in early 2007.

Review of LINK

In 2006 the Homeless Agency commissioned Datability Ltd to conduct a full review of the Dublin LINK Client Database system, as recommended by the Homeless Agency action plan for 2004–2006, Making it Home. The review began in September 2006 with a view to completion in the first quarter of 2007. The reviewers conducted focus groups with LINK

users, interviewed the developers of LINK (Resource Information Services) and completed over 100 questionnaires with Project Workers, Project Managers and Senior Management within Homeless Services and the Homeless Agency.

The review will examine the extent to which LINK is being used by homeless service providers to share information, work more effectively with clients, coordinate and avoid duplication of work with other agencies, make decisions about programmes and services and complete research.

The review will aim to clarify what should be kept from the accumulated experience with the LINK client recording system, make recommendations for improving shared data about homeless clients, provide an overview of LINK user requirements and make recommendations to help homeless service providers in developing their approach to shared client data in an effective manner.



Launch of Away from Home and Homeless Report

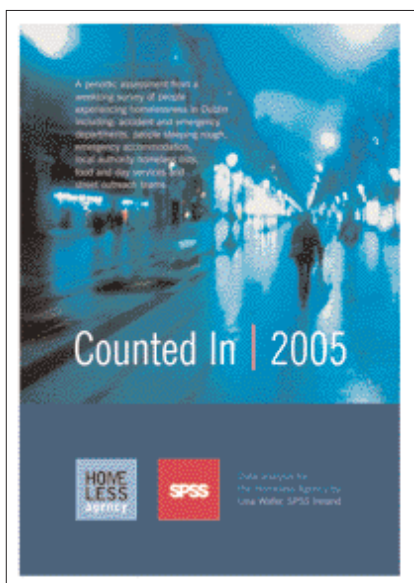
The Homeless Agency launched Away from Home and Homeless – Quantification and profile of EU10 Nationals Using homeless services on January 23rd 2006, which included recommendations to address their needs. The event was hosted by the Homeless Agency and included presentations from TSA Consultancy and Emigrant Advice. It was well attended by representatives from voluntary and statutory services working with people who are homeless.

Launch of the Homeless Agency Research Series



The Homeless Agency launched the research report series and disseminated the findings and recommendations of the reports to the homeless services sector on February 6th 2007. The report series included; A Review of Funding, Review of Participation Structures, Evaluations of the Rough Sleepers Case Management Pilot Project, Review of Temporary Accommodation, Planning for Children, Care and Case Management: Assessment of the Homeless Agency Model, Review of Food and Food Centres and Couples and Families in B&Bs: Potential for Access Housing Unit Referrals.

Launch of Counted In, 2005 – Periodic Assessment of Homelessness in Dublin



The Homeless Agency report 'Counted In, 2005' based on the periodic assessment of homelessness carried out in March 2005, was launched by the Minister for Housing and Urban Renewal on May 25th 2006 in the Mansion House. Other speakers at the event were the Chair of the Board of the Homeless Agency, SPSS Ireland Consultants who were commissioned to analyse the information and report and the Director of the Homeless Agency.

Counted In, 2005 is a weeklong survey of people experiencing homelessness in Dublin. It includes people accessing accident and emergency departments, people sleeping rough, emergency accommodation, local authority homeless lists, food and day services and street outreach teams. It was carried out in the last week of March 2005.

The 2005 figures show a 19% decrease on the total population of people experiencing homelessness in Dublin from the previous assessment in 2002. *Counted in, 2005* found that the total number of people who presented as homeless in Dublin including adults and children was 2,015 individuals. This comprised 1,361 households made up of 1,552 adults.

CornerStone

CornerStone is the publication of the Homeless Agency and is produced four times a year. CornerStone raises current issues relating to homelessness and provokes discussion and debate on a broad range of housing and health issues. It introduces personnel working within the homeless sector as well as profiling homeless services. In 2006, CornerStone was distributed widely among homeless services, academic libraries, local councilors, Health Service Executive, local authorities and international homeless agencies.



Current and past issues of CornerStone are also available to download on the Homeless Agency website at <http://www.homelessagency.ie/research/cornerstone.asp> and the table below highlights the total downloads for 2006.

Issue	Date	Number of downloads over 2006
Issue 26	March 2006	305
Issue 27	June 2006	149
Issue 28	October 2006	186
Issue 29	December 2006	125

The following topics were covered in 2006:

- An Ounce of Prevention (Comprehensive Preventative Strategy)
- Building for Inclusion
- Counted In 2005 (Homeless Assessment)
- Housing and Disability
- Housing Need: The Poor Relation in the Irish Housing System
- Makeroom – NGO Campaign
- Portrait of a Project
- Rethinking Renting
- Review of the Implementation of the Governments Integrated and Preventative Homeless Strategies
- Review: Housing Contemporary Ireland
- Tenant Purchase – Time for a review
- Tenancy Sustainment Service
- The invisible child
- Towards 2016

CornerStone Evaluation

An evaluation of CornerStone was carried out in 2006. Approximately 100 individuals from the mailing list; homeless and non-homeless services including local authorities, health services, addiction and rehabilitation services, mental health services, hospitals and citizen information centres and housing associations took part in the evaluation.

60% of readers surveyed said CornerStone was useful for their organisation and 74% of readers surveyed said that they did not receive the information they received in CornerStone elsewhere.

Following are some of the themes, issues and subjects suggested by readers that could be covered in the future:

- Aftercare services
- Barring policies – comparative across the sector
- Challenges of partnership
- Domestic violence
- Real life stories / interview rough sleepers
- Mental health & dual diagnosis
- Housing lists in local authorities
- Rental Accommodation Scheme
- Consumption rooms / Accommodation for drug users
- Service user input

Update

Update is a bi-monthly bulletin produced by the Homeless Agency and highlights news, events and job vacancies within homeless services. It is distributed to over 600 people in homeless services electronically as well as by post and is also available on the Homeless Agency website on www.homelessagency.ie

Homeless Agency Website

The Homeless Agency website provides comprehensive information about homelessness in Dublin, the work of the Homeless Agency and services available for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Homeless Agency research, policy, information and other publications are available to download on www.homelessagency.ie. Information on the Homeless Agency's funding arrangements is also available and bookings for the learning and performance programme can also be made via the website. The website also has a noticeboard section, which provides an information tool for services working with people who are homeless to publicize job vacancies, tenders, events and news items.

There were a total of **90,438** original visits to the Homeless Agency website from January – December 2006.

Top 3 downloads 2006	Total number
The Streets (Health Service Executive)	1,205
Homeless Directory	1,194
Homeless, Housing Need & Asylum Seekers	947

Top 3 requested pages 2006	Pageviews
Making it Home_Appendix	29,076
In the News	23,814
Library	18,662

Library

The Homeless Agency library is a unique information resource providing homeless services, researchers and the public with access to electronic and hard copy documentation on all aspects of homelessness. The library is based in the offices of the Homeless Agency in Parkgate Hall, 6–9 Conyngham Road, Dublin 8 and can be accessed during normal working hours. One of the most frequently accessed pages on the website was the library database averaging over 18,000 page impressions over 2006. The library was accessed regularly over the year and visitors were able to avail of the photocopying service. The library database can be accessed on www.homelessagency.ie/research/library.asp



Strategic Aim 5

Ensure that Local Areas Develop Effective Responses to Homelessness

It is of primary importance to try and tackle homelessness in each local area. Evidence clearly indicates that the majority of people who become homeless are from a small number of geographic areas in the region, mostly areas of high deprivation. At the point where people are imminently at risk of homelessness, local and early interventions are the most effective way of preventing them from becoming homeless.

Achievements and Activity 2006

The Homeless Agency is focused on ensuring the continued operation of the local area forums in all local authority areas and ensuring that each local area develops effective responses to homelessness.

Under the Action Plan each local authority agreed to organize forum meetings and to continue the general activities of the forum and to ensure it's input into the development of new structures and policies in their region. The Homeless Agency attends and supports each local area forum meeting and addresses issues as they arise. In Dublin there are eight such forums, including one in each local authority area outside of the city centre (Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin) and five in the functional areas of Dublin City Council (Central, North Central, North West, South Central and South East). The work of the forums is to develop and implement local area plans, in consultation with the local authorities and Health Service Executive based on the Homeless Agency Action Plan.

The following provides an overview into the work of local authorities in the local areas during 2006:

Dublin City Council

- Setting up a Local Homeless Forum in each of Dublin City Council's five administrative areas. An average of six meetings took place in 2006 in each of the five areas.
- Suitable premises were sourced and extensively refurbished to allow for the relocation and upgrading of the dedicated women's emergency accommodation service.
- Team of resettlement officers continued to provide one-to-one support to enable people to overcome the causes that brought them into homelessness and allow them to return to permanent housing. A total of 162 households were supported during the year.
- The opening of two night shelters for men allowing the Nightbus service to provide a nights accommodation to over 50 persons per night.
- The management of and support to three transitional housing projects (16 housing units) and three permanent housing units (29 housing units).
- A total of four pilots under the Rental Accommodation Scheme were set up in 2006 allowing households to move from emergency accommodation to permanent housing. The schemes were managed by Threshold (23 apartments), Focus Ireland (23 apartments), and a private company Direct Service Provision (100 housing units).
- Continued management and monitoring of private emergency accommodation providing 1,283 beds in 53 properties.

South Dublin County Council

- Operation of ten family transitional housing units in Kilcronan, Clondalkin by Sonas Housing Association in partnership with South Dublin County Council.
- Operation of 17 units of transitional accommodation at Russell Square, Tallaght, which are managed by Sonas Housing Association (five units) and Sophia Housing Association (12 units).
- Provided a premises for use as a Women's Refuge in Tallaght, which is managed by Saoirse Housing Association. The Refuge was officially opened in December 2006.
- The Council allocated 13 homeless applicants permanent housing accommodation in 2006 and a further four were allocated permanent accommodation by voluntary housing associations.
- Continued to fund the information and advice service provided by Tallaght Homeless Advice Unit for homeless persons and those at risk of homelessness.
- Participated in the Cold Weather Strategy for homeless rough sleepers in the Tallaght and Clondalkin areas.
- Continued to develop a proposal with Focus Ireland for the provision of 24 single person units in Tallaght to be allocated primarily to those registered as homeless with the Council.
- The Homeless Forum continued to meet bi-monthly and fed into the development of the Homeless Action Plan 2007–2010.

- The Council appointed an outreach worker in 2006 whose work focuses on: Interviewing and assessing the needs of applicants for inclusion on the Council's Homeless Register; Families in emergency accommodation; Long term residents of hostels and People sleeping rough.
- The Council introduced a Tenancy Sustainment Service in 2006 to provide tenancy support for homeless persons being allocated permanent housing while also addressing the needs of existing tenants within the public, voluntary and private rented housing sectors who may be vulnerable to homelessness.

Fingal County Council

The following is a breakdown of people who are homeless and who were accommodated through transitional, voluntary and standard tenancies year ending 31/12/2006.

- 20 Applicants accommodated in total 31/12/06
- 15 applicants accommodated in transitional housing as follows:
 - four applicants where accommodated on outreach programs with Sophia
 - five applicants where accommodated in Sophia's transitional program, Donabate
 - six applicants where accommodated in the Bond Transitional project
- Five standard tenancies where allocated as follows:
 - two applicants moved out of Sophia to full tenancy
 - one applicant progressed from Sophia outreach program to a full tenancy
 - two applicants were accommodated in standard housing.
- Currently have 12 applicants accommodated in Hazel Grove, Donabate.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

- Homeless Centre at Bentley House – opened end of December 2006 on a 24x7 basis. It comprises 13 apartments and six short stay emergency beds and caters for 30 people. The emphasis in the centre is on supporting people to 'Move On' out of homelessness. The Centre is managed by Crosscare on behalf of the Council and the Health Service Executive.
- Operation of 19 family transitional housing units managed by voluntary housing associations. Support services provided by Settlement/Welfare from the Council's Housing Department in conjunction with the Voluntary Housing Associations. These units are used for referrals for families who require support and who have been homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- In total, ten households who were experiencing homelessness were housed in Local Authority housing; private rented accommodation was sourced for a further 20 homeless households; 35 households were provided with Transitional Accommodation and three households were housed in long term accommodation by the Voluntary Housing Associations in conjunction with the Council.
- A second transitional placement service opened for single men experiencing homelessness aged between 40–65 (first service established in 2005); a number of people have re-integrated back into settled community living. These services were established in conjunction with the Homeless Persons Unit.

- Homeless Forum – The local homeless forum met bi monthly in 2006
- Registering locally as homeless – Clinics are held twice weekly by the C.W.O from the H.P.U.
- All homeless households are linked in to relevant services where appropriate and provided with support from the Council's in house welfare team.
- The tenancy sustainment service commenced in late September 2006. The T.S. worker is linked in with households, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- The Settlement Officer is linked in with approx 45 homeless applicants.
- The Outreach Officer is linked in with a significant number of people many of whom are not approved for housing due to welfare difficulties/anti social including addiction management, inability to live independently, service resistant etc.
- West Pier Project for Travellers who have high support needs – A limited day service continues to be provided on the West Pier for travellers who had been living in a very chaotic and marginalized situation. A doctor and nurse visit on a weekly basis. The service is managed by Crosscare on behalf of the Council and the Health Service Executive.
- The VEC have recently commenced a step-up project to provide education and training for homeless adults in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. The project is supported by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. The target group are single men and women who are on the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Housing/Homeless register.

Healthcare

In 2006, specialist healthcare services continued to be provided for people experiencing homelessness including:

Acces Team

- During the course of 2006 the ACCES team continued to offer community care to homeless people with severe and enduring mental illness. Through ongoing assertive outreach, assessments, medication management and support around social needs the team worked to ensure that homeless people's mental health needs were treated appropriately and where possible that their care could be provided in the community rather than in a hospital setting. The team also endeavoured to promote stability, prevent relapse and engage patients and care givers in psycho education.
- In 2006, the team established a weekly depot clinic at Parkgate Hall and also continued to provide medical treatment in homeless accommodations when necessary. During 2006 the team received 109 new referrals, 13 of which were for female patients. The team also continued to work with existing patients who were referred in 2004/2005.
- In addition to their clinical role with patients, the team continued to provide training sessions on mental health issues to homeless service providers. These included trainings on schizophrenia, assessing risk of suicide/self harm, depression and dual diagnosis. The team also dealt with enquires from workers in the homeless sector and advised them on working with homeless people with mental health problems.
- Team members were also involved during 2006 in a number of steering groups and planning committees on issues relating to people who are homeless with mental health needs. They used these meetings to raise awareness, challenge discrimination and to advocate for more appropriate services for people who are homeless with mental illness.

- The ACCES team continues to encourage homeless service providers to contact them if they have concerns over a client's mental health or if they want to discuss a possible referral.

Multidisciplinary Team (Northside)

- The Multidisciplinary Healthlink team split into two teams in September 2006 and the caseload is divided between the two teams. The north side team now referred to as Northside Healthlink Team operates north of the river Liffey and accepts referrals from any agency within the three north side Local Health Office (LHO) areas. The Multidisciplinary Healthlink Team are an outreach team who are not constrained by geographical boundaries. The role of the team is to link people experiencing homelessness coupled with health care needs to health care services. The over riding philosophy being to link people, when appropriate and possible with the main stream health care services
- The team comprises of two staff – an Outreach Worker and a Public Health Nurse. The service offered to any client referred is a health needs assessment which incorporates assessment, care planning, implementing and evaluating health care needs and evaluating health care needs and where appropriate the holistic health needs assessment is completed with its ensuing care planning etc.
- In 2006 the team received 95 referrals. Of these 61 were requests for specific health care interventions, which required their own specific health care plan. These interventions varied from requests for assessment of child health and development (42 in number) to working with persons discharged from hospital to ensure that they are linked with and continued to link with health care services.
- The periods of time involved with these referrals varied from a short brief intervention to weeks of contact depending on the client's needs, as dictated by an assessment with its resulting care plan, and the co working arrangement with other agencies.
- The team also worked with 39 long term homeless clients whose needs are multiple and complex. These clients require and continue to require ongoing assistance and advocacy in order to establish/maintain links with health care services.
- The north side Healthlink team continues to over see care packages which have been put in place for a number of clients who are in receipt of the services of care attendants and for clients who have been placed in nursing homes due to there being no available appropriate accommodation.

Multidisciplinary Team (Southside)

- The Southside team dealt with 84 short-term interventions, these interventions varied from advice and information to working with individual clients to linking them to a range of appropriate medical services. However, the bulk of the caseload involved 70 complex multiple needs cases who required ongoing assistance and advocacy in order to establish/maintain links with health services.
- During 2006, the Multidisciplinary team provided fast track medical service for people who are homeless and during 2006 provided 333 new medical cards for homeless people. As part of this service the team also handle reviews and change of doctor requests.
- Training was delivered to various service providers around HIV Hepatitis and needle stick injury and needle exchanges conducted.

- A weekly clinic was conducted at Bow Street Food Centre, with Multidisciplinary team engaging with a large number of clients during 2006. This venue also provides an excellent opportunity to interact with members of the medical service regarding client's health needs.

Safetynet

- Safetynet was set up in 2006, it is a comprehensive primary healthcare service targeted at people who are experiencing homelessness in Dublin. The programme makes services more accessible by locating medical and social support services in the agencies and services where homeless people attend for support.
- Safetynet is an innovative step taken by a partnership between the Health Service Executive, voluntary agencies and private general practices. It is intended that this service will help improve the access for people who are homeless so that they can access the services available to the housed population.

The following provides an overview of the progress and achievements of a number of organisations working within the voluntary sector who are addressing the needs of people who are homeless in Dublin

Access Housing Unit (AHU) – Threshold

- In 2006, the AHU created 72 tenancies in the private rented sector. These tenancies accommodated 75 adults and 25 children. Over 70% of tenancies created were for single men, which is representative of the high number of single men who are homeless. The next largest group houses through the AHU were one parent families .
- The Access Housing Unit has completed its fourth year of work. 2006 was a busy year for the AHU which saw a 30% increase in referrals from over 30 homeless services.
- In 2006, 70% of tenancies created were through repeat landlords returning to the unit to offer accommodation after they had a good experience with a previous tenancy.
- In 2006 the Tenancy Sustainment Worker provided support to 50% of tenancies created by the AHU.
- The Access Housing Unit in partnership with Dublin City Council and a private landlord operated 23 units of accommodation under the Rental Accommodation Scheme in Dublin city for homeless or formerly homeless people. The AHU provided a property management function and tenancy sustainment service for the 23 units.
- A new partnership in 2006 saw Threshold's Access Housing Unit working with Dublin Lions to help people make the move from homelessness to independent living in Dublin. Dublin Lions have generously agreed to sponsor the cost of creating a special 'flat-out' kit for Threshold clients. The kit will be available to clients who move out of homelessness and into private rented accommodation and will consist of essential household groceries and one or two basic electrical items like a kettle or toaster.

AIDS Housing

- The occupancy rate in 2006 was 99.4%.
- Matt Talbot Hall site was purchased for €1.178 million.
- Planning permission was granted for an additional 15 apartments.
- Funding application for Capital Assistance Scheme was sent to Dublin City Council.
- Commitment to meet funding shortfall from own resources.

Ana Liffey Drug Project

- Throughout 2006 the Ana Liffey Drug Project continued to provide a 'Low Threshold – Harm Reduction' service to individuals that are homeless. This included people who are roofless, houseless, living in insecure housing and inadequate housing situations.
- The Ana Liffey Drug Project worked with people presenting with varied 'Risk Variables' The following is an outline of the types of Risk Variables people presented with throughout 2006; constant and uncontrollable drug use, poly drug use, regular drug use, no problem drug use – recreational drug use, little or no drug use – risk of relapse and overdose, unsafe use/disposal of drug paraphernalia, on methadone maintenance programme or similar, uses prescribed drugs (prescribed to them or otherwise), uses prescribed drugs as outlined by GP or other.
- Having identified the increase in people who are homeless with problem substance use issues presenting to the Ana Liffey Drug Project; the project took a strategic decision to work in closer partnership with homeless services. This conscious decision has seen improved working relationships with all homeless services and this joined up way of thinking has worked well for people who use the Ana Liffey Drug Project services.
- In 2006 the Ana Liffey Drug Project developed a Care and Case Management trial involving drugs and homeless services. Funded in partnership through Pobal and the North Inner City Drugs Task Force; this action research initiative involves a full-time Case Worker for the action research project, their role is to establish dedicated client care plans that specifically address homelessness for an estimated 6–12 service users over 18 months. This action research post involves recording barriers to service provision and feeding this information into identified policy forums.
- During the summer of 2006, the Ana Liffey Drug project provided Assertive Outreach to people engaging in drug and alcohol use within particular city centre areas. This work has meant a significant increase in the use of the projects services by this particular group of people.
- In 2006, at a strategic level the Ana Liffey Drug Project took an active role in the Rapid Needs Assessment Working Group, which led to the establishment of the 'Dublin City Rapid Needs Assessment' Overseeing this piece of work was the Research Steering Group made up of key stakeholders from the Homeless Agency, Merchants Quay Ireland, Dublin City Council Homeless Services, Store Street Garda Station, Dublin Simon and the Ana Liffey Drug Project. This research provides key recommendations for implementation in 2007 and beyond.

Crosscare

- In 2006 Crosscare continued to address the needs of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness through its bases in Dún Laoghaire, Amiens Street, Longford Lane and Cathedral Street.
- In Dún Laoghaire, Crosscare opened the new Bentley House facility in December 2006. Crosscare manages the service on behalf of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and the Health Service Executive.
- Crosscare implemented the Holistic Needs Assessments with all service users as a basis of service and worked to move on of a substantial number of service users into the private rented accommodation sector in Bray
- CentreCare moved into its renovated wheelchair accessible premises at 1 Cathedral St., Dublin 1 and worked with over 2500 people through its 'walk-in' information and advocacy service and through outreach clinics in Crosscare's three food centres and in six other locations (Capuchin Day/Food Ctr., Hill Street Family Resource Ctr., Guild of the Little Flower Food Ctr., Meath St., Mendicity Institute Food Ctr., Island St., St Joseph's Penny Dinners, Cumberland St. and Open Heart House (HIV+ organisation)).
- Crosscare continued to offer its day and night service seven days a week.
- At the Amiens Street base, Crosscare delivered a cold weather response service at the Amien Street base to young drug users who are sleeping rough.

Daisyhouse Housing Association

- There was a continuing high demand for the 14 units of transitional housing and support during 2006. By the end of the year, Daisyhouse had received 66 enquiries and 39 applications.
- The turnover rate of residents moving on remained good in 2006, with six residents assisted in moving into permanent accommodation and the average length of stay for 2006 was 20 months. Daisyhouse continued to have a 100% success rate in the settlement of ex-residents with none returning to homelessness.
- The profile of referral changed slightly in 2006 and there was an increase in the numbers of referrals for people with a history of drug addiction.
- During 2006, Daisyhouse acquired a number of properties that will be used as long-term accommodation and this will help with move-on options from the transitional service.
- Daisyhouse has retained the Excellence Ireland Quality Assurance Q Mark for the 5th year running.
- The results of our Annual Survey of Residents, External Stakeholders Survey and Employee Opinion Survey were all very positive.
- The goals set for 2007 and beyond include; continue to provide high quality housing and support services, remain adaptable to the changing profile of homelessness in the country, expand existing services and develop new ones where possible and to add to our stock of accommodation, including long-term accommodation.

Depaul Trust

- A staff conference was held in January 2006 and was attended by over 90 staff from both Dublin and Belfast. The conference theme was 'How high are the walls?' which aimed to look at the Low Threshold model used within the Depaul Trust services.
- Attendance and networking at the International Harm Reduction conference in May 2007 informed and further raised the agenda around The Depaul Trust Ireland's Harm reduction approach.
- In November 2006 Depaul Trust hosted an interagency seminar in Belfast on Low Threshold working. Towards the end of 2006 Depaul Trust have instigated work on a Low Threshold / Harm Reduction strategy, which will stretch across each of the services over the coming 3–5 years.
- Health and medical needs of service users have continued to be a serious issue within services over 2006. A number of service users passed away within the service in 2006.
- James Street is a new project in development, which will provide long-term housing for people with chronic health needs due to long-term homeless and alcohol use, the project is due to be opened in winter 2007. As an interim measure to this project the Homeless Agency supported the temporary opening of a disability accessible project to house four men.
- The Depaul Medical services have continued with the support of the newly developed Primary care safety net and a specialist support worker around mental health issues is in post at Back Lane services.
- There has been a noted improvement in the quality of accommodation of in projects in 2006. Clancy was repainted, communal lounge redesigned and plans put in place for a new kitchen area. Aungier Street was redesigned to allow for a private nurses station. St Vincent de Paul partners have also enabled the improvement of physical space in both Back Lane and Tus Nua services, including fully utilising the communal and garden space of each service.
- Depaul Trust have noted that they have maintained and have benefited from links with the Homeless Agency and also addiction sector networks and aim to build on these partnerships into 2007. Depaul Trust undertook a service evaluation initiated by the Homeless Agency, which included detailed consultation with service users. In 2006, Depaul Trust was involved in sector-based research across the city and contributed to a range of surveys and consultation processes around the improvement of homelessness services and prevention measures.
- Depaul Trust continued the ongoing development of services in Belfast in 2006. The Depaul Trust Northern Ireland, now have three services, which encompass a harm reduction project for street drinkers, a large families project and a safer driving training project for young people. The central office services expanded and moved premises in 2006 and a regional office was established in Northern Ireland.
- In 2006, Depaul Trust expanded their outreach services outreach services with a successful Pilot project in Ballymun. The Ballymun Case Management Team (BCMT) have worked with over 50 people with alcohol support needs, this service compliments the Homeless Agency action plan around the delivery of locally based services. In 2006, BCMT met monthly and undertook an action based research brief, which will lead to a detailed report being

developed in 2007. A befriending service, which is staffed by volunteers was established in Back Lane and worked with 12 participants in the community in 2006.

- Depaul Trust noted an increasing interest in volunteer support, which added to the variety and skills of the staff team.

Dublin Simon

- The Dublin City Tenancy Sustainment Service was set up in January 2006 to deliver a dedicated service to tenants at risk of homelessness, working to ensure their tenancies are sustained and homelessness prevented. A Homeless Agency Partnership Initiative, the service is contracted from and delivered by Dublin Simon Community. The service had its first active cases in March 2006.
- The Dublin Simon Rough Sleeping Team is often the first point of contact for those sleeping rough in Dublin City. The team addresses the needs of rough sleepers throughout the City in conjunction with the long running Dublin Simon Soup Run service. In 2006 the Rough Sleeping Team worked with 898 individuals, with 64 case managed throughout the year. 1440 referrals were made to emergency accommodation, with 168 to longer-term accommodation (six months+). 78% of those worked with were male and 22% female.
- The role of Dublin Simon's Resettlement Service is to access and provide move on options for clients to more suitable accommodation. In 2006 there were 250 referrals to the service, 77% male, 20% female and 3% couples. 25% were from clients self-referring through word of mouth and making direct contact with the service. 30% were from internal and external emergency shelters, and 25% from treatment services such as Rehab or Aftercare. 130 clients were moved on in 2006 to more suitable accommodation, with 45% of those to transitional housing and 15% to private rented housing.
- Dorset Street Transitional Housing consists of 15 self-contained units and a Homeless Agency evaluation was undertaken at the beginning of autumn of 2006 with a report due early in 2007. 2006 saw the introduction of a new accommodation referral service operating three to four times a year. 14 individuals used the programme during the year, and half of them moved to private rented accommodation, with five moving on to local authority housing. Dublin City Tenancy Sustainment team engage with those moving out of the programme into independent living.
- Dublin Simon Detox Unit had a successful year in 2006 with more than 76% of service users completing their alcohol detox. The occupancy rate was over 80% and it is planned to increase this in 2007 by appointing a continuous care worker. The waiting list time for detox in 2006 was on average four to six weeks. Many service users went on to rehab and aftercare, with others moving on to other dry hostels. The gender ratio was 70% male and 30% female. Dublin Simon Detox completed their first benzodiazepine detox in August 2006, with the aim to do more in the future, in addition to looking at other detoxes to vary the range of services supplied.
- Dublin Simon Training and Employment Project – Developments in 2006 include additional classes for service users (silk screen printing, graphic communications and pyrography). In May first time portfolios for our modules were submitted for FETAC accreditation to Crumlin College (40 portfolios between morning and afternoon courses), and numbers of participants picked up to a level that required the use of a waiting list for the courses.

There are increasing numbers of participants from the Dublin Simon rehab/detox/aftercare services, and as a result the numbers of participants and courses offered in the morning were doubled from five to ten classes. From August/September there was a review of the project, and in December the presentation of FETAC certificates in Crumlin College (17 participants attended and enjoyed the official ceremony together with about 200 other students from Crumlin College and projects in the surrounding area). Several participants moved on to part-time employment, CE schemes and some to full-time employment; some participants took part in Business in the Community 'Ready for Work Programme'. Others went back to further education, and there was co-operation with the Dublin Simon Rehab Service to provide a facility for their weekly Jobs Club. Facilities were provided for staff IT training as well as training for Dublin Simon's CE employees.

- In 2006 the occupancy rate in Dublin Simon Rehab was 90–100% and more referrals were received than places available. The service continues to build relationships with outside services such as the Mental Health Access Team and Probation and Counseling Services, whilst working on a project to improve communication links. The service increased the number of full time staff to four and there was a significant increase in the numbers of volunteers in Rehab. The introduction of yoga classes, reflexology, acupuncture and art classes complemented the Rehab programme, and a new (pilot) database has been set up to aid collation of stats and reporting systems. The challenges for the service include addressing issues and barriers preventing women accessing Rehab. One individual was taken on for a 6-month jobs club/meaningful activity occupation programme pilot scheme, which identified how such a programme could be rolled out across the organisation, and the benefits of this for the organisation. In September the service was confronted with the challenge of an MRSA scare within the project, a huge learning curve, which resulted in devising guidelines and a draft procedure around managing this in the future. Managing service users on high doses of methadone within the rehab environment proved to be an ongoing challenge, whereby the team need to consider putting a cap on the maximum dosage of methadone in the criteria.
- The Aftercare caseload achieved by the team was a steady 88–94% throughout the year. There are currently two aftercare houses, one in Ushers Island (female) and the other in Santry (male). One Aftercare service user has secured a work placement in Marks and Spencers through the Business in the Community programme.
- New initiatives introduced in 2006 included the services of a doctor, a nurse, and a counsellor. Dublin Simon Community Emergency Shelter on Harcourt Street continued to provide safe, appropriate, accommodation for homeless adult men and women, (over 18 years), and to assist them to move into appropriate move-on accommodation. The Shelter continued to proactively move individuals on into more appropriate accommodation and continues to adapt to meet the changing needs of those requiring emergency accommodation.
- In 2006 Dublin Simon continued to provide three long-term housing projects based at Sean Mac Dermott St, North Circular Road and Canal Road providing permanent accommodation for 60 people who have been homeless in the past and need varying degrees of support. A shared community experience is provided in two of the houses with 24 hour staff, cooked meals, laundry, cleaning facilities and group activities. The Canal Road project offers greater independence, with tenants having their own self-contained flat and supportive staff on site between the hours of 9–5.

Focus Ireland

- In 2006, Focus Ireland secured 105 additional homes for people who were homeless through acquisition, partnership and direct build in Dublin, Limerick and Waterford.
- Over 4,000 people used the Focus Ireland coffee shop, advice and information centre on Eustace Street during 2006.
- The tenancy support and settlement teams working in Dublin, Waterford and Limerick settled 166 households in 2006 surpassing their target of 148 households.
- In partnership with the Health Service Executive Dublin North East the young women's Aftercare Project was expanded to an Aftercare Hub with ten units of self contained accommodation and five step down apartments. In addition two dedicated aftercare workers were employed during the year to work with young people leaving care in the Health Service Executive Dublin North East area.
- The Four Peaks Challenge was a successful fundraising event with 75 teams of climbers and a variety of drivers successfully conquering the four highest peaks in Ireland: the event raised over €402,000 in 2006.
- The MakeRoom alliance was established between Focus Ireland, The Society of St Vincent de Paul, Threshold and the Simon Communities of Ireland –making a clear statement: long term homelessness is serious but it's solvable, if policy is changed. Details of the campaign are available on www.makeroom.ie
- Launch of the 'Hearth' Exhibition at IMMA, with art selections from the gallery's permanent collection made by IMMA staff and people attending the Focus Ireland SPOKES adult education programme. The theme was 'Home'.
- The Festival of Home took place November 2006 with national and international speakers on the meaning of 'Home' in Dublin. The two-date event explored this through art, film, drama on the first day at an exhibition with a conference and on the second day examining the connections between housing and home and the implications for housing policy.
- Published the research report 'Building for Inclusion?' which was the first in-depth examination of the operation of Part V of the Planning and Development Act. This research added to the ongoing debate around the effectiveness of Part V in delivering housing to those most in need and contained recommendations for reform.
- Focus Ireland's 2005 Annual Report was a winner in the 2006 Leinster Society of Chartered Accounts Annual Reports Awards.

HAIL – Housing Association for Integrated Living

- In 2006, HAIL participated in Dublin City Council North West and North Central Homeless Fora.
- In two newly acquired apartments in Dublin North West HAIL housed with support one tenant with mental health issues referred by DCC Housing Welfare Officer and one tenant with mental health issues referred from transitional housing by local Community Mental Health team.
- Participated in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Homeless Forum.
- 19 people with mental health issues were referred by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and Cluain Mhuire for housing with support available for occupation in 2007.

- Participated in Fingal Homeless Forum.
- Ongoing partnership work with Fingal County Council in relation to plans for housing with support for people with mental health issues in several locations.
- Participated in South Dublin County Council Forum.
- Provide housing with support in Clondalkin for two single men referred from hostel accommodation by Mental Health Service.
- Provided housing with support in Tallaght for one single woman referred from hostel accommodation by Mental Health Service.
- Provided housing with support in Tallaght for one woman from transitional accommodation.
- Provided housing with support for one single man at risk of homelessness referred by Mental Health Services.
- HAIL continued to implement its strategic plan 2003–2008.

Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI)

- More than 45,000 meals were provided in 2006 – approximately 22,000 breakfasts, 13,000 lunches and 10,000 Sunday dinners.
- The drop in information, advice and crisis support service provides assessment of service users needs, advice and information on health, social welfare, emergency accommodation, long-term housing and other issues.
- In 2006 there were just under 10,000 supportive interventions with service users using their homeless service.
- MQI offers primary care services for people who are homeless in partnership with the Health Service Executive. This service has GP's, nurses, a counsellor and a chiropodist.
- In 2006, there were almost 8,000 health care interventions during the year including more than 5,000 nursing interventions and 880 dental interventions. The two GP's dealt with more than 1,000 visits and the chiropodist provided more than 50 interventions over the course of the year.
- The Settlement Service provided intensive settlement support for 149 clients in 2006. additional supports provided included pre-tenancy training and aftercare support.
- MQI also ran a Dormant Accounts funded tenancy sustainment service, which assisted 25 persons.

Miss Carr's – Ecclesville

- Launch of 2007–2012 Strategic Plan.
- Facilitated lone parents to progress from homelessness into permanent accommodation e.g. council/voluntary housing and the RAS scheme.
- In 2006 provided studio apartment accommodation to ten parents and children.
- Revised administrative criteria to meet the current and emerging needs of lone parents.
- Continue to offer 25 nursery places to on-site and local lone parent families.
- Continue to provide residential care to vulnerable children.

Peter McVerry Trust

- Avoca Aftercare Service reopened during the first quarter of 2006. Peter McVerry Trust provides aftercare accommodation for homeless individuals who require secure and stable accommodation to maintain their recovery and provide an opportunity for continued personal development. This is a 6-month programme where clients come directly from treatment and work on an individual care plan to skill themselves in order to live independently and maintain their drug free lifestyle. All participants engage in drug free day programme while living in the house.
- Lantem Residential Community Detox Service reopened in the first quarter of 2006. This service provides a methadone detox programme and consists of a psychoeducational group programme as well as a therapeutic horticulture programme. People who are experiencing homelessness can avail of a six week detox programme with a view to becoming drug free. Clinical governance approval received from Health Service Executive Northern Area. A multidisciplinary staff team is in place including; Nurse Manager, Project Workers, Psychotherapist, Staff Nurses as well as a part-time level two GP, 1:1 counsellor, Horticulturist, Gym Instructor and Art Teacher.
- A dedicated Referral and Assessment Service was established in the first Quarter of 2006. This included the recruitment, induction and training of a Referral and Assessment worker for all Peter McVerry Trust services. This post is a registered psychiatric nurse. All referral and assessment forms were streamlined and standardised to ensure they are client friendly and transparent.
- The Outreach Service was launched in during the third quarter for 2006. The recruitment, induction and training of a dedicated outreach team to work with the most vulnerable clients in the Trust. This team provides support to clients through our drop in service as well as being available to clients on an outreach basis.
- The Education, Training & Development Service was launched in the third quarter of 2006. People who are accessing this programme are offered a diverse range of programmes and activities in response to the needs of participants. On site nurse is available to provide nursing assistance to people who are homeless.
- A new line management structure was introduced from Fr. Peter to the Trust. The premises were refurbished to meet health and safety guidelines in line with best practice. This service provides low threshold transitional accommodation to people who are homeless and who wish to stabilise their drug use.
- Participated with the Homeless Agency in the evaluation of transitional services.
- The tenancy sustainment team was introduced in the third quarter of 2006. The service included the introduction of dedicated units of accommodation for homeless, drug free service users who are reintegrating back into the community. Tenancy sustainment workers provide floating support to assist clients in learning the skills to live independently. This service was introduced to further develop the continuum of care model, in particular from the Aftercare service.

Respond! Housing Association

- In 2006, total occupancy in Conrath House was 78 with 53 of these residents moving to alternative/appropriate permanent accommodation.
- A separate floor was opened in 2006 to facilitate working residents in Conrath House. Included were eight rooms in total with one room being designated as a visitor's room. The use of the visitor's room for families will be reviewed extensively at a later date.
- Respond! opened a house in Tallaght as an extension to Conrath House that will cater for residents who had reached their 18-month stay with Conrath House but who had been unable to secure adequate move on options or permanent accommodation.

Sonas Housing Association

- During 2006 Sonas Housing Association provided transitional supported housing for 51 women and 82 children who were homeless primarily as a result of domestic violence.
- 18 women and children continued a transitional tenancy, which had started in 2005.
- 19 women and 31 children started new transitional tenancy started in 2006. of these:
 - six had been interviewed in 2005 and did not move in until 2006
 - A further 11 were interviewed in 2006 and moved in during 2006
 - two people were interviewed in 2006 and were due to move in 2007
 - one woman was interviewed in 2006, was accepted but died before she moved
 - 14 women interviewed in 2006 but 19 moved in over the year
- 14 women and 29 children moved on during 2006 (eight to local authority, two to permanent tenancies with Sonas Housing Association, and four left the service (one had completed her tenancy and three had not).
- 17 women and 11 children continued existing permanent tenancies with Sonas in 2006.
- Five new permanent tenancies during the year – two in Ballymun and three in Fortunestown, Tallaght. This was for a total of five women and eight children.
- Permanent tenancies were provided to a total of 22 women and 19 children.
- Overall, in 2006 Sonas provided a service (in transitional and permanent housing) to 73 women and 101 children.
- Six new housing units were opened in March 2006 in Fortunetown, Tallaght – three of these are transitional tenancies and three are permanent tenancies.
- In 2006 a total of 32 applications were received from referral agencies including Women's Refuges (15), local authorities (five), Health Service Executive (four), Community Services (four), Women's Aid (two), Maternity Hospitals (two) and Tallaght Homeless Advice (one).
- Sonas piloted a tenant participation initiative during 2006, which was reviewed and recommendations taken on board.
- In 2006, the Board and Staff of Sonas during 2006 did a lot of work with an external change management consultant. The process looked at roles and processes within the organisation.

Vincentian Housing Partnership – Rendu Apartments

- During 2006 Rendu Apartments received 92 referrals/applications from 38 referring agencies.
- In 2006:
 - 16 adults had left the programme
 - two were expelled (both clients were expelled due to substance misuse and multi issues)
 - 14 children lived in Rendu Apartments with 61 on access visits
- On December 31st the service had:
 - 18 units in use
 - 20 clients and five children, 20 children on access
 - 20 applicants on the waiting list
- Throughout the year Rendu Apartments were supported by various agencies of multidisciplinary teams in the Dublin area in relation to specific clients for example: chiropodist, hygienist, dentist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, psychiatrist, doctor, nurse, care assistant, dietician.
- During the year four of the clients of Rendu were supported through the Business in the Community Ireland training and employment programme Ready for Work.
- In 2006, 13 applicants were interviewed and were either rejected or withdrawn for the following reasons:
 - Interviewed and decided not to accept offer
 - Active drug/alcohol users
 - High dependency
- As part of their resettlement programme, Rendu continued to link with clients who have moved on offering them the option of a 6 or 12 month follow up support by staff and volunteers during the resettlement period. In total 44% of clients that left Rendu in 2006 signed into the resettlement programme.
- During 2006, 36 adults and 19 children were accommodated. There were 61 children on access visits set up by the Health Service Executive and also by arrangement with family. The occupancy rate for the year was an average of 86, which is the same occupancy rate as 2005.

Strategic Aims 6

Increase Housing Options for Single People who are Homeless

Provision of Social Housing to Homeless Households in 2006

Local authority housing allocations for homeless households continues to be a key area where improvements need to be made to ensure that the targets set in the action plan are met. Given the need for permanent move on accommodation, this area will provide an important focus for the Homeless Agency partnership in relation to *A Key to the Door* Action Plan for 2007–2010.

Homeless Households Accommodated Through Local Authority and Housing Association Social Housing 2006					Targets		Outcomes	
County Councils	Year	Total No Allocated	Total No of Voluntary Allocated	Total No of Voluntary Allocated to Homeless	Target No of Houses Allocated to Homeless	Target % of Houses Allocated to Homeless	Actual No of Houses Allocated to Homeless	Actual % Allocated to Homeless
Fingal County Council	2006	265	Not Available	Not Available	0	0	20	7.60%
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Co Co	2006	110	18	3	0	10%	13	12%
Dublin City Council	2006	573	0	15	189	33%	159	27%
South Dublin County Council	2006	478	109	4	47	10%	13	2.7%

Board Members 2006 and Consultative Forum Members 2006



Back row (from left to right)

Liz Clifford, Don Comiskey, Sr Angela Burke, Vincent Healy, Leonora O'Reilly, Josephine Ahern, Eamonn Martin, Lisa Cuthbert, Mary Martin, Pat Jennings, Ciaran Dunne, Seamus Sisk, Nualan O'Brien, Frank Mills

Front row (from left to right)

Anne Helferty, Brendan Hynes, Clare Schofield, Russell Chapman, Kathleen Holohan, Declan Jones, Derval Howley, Dermot Kavanagh, Orla Barry

Absent

Alan Carthy, Brendan Kenny, Donal McManus, Eddie Matthews, Leonie O'Neill, Pat Doherty, Philomena Poole, Sinead Hanley, Vivian Geiran, Patricia Cleary, Theresa Dolan, Patricia O'Connor, Des Stone, Muireann Morris, Declan O'Donoghue, Martina O'Connor, Yvonne Fleming

Board Members 2006

In 2006, the Homeless Agency Board set the strategic policy framework to address homelessness in Dublin. It proposes plans to the Cross Departmental Team and also to the relevant Local Authority Strategic Policy Committees and Councils: to the Health Service Executive and other statutory agencies, which are partners in its arrangements.

The members of the Board are as follows:

Kathleen Holohan – Chair	Director of Housing, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
Alan Carthy	Director of Housing, Fingal County Council
Alice O’Flynn	Assistant National Director, Social Inclusion, Health Service Executive
Brendan Kenny	Assistant City Manager, Dublin City Council
Declan Jones	Homeless Network Representative (Focus Ireland)
Dermot Kavanagh	Homeless Network Representative (Merchants Quay Ireland)
Donal McManus	Executive Director, Irish Council for Social Housing
Eddie Matthews	Director of Social Inclusion, Health Service Executive Dublin North East
Leonie O’Neill	Director Of Social Inclusion, Health Service Executive, Mid Leinster
Leonora O’Reilly	Adult Education Organiser, CDVEC
Pat Doherty	Homeless Network Representative (Depaul Trust)
Sinead Hanley	Chair, Consultative Forum, Independent
Vivian Geiran	Deputy Directions of Operations – Homeless Offenders Strategy Team
Philomena Poole	Director of Housing, South Dublin County Council

Consultative Forum Members 2006

In 2006, the Consultative Forum had the task of monitoring the implementation of the action plan from a service delivery and operation perspective. The Forum provided a mechanism for the promotion and development of partnership between organisations and sectors, which underpins the approach of the Homeless Agency.

The members of the Consultative Forum are as follows:

Sinead Hanley – Chair	Independent
Orla Barry	Director of Services, Focus Ireland
Sr Angela Burke	Director, Vincentian Housing Partnership
Patricia Cleary	Director, HAIL Housing Association
Liz Clifford	Homeless Co-ordinator, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
Don Comisky	Director, AIDS Fund
Lisa Cuthbert	Director, PACE
Theresa Dolan	Assistant Director, Capuchin Day Centre
Ciaran Dunne	Executive Manager, Dublin City Council
Yvonne Fleming	Manager, CentreCare
Brendan Hynes	Homeless Coordinator, South Dublin County Council
Vincent Healy	Senior Executive Officer, Dublin City Council
Anne Helferty	Snr Housing Welfare Officer, Dublin City Council
Pat Jennings	Senior Probation and Welfare Officer
Eamonn Martin	Joint Chief Executive, Sophia Housing
Mary Martin	Social Inclusion Manager, Health Service Executive
Frank Mills	Director Social Inclusion, Health Service Executive North
Muireann Morris	Director, Sonas Housing
Patricia O'Connor	National Drugs Strategy Team
Martina O'Connor	Homeless Coordinator, Fingal County Council
Declan O'Donoghue	Snr Employment Services Officer, FÁS
Clare Schofield	Education Coordinator, CDVEC
Seamus Sisk	Deputy Director, Irish Prisons Service
Des Stone	Superintendent Community Welfare Officer

Homeless Agency Networks

To promote effective partnership and coordination between services, the Homeless Agency has established service specific networks, which include representatives from relevant organisations working in partnership to address their areas of service. Emerging issues are identified at these networks and proposals to provide solutions are developed on an operational and strategic level.

The networks, which were coordinated by the Homeless Agency in 2006 included:

- Emergency Outreach
- Emergency Accommodation Providers
- Transitional Accommodation
- Settlement
- Family
- Information
- Learning and Performance

Homeless Agency Steering Groups

The Homeless Agency commissions a wide range of research into various aspects of homelessness within the context of its action plan. Steering groups are established to work together to address particular issues. Projects often involve time limited steering groups including representatives from the voluntary and statutory sectors. In 2006 the following working groups included:

- Rapid Needs Assessment Steering Group
- Holistic Needs Assessment Steering Group
- Care and Case Management Steering Group
- Emergency Evaluations Steering Group
- Transitional Evaluations Steering Group
- Dublin City Tenancy Sustainment Steering Group
- Competency Framework Steering Group

CornerStone Advisory Group

The role of the CornerStone Advisory group is to support and assist the editor of CornerStone in forward planning for articles. The group is comprised of representatives from voluntary and statutory organisations.

Assessment Panel

The Assessment Panel consists of the Director and Head of Finance of the Homeless Agency, a representative from each of the local authorities and three representatives from the Health Service Executive. Funding of homeless service is shared on an agreed basis between the local authorities and the Health Service Executive. Each year the Homeless Agency invites expressions of interest from the homeless sector for developments in line with the action plan.

Homeless Network

The Homeless Network is the umbrella body representing community and voluntary sector organisations that provides services to people experiencing, or at risk of homelessness. It is the only network of its kind in the Republic of Ireland devoted exclusively to homelessness.

- The 23 members encompass a wide range of services: including day-centres, accommodation providers, housing associations, as well as information, outreach and advocacy services. All members are in the Dublin area, and some of the larger organisations also have a national presence.
- It provides a mechanism to nominate/ elect representatives to sit on a wide range of fora: including the Forum and Board of the Homeless Agency, Dublin City Council local homeless fora, as well as a variety of working groups convened by the Homeless Agency. As nominated representatives of the community and voluntary sector, these representatives feedback to the Network on a regular basis.
- It agrees written policy positions by consensus on issues relating to homelessness.
- In 2006 the Network made a significant contribution to the development of the Homeless Agency action plan 'Key to the Door'. This process was facilitated by the very extensive consultation process carried out by the Homeless Agency.
- 2006 also saw the Network develop its own three-year strategic plan, which core aims comprise (i) influencing policy (ii) ensuring good communication within the Network and all external stakeholders (iii) facilitating partnership and finally, (iv) to ensure it meets the needs of its membership.
- The Network hosted a seminar specifically for its representatives on the newly-established Dublin City Council Fora. This arose from an identified need as many of the local managers attending the local fora, do not normally attend network meetings. Fitzpatrick Associates and Dublin City Council gave presentations on the rationale and purpose of these fora, and the role of the Network representatives on the fora was explored within facilitated groups. The subsequent satisfaction survey was very positive.

Funding

In 2006 the Homeless Agency distributed €40.1 million of State funds to voluntary and statutory service providers for people who are experiencing homelessness in Dublin. This funding comes from the Health Service Executive and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The Homeless Agency has fulfilled this role since the approval of its first action plan in 2002. Since then the amount of State funding has increased significantly. Over 70 different services are funded through the Homeless Agency and are provided by over 30 voluntary and statutory service provider organisations.

Funding through the Homeless Agency arrangements allows for the provision of services for those at risk of homelessness such as tenancy sustainment services, information, advice and advocacy services. The funding also provides frontline support and accommodation for people who are homeless such as street outreach, emergency accommodation, food and day services, practical support, nursing and GP services, detox and rehabilitation and support for people leaving homelessness including transitional, settlement and long-term permanent accommodation.

Funding Allocations – 2006 Homeless Services Budget

Organisation	€ HSE	€ LA	€ Total
Access Housing Unit (Threshold)	0	281,519	281,519
AIDS Fund	399,834	83,414	483,248
Capuchin Day Centre	117,635	331,875	449,510
Crosscare	1,046,088	654,945	1,701,033
Daisyhouse	0	94,168	94,168
DePaul Trust	1,989,769	1,532,237	3,522,006

Direct Health Service Provision	4,250,000	0	4,250,000
Dublin City Council	468,244	2,552,083	3,020,327
Dún Laoghaire West Pier Project	50,000	50,000	100,000
Focus Ireland	1,253,664	3,896,051	5,149,715
HAIL	139,024	113,536	252,560
Little Flower	0	21,321	21,321
Local Services – SDCC	0	400,000	400,000
Long-term housing	100,000	100,000	200,000
Merchants Quay Ireland – Faltiu Centre	610,767	984,553	1,595,319
Miss Carr’s	82,427	50,975	133,402
Novas Women’s Emergency Shelter	80,000	80,000	160,000
Peter McVerry Trust	294,694	90,072	384,766
Private Premises – Abbey Street	213,210	453,330	666,540
Private Premises – Sancta Maria	220,121	585,406	805,527
Respond	538,000	223,278	761,278
Haven House	551,797	373,662	925,459
Legion of Mary	90,544	0	90,544
Salvation Army	2,254,773	2,303,372	4,558,145
Simon	2,580,958	1,819,096	4,400,054
Sisters of Our Lady	176,097	352,216	528,313
Sonas	469,986	399,001	868,987
Sophia Housing	502,631	487,900	990,532
Tallaght Homeless Advice Unit	0	115,853	115,853
Teach Mhuire	98,880	159,908	258,788
Tenancy Support Services – Local authorities	0	800,000	800,000
Vincentian Refugee Centre	100,000	127,000	227,000
Vincentian Housing Partnership – Rendu	319,966	216,747	536,713
YMCA	306,367	332,714	639,081
	19,305,476	20,066,233	39,371,708

Local Authority Section 10 Funding			
Aoibhneas	0	268,180	268,180
Iveagh Hostel	0	268,180	268,180
Life	0	42,665	42,665
Bru na bhFiann	0	164,565	164,565
Vergemount	0	36,570	36,570
	0	780,160	780,160
Homeless Agency Total	19,305,476	20,846,393	40,151,869

Homeless Agency Expenditure 2006

The Homeless Agency managed its operations within a budget of €1,481,920 in 2006

Expenditure 2006	€
Salaries and Wages	686,704
Training for Homeless Sector employees	110,017
Operational Costs (including consultancy, printing and other costs)	685,199
Total Expenditure	1,481,920

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**HOME
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