



**Challenging
homelessness.
Changing lives.**

FOCUS
Ireland

Annual Report 2017

**Thanks to our
supporters we
helped over
14,500 people
in 2017.**

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Foreword

Sr Stanislaus Kennedy,
Life President & Founder, Focus Ireland



I am proud to say that our great staff supported a record number of 14,500 people in 2017 who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. It is inspiring to see the impact of this life-changing work as we helped over 1,000 households to move on from homelessness in 2017.

There is much good work being done in partnership with the State, other NGOs and our supporters. However, I will never shy away from highlighting that much more needs to be done as the crisis is now worse than it has ever been.

There were 7,148 people homeless at the end of 2016. This shot up to 8,587 by December 2017. It is heartbreaking to think that one in every three of these people is a child.

It is clear that the crisis is getting worse. We in Focus Ireland put our energy into helping those affected and finding practical solutions. We need to end homelessness because it is morally and fundamentally wrong.

It is shocking that in 2017 more children were born into homelessness than ever before. They are our children too and we have a duty as a society to provide a safe home for them.

This is what we in Focus Ireland are working to achieve. Our Family Team in Dublin work hard to secure a home for one or two families every day, in partnership with the Dublin Region Homeless Executive and local authorities. However, at least three more families lose their homes and become homeless every day. More single people are also being forced into homelessness due to rising rents, evictions and a critical shortage of affordable housing.

How can we stand by while families who are homeless are forced to live in one hotel room for months at a time? There is nowhere safe for the children to play, do their homework or for families to cook a meal. This is causing terrible damage to families and many single people who are homeless. The damage done to families and children will not just affect this generation but the next generation and generations to come. It must not continue.

Focus Ireland continues to put forward realistic policy solutions to help prevent and end homelessness. We do this work through over

80 frontline services in Dublin and around the country. While the crisis is still deepening, the situation would be much worse without the services and housing we provide. The most frustrating thing is that the homelessness crisis could be ended if the right political decisions were taken.

The Government's strategy is not working. There is no strategy to tackle family homelessness; all it has is an outdated promise in Rebuilding Ireland and a stack of press statements. We urgently need a coherent, joined-up and ambitious strategy to tackle this issue.

A strategy that would see the Government take the decisions it has shied away from for several years. This includes actively building social housing, ensuring that bank restructuring does not come at the cost of mass homelessness, taxing those who hoard building land and protecting the rights of tenants facing eviction.

I am very concerned about the Government's continued emphasis on the delivery of family hubs rather than permanent homes. The Government admits that hubs are only a 'first response' but there is still no sign of them delivering a second, substantive response which is adequate to the crisis we are facing.

We need a specific sub-strategy on family homelessness that would include a cast-iron guarantee that no family would be homeless for more than six months. This crisis can and must be ended.

We must all redouble our efforts to continue to provide a voice for the many people and families who still have no voice. We will not rest until they are heard. We must not rest until they all make it home.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Stan C Kennedy".

Sr Stanislaus Kennedy

About Focus Ireland



In 2017, 89% of every euro received was spent directly on our services to combat and prevent homelessness.

Focus Ireland works with people who are homeless or at risk of losing their homes across Ireland. We are driven by the fundamental belief that homelessness is wrong.

Wrong because it is a failure of society that creates victims out of ordinary people and robs them of their potential.

Wrong because it can be prevented and solved but is allowed to continue, thereby undermining our society.

Focus Ireland's strategy outlines that the real solutions to this crisis lie in preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place and ensuring that they are helped to stay in their home once they have found one. These are the two areas that will be central to our work in the coming years.

Directors

Sr Stanislaus Kennedy
(Founder and Life President)
Mr Gerry Danaher (Chairman)
Mr Declan O'Flaherty
Mr Ronan Harris
(Resigned 6 February 2017)
Ms Pauline Burke
(Resigned 20 April 2018)
Mr John Moloney
Mr Diarmuid Burke
Ms Anna Lee
Mr Michael Layde
Dr Suzanne Quin
Ms Susan O'Connell

Trustees

Sr Síle Wall
Catherine Earley
Tim Bouchier-Hayes

Chief Executive Officer

Mr Ashley Balbirnie
(resigned 28 March 2018)
Mr Pat Dennigan
(appointed 29 March 2018)

Secretary and Registered Office

Mr Pat Dennigan
9-12 High Street
Dublin 8

Registered No: 106149
Registered Charity No:
CHY 7220

Auditors

Deloitte
Deloitte & Touche House
Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 2

Solicitors

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

Bankers

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



14,500+

people supported who were homeless or at risk



1,000+

families supported who were homeless



300

people used our education services



90%

According to customer survey, 90% would recommend our services



1,065

households supported out of homelessness



4,996

people provided with advice and information



250K

supporters were contacted daily via social media



996

homework support sessions were conducted with children

Services and Housing Nationwide

Carlow
Clare
Cork
Dublin
Kildare
Kilkenny

Limerick
Monaghan
Sligo
Tipperary
Waterford
Wexford



2017 Overview

Focus Ireland rolled out our new Strategy 2017–2020 ‘Challenging Homelessness, Changing Lives’ in January 2017 which will guide our approach in the coming years.

We will focus on two pillars:



Making sure that we can prevent homelessness before it happens is one of the most effective ways that we can tackle this crisis. We will aim to reach young people, adults and families who are facing homelessness early to ensure they have our support to keep the home they have.

Focus Ireland continued our work across housing, services and advocacy to respond as effectively as possible to the deepening housing and homelessness crisis in 2017.

Sadly, the problem continued to get worse as the number of people who were homeless shot up to a new record total of nearly 9,000 people by year end. However, it is important to stress that this crisis would be even worse without the work of our staff during the year. Focus Ireland services progressed again

in 2017 as we continued to shift our focus to prevention. Focus Ireland now provides services in Carlow, Clare, Cork, Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Limerick, Monaghan, Sligo, Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford.

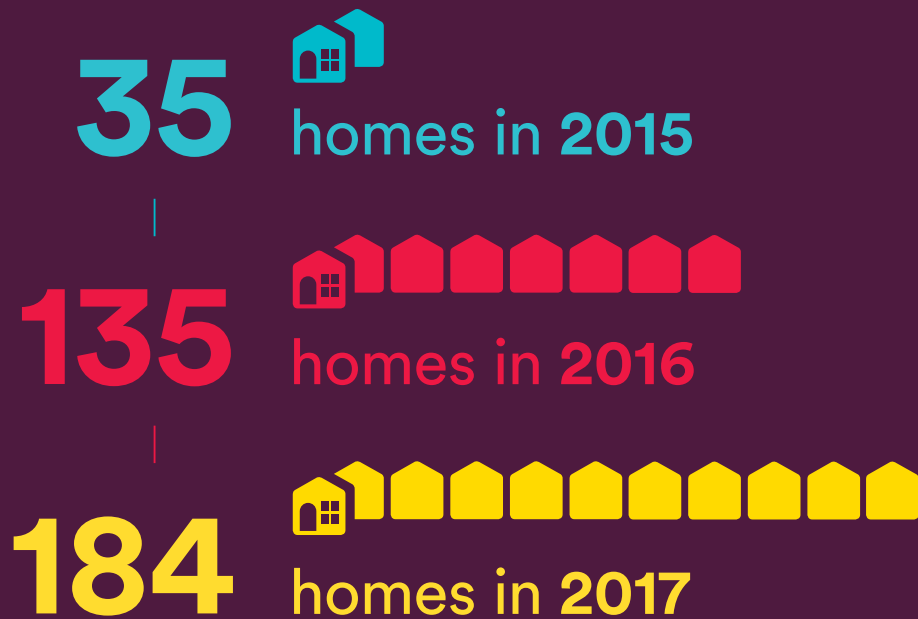
We are now also helping more people at risk of homelessness, supporting more people into new homes, building new homes and being there to fight for people when they need us the most.

We supported 1,065 households out of homelessness in 2017 with support from the State. This shows how Focus Ireland is working every day ‘Challenging Homelessness and Changing Lives’.

Behind every number is a human story or stories; a man, a woman, a family who are now in a home, or never became homeless in the first place because of the work of Focus Ireland. In 2017 this work meant we supported a record total of 14,500 people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness – compared to the 13,500 we supported in 2016.

Focus Ireland works in partnership with the State to achieve a high standard of work. We receive approximately 50% of our funding from the State including, local authorities, the HSE, Tusla and other statutory bodies.

The number of Focus Ireland homes provided in the last three years:



However, Focus Ireland is able to reach the number of people we do as 50% of our funding is raised through individual donations, corporate support and community events. Focus Ireland has a responsibility to never shy away from highlighting to the Government of the day what more could be done to end homelessness. People are four times more likely to move out of homelessness if they have a key worker.

This work continued apace in 2017 as we consistently presented our insights and highlighted the policies that we believe will start to solve the problem (proposals can be found on focusireland.ie). Many of the policies that have been outlined by the Government in its housing strategy 'Rebuilding Ireland' are, we believe, the right ones: increased social housing, rent regulation and rent supports that reflect market realities.

However, the implementation of these policies has not made any major inroads to ending the crisis as the policies are often so watered down that they are ineffective in delivering real change. The men, women and children who are homeless simply cannot afford to wait for years for a home. Homelessness is wrong and it damages lives. Focus Ireland's organisational strategy 2017–2020 firmly

restates our commitment to challenging homelessness and not merely managing it.

This strategy will lead our work towards ending this problem for good. We need to be resolute and strong in our conviction that this is the right thing to do. This is why we were critical of the Government's over-reliance on developing family hubs as a response to homelessness. Under our strategy, every Focus Ireland service and policy demand will be directed to the twin goals of preventing homelessness or supporting people to exit homelessness for good.



We supported over

14,500

people in 2017, a 7% rise from the 13,500 supported in 2016.

The Allassar family

The Allassar family experienced difficult times, spending five years in direct provision and an additional 12 years struggling in rental accommodation before Focus Ireland provided them with a home.

To Palestinian-born Maher Allassar, his wife Alla Korilenko, his 15-year-old stepson Gleb, and their two-year-old daughter, Mariam, the development of the Focus Ireland housing at Greenmount Close has changed their lives forever.

This modern development for elderly or disabled residents is suitable for Maher's needs. He has polio and walks with a frame, albeit with difficulty. Allassar has great friends in the Irish Palestinian community, he says, particularly his GP, Dr Bassam Naser, who helped them to apply for social housing under the disability category.

Before Focus Ireland stepped in, the Allassar family

experienced one challenging housing condition after another, despite Maher being an Irish citizen. Maher recalled: 'The last flat was smelly, cooking odours lingered. Gleb had to sleep in the living room, and a loud neighbour meant none of them slept well. There was mould and damp. Mariam was sick a lot. It was really tough.'

In time Maher contacted Focus Ireland and after an interview, and assessment of their housing needs, the family were successful. He said: 'When we were told to come back I thought maybe we signed something wrong, but they said, "You have a house." My wife cried. Of course I cried. It was really emotional.'

In the evenings the family can now all sit around the table and eat together in comfort. Their teenage son has the space and silence to concentrate on his studies. Their young daughter has room to use her crayons and play. These are routines which many of us take

for granted, but they mean everything to the Allassars.

Now that they have a stable place to live – a place to call home – the Allassars can plan for the future. They hope to realise their dreams now that they are no longer struggling in unsuitable and poor standard accommodation.

Their home at Harold's Cross is tailored for Maher's mobility needs, Maher is minding his health. He is helping his children and contributing to a thriving community in the locality, along with his neighbours in the Focus Ireland development.

He said: 'Here we are in heaven. We have three bedrooms, a kitchen, living room and two toilets. We say, "Thank you, friends. Thank you, Focus Ireland. Thank you, Ireland".' Their new home is one of 28 provided on land donated to Focus Ireland by the Sisters of Charity 15 years ago.



28

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and two toilets.
We say, thank you,
Focus Ireland.

Maher Alassar with his wife, Alla Korilenko, and children, Gleb and Mariam at their new home in Greenmount Close, Harold's Cross. Photograph: Irish Times.

Preventing homelessness

Focus Ireland strongly believes that it is vital that no person is forced to sleep rough and that no family or individuals are trapped in emergency accommodation with no idea of when they will secure a place to call home.

Our organisation has recognised that if resources are focused too much on delivering emergency responses this leads to the crisis being ‘managed’ rather than ended. It is clear logic that in order to end this terrible crisis there must be more action to prevent the constant rise in the number of people becoming homeless. There must also be increased pathways out of homelessness through provision of social housing alongside affordable and secure rental accommodation.

This is why Focus Ireland’s strategy is very focused – not on the emergency response but on the two other main approaches to addressing homelessness:

1) Prevention

2) Providing housing with support

In recent years Focus Ireland has actively shifted our services more towards working to prevent homelessness. Focus Ireland has responded to the growing number of

people at risk through our ten Advice & Information centres across the country. The aim of these services is two-fold: to prevent people becoming homeless and to support people who are already homeless to sustain an exit out of homelessness. Our specially trained staff work closely with individuals and families at risk, trying to ensure that their personal housing problem does not become a homelessness crisis.

In 2017 our Advice & Information services informed **4,996** people about their rights, their options and the support services available to help them avoid becoming homeless. During the year the Advice & Information service introduced an intensive case management feature to those customers who required an extended period of engagement to prevent them from becoming homeless. The A&I case management work prevented **321** households from losing their homes in 2017. Meanwhile, advice and information staff helped **443** households who were homeless to find a home and a route out of homelessness. An external

evaluation of these services demonstrated their effectiveness and value (Finding a Home, Walsh and Harvey).

In 2017 Focus Ireland added extra impetus to our work to prevent youth homelessness. Teenagers can become homeless because they fall out with their families. This can often lead to long-term homelessness which seriously damages their adult life.

In response to this problem we provide a 'family mediation service', in collaboration with Tusla. This innovative service supported **22** teenagers at high risk of homelessness to stay in the family home during 2017. These successes are the result of intensive family mediation which can defuse a crisis and help families to rebuild relationships.

Focus Ireland also continued our proud track record of always being ready to challenge the underlying factors which are forcing people into homelessness. Focus Ireland carries out this work in a resolute manner that always puts forward solutions rather than simply criticising for the sake of it. We always acknowledge that we work successively with the State to deliver services and homes. However, Focus Ireland actively highlights when specific policies

are not working and campaigns to change legislation or introduce new laws if required to help end this terrible crisis. Focus Ireland spoke out strongly in the media to stress our belief that the continued deepening of the crisis in 2017 was due to the Government repeatedly failing to tackle the deeper issues that are driving more and more people into homelessness, such as rising rents, lack of social and affordable housing, vulture funds, underserved mental health and addiction services, and poverty.

We also challenged the Government's repeated claims that it is doing all it can to tackle homelessness. We criticised the Government for voting down the so-called Focus Ireland anti-homelessness amendment in December 2016 which called for an end to evictions of tenants who are respecting their tenancies in buy-to-let properties being sold or repossessed.

If this amendment had been passed in Dec 2016 it would have prevented at least 350 families and over 500 children from becoming homeless in 2017 alone. We continue our work to lobby this Government – or the next – to bring in this anti-homelessness amendment as it would be one of the most effective prevention measures.



Leaving homelessness behind for good

A core objective of Focus Ireland's current strategy – which runs to 2020 – is to deepen our commitment to preventing homelessness and supporting people into housing.

We work to ensure that all our efforts either help to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place or actively support families and individuals to secure a place to call home.

Sadly, the overall crisis deepened again in 2017, as well over 9,000 people were homeless by year end. However, it is important to highlight that without the work of Focus Ireland the crisis would be even worse. We helped a record number of 14,500 people in 2017 who were homeless or at risk. We provided a place to call home for nearly 1,000 households nationwide who were formerly homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The work of our staff changed the lives of more people than ever before in 2017 by helping them to leave homelessness behind. The men and women working for Focus Ireland across the country made this possible. All of our projects work in close collaboration with statutory organisations (Department of Housing, local authorities, the Dublin Region Homeless Executive, Tusla and the Department of Social Protection), and make the most effective use of the range of

government supports now available.

In 2017 our Family Team continued to be the lead agency helping families who are homeless in Dublin with the support of the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive. The team provided vital case management support to **1,033** families by the end of the year, compared to **946** in 2016. Our child support workers on the family team supported over 200 children in 2017.

The work of our Family Team was expanded in 2016 to help respond to the growing numbers of families becoming homeless. It was a great achievement that this team managed to help **387** families out of homelessness and into a home during the year. This is really life-changing as all these families and children now have a place to call home and can move on in life.

Focus Ireland also continues to be a leader in delivering Housing First services in Ireland. This innovative approach sees staff working to get people who are sleeping rough into a home where they are provided with vital support services.



Children take part in a special Christmas art workshop run by the Focus Ireland family team in Dublin in mid-December 2017. Photograph: *Irish Times*.

Dublin Housing First (in partnership with the Peter McVerry Trust) provided homes for 106 additional people with a long history of rough sleeping, bringing to **220** the total number provided with secure homes by this service. Focus Ireland also took the lead in establishing the Housing First good practice platform where all homeless organisations can share skills and experience in delivery Housing First in an effective way.

We also continued the work of our ‘Youth Housing’ services developed in Limerick, Waterford, Cork, Clare, North Tipperary and Dublin to provide homes for vulnerable young people, along with vital support to help them sustain their tenancies as they make the transition into adulthood. This independently evaluated programme has already changed the lives of **103** young people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. This innovative work involves collaboration between Focus Ireland, Tusla and the City and County Council in these areas. Focus Ireland believes this approach need to be extended elsewhere to meet growing needs around the country.

Housing is essential, but it is not the only thing needed to help people leave homelessness behind for good. People also

need access to education, training and employment. Our employment programme, which supports young care-leavers into employment, also continued its great work during the year and helped **35** people. Meanwhile, our PETE (Preparation for Education, Training and Employment) service worked with **274** people in 2017.

1,033

The Family Team provided vital case management support to **1,033** families by the end of the year, compared to **946** in 2016.

387

The Family Team managed to help **387** families out of homelessness and into a home during the year.

Focus Housing Association: Overview

Focus Ireland has committed to doubling the number of homes we directly provide over the period 2016–2020.

This increased housing delivery is a core part of our strategy and is playing a key part in our work, challenging homelessness and changing lives.

We continued our good work in 2017 by delivering 184 new homes compared with 135 new homes the previous year and 35 in 2015. This means we have now delivered 354 homes in the three years from 2015 to 2017. This work has changed the lives of many who now have a place to call home.

We carry out this vital work through the Focus Housing Association. The new homes delivered in 2017 came through a combination of long-term leasing, acquisitions, short-term leases and tenancies managed by Focus Ireland.

By the end of 2017 our existing stock of homes was 981. Focus Ireland lease and manage tenancies in the following areas nationally: Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council, Fingal County Council and in counties Kildare, Carlow, Wexford, Kilkenny, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Clare and Sligo.

The work in these 13 areas requires significant property management from Focus Ireland to prevent men, women and children from entering homelessness, and to ensure that those impacted by the housing crisis can access stable housing.

Harold's Cross

Another great success story during 2017 saw the launch of our new development at Harold's Cross in Dublin. The day was the culmination of one of Focus Ireland's most ambitious housing development projects. The project was launched by Minister of Housing, Planning and Local Government Eoghan Murphy and we also launched our Annual Report 2016 as part of this event.

The day captured the vision of Focus Ireland that 'everyone has a right to a place to call home' as the new housing development provided 28 homes for families and people who were formerly homeless or at risk of homelessness.

We must once again pay tribute to the Sisters of Charity who so kindly donated the land to Focus Ireland for social housing. The support of Dublin City Council, Our Lady's Hospice and the local community was vital in turning



354

homes directly delivered
in the three years from
2015–2017



981

was our existing
stock of homes by
the end of 2017



this once vacant site into 28 much-needed new homes which have changed the lives of men, women and children.

John's Lane West

In 2017 we also commenced construction of our site at John's Lane West in Dublin 8 which will deliver 31 units towards the end of 2018.

Focus Housing Association agreed a partnership arrangement with Tusla for the Capital Assistance Scheme 2017 and are actively acquiring units for young people coming out of care.

Focus Ireland are achieving our goals in a multi-pronged approach and utilising funds via a variety of mechanisms, including the Housing Finance Agency, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and donors. Our work continues apace across Ireland and we look forward to playing an integral part in helping to deliver homes to help tackle the housing and homelessness crisis nationwide.

Mark's story

Focus Ireland supported over 14,500 people last year as part of our work Challenging Homelessness and Changing Lives. Mark Wright (28) tells his story to help highlight one of the human stories behind these figures.

The young Cork man tells how he battled through serious addiction leading to homeless and how he later turned his life around with the help of Focus Ireland.

He said: 'I got caught up in drugs at a very young age when I was 12 and gradually the drugs increased and I would have ended up homeless. It is like been caught in the headlights. Not knowing where you will sleep.' He admitted: 'Most nights I was going to sleep towards the end of my addiction hoping the drugs would kill me.'

He said: 'In that situation I could not get clean. The only reason I got clean


eventually was because of my children.' Mark explained how at this point he contacted Focus Ireland and got on the path to recovery and turning his life around. He said: 'When I went into Focus Ireland I was greeted by another human being. He shook my hand. There was a sense of belonging inside. That he did consider me another person and he didn't judge me on where I was after coming from.'

Focus Ireland worked with Mark to support him and help with everything from his addiction issues through to money management and access to education. Staff at the charity helped to get him signed up for a two-year night college course in UCC to get a Diploma in Youth & Community work. His Focus Ireland support worker helped him through his college with a weekly study session. Mark said: 'My Focus Ireland Case Worker kept me going. He said: "We have plans for you.

Keep doing what you have to do. Keep turning up. Keep working." I finished my first year last year and he was such amazing support.'

Focus Ireland continued to work with Mark to help secure accommodation and get him settled and back on track in life. In a short video he tells how Focus Ireland secured a home for him. He now plans to finish college and get a job.

He said: 'I was nearly crying when I got the place. I can't express how much it means to me. It's not just my home, it's a home for my children.' The young father said his life has changed completely and he puts it down to the support of Focus Ireland and his children. 'I am more confident now. I am a brilliant father to my children. I will be forever grateful to Focus Ireland for what they have given me – and to my children. It means the world to me. My future looks good now.'



‘I am more confident now. I am a brilliant father to my children. I will be forever grateful to Focus Ireland for what they have given me – and to my children.’



14,500

people supported by Focus Ireland last year as part of our work Challenging Homelessness and Changing Lives.

Challenging homelessness together

Focus Ireland cannot work alone. We – and the people who depend on us – rely on the support of tens of thousands of people across the country.

Our loyal supporters donate funds, campaign for policy change, volunteer in our services or support our governance. We also work closely with statutory organisations, local authorities, the Dublin Region Homeless Executive, Tusla, Pobal and the Department of Social Protection to make the most effective use of the range of government supports.

All of this amazing support helps us to challenge homelessness and change lives. It helps our staff to be there when people need vital support and for someone to listen and to let them know there is help available.

Individual Supporters

Our donors are some of our most dedicated supporters and we cannot thank them enough for their loyalty and kindness. They donate online, mail in cheques, sign up to give every month, volunteer at events, and participate in the most difficult physical challenges to help us make a difference. More than 15,000 people helped us to challenge homelessness and change lives in 2017.

Corporate, Major Donors, Trusts and Foundations

In 2017 a total of 489 companies supported our work through corporate partnerships, donations, employee giving and fundraising along with payroll giving. 2017 saw the second full year of our strategic partnership with Bord Gáis Energy, who committed €1.2 million in funding over three years to Focus Ireland to help prevent family homelessness. For the first two years of the partnership the following has been achieved:

- Vital travel, childcare and therapy support was provided for 2,353 families and children
- A further 2,104 families and children living in emergency accommodation were supported through activities such as an annual Christmas party, trips to the Zoo, etc.
- 1,134 families on the brink of homelessness were provided with specialist advice and information to keep them in their home, thus helping them to avoid the trauma of homelessness



Focus Ireland produced a video in 2017 called '*I Can't Sleep*' which highlighted the work of Tusla-funded Aftercare Services. The video aired on TV with the great support of Bord Gáis Energy (BGE) as part of a three-year corporate social responsibility (CSR) partnership with Focus Ireland. U2 gave permission to use their track 'Sometimes You Can't Make it on Your Own' for the short film.

— An innovative and informative prevention message was delivered to the Irish public. The prevention message was aired three times on TV3 and was supported by a social media campaign that saw a further €120,000 raised to support the vital work of Focus Ireland.

Over €750,000 was raised through our Shine a Light Night with over 100 CEOs, 450 employees and 54 companies sleeping out for one night in support of people who are homeless.

The support of donors and foundations enables us to combat and change the policy landscape for young people facing homelessness in Ireland. Some significant highlights were the recognition of the success of the Youth Family Mediation service which was scaled up with the support of Tusla, and both national and international recognition for our youth programmes such as Employment Focus, Family Mediation and in particular Youth Housing First, which allow Focus Ireland to take a position as lead influencer in the area of youth service provision.

A new three-year partnership began with the Social Innovation Fund Ireland which will support the development of the Preparation for Education, Training and Employment programme (PETE).

Community Fundraisers and Beloved Shops

Thousands of committed and fabulous individuals, schools, colleges, community groups and organisations all over Ireland roll up their sleeves and raise funds for Focus

Ireland every year. Every year community engagement increases and 2017 was no different. Events ranged from table quizzes, sleep-outs, marathons, fun runs, dance competitions, talent shows, Beloved shop takeovers, fashion shows, bake sales, boat races and tunnel runs; and, for the more adventurous, overseas hikes and treks such as the Camino challenge or our Kilimanjaro Trek! A huge thank you to all who volunteered and donated to our Beloved shops, and to those who participated in the hundreds of community events that took place.

|
15,000

More than 15,000 people helped us to challenge homeless and change lives in 2017.

|
489

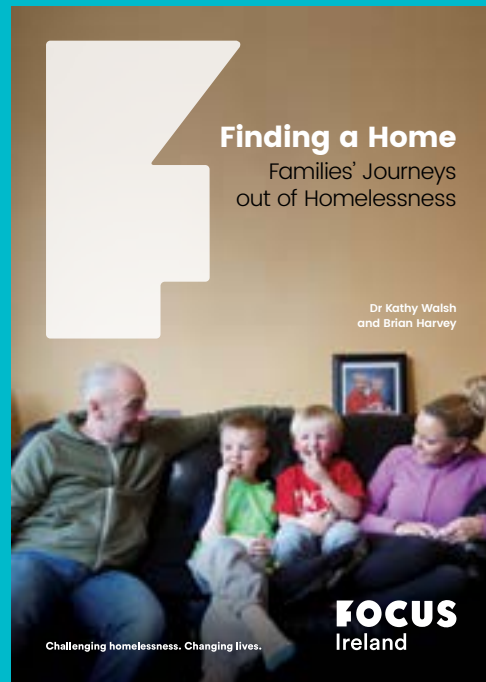
companies supported our work through corporate partnerships, donations, employee giving and fundraising along with payroll giving.

Monitoring, evaluating and researching

In 2017 Focus Ireland published a number of important pieces of original research which helped to deepen our understanding of homelessness and to inform the work that we do.

The findings emerging from these studies were launched as major events, discussed across the media and, in some cases, presented directly to policy-makers at the Housing Oireachtas Committees. These studies also act to inform the ongoing delivery of our own Strategic Plan which focuses on the two key pillars of 1) Prevention of homelessness and 2) Supporting people into housing as quickly as possible.

- In partnership with four other NGOs, we published a major study on youth homelessness entitled **‘Living in Limbo: Homeless Young People’s Paths to Housing’** which was carried out by Dr Paula Mayock and Sarah Parker, Trinity College Dublin. The study built on a previous study commissioned by Focus Ireland (published in 2014), tracking the lives of young people and their family members over time. The study was launched by Former President Mary McAleese in May 2017.
- Focus Ireland (in partnership with Tusla) published an evaluation of our partnership **‘Limerick Youth Housing’** project. The study documented the very positive outcomes of young people who have passed through our flagship housing project. The study highlighted the importance of a partnership approach to delivering youth housing. Dr Steve Gaetz and Melanie Redman – experts on youth homelessness from Canada – launched the study at our national conference in Limerick in September.



- A ground-breaking piece of research entitled **‘Food Access and Nutritional Health among Families in Hotel Accommodation’** was published by Focus Ireland in August 2017. The study – led by Dr Michelle Share of Trinity College Dublin – recorded the impact on the diet and health of families who are homeless and found that daily fruit and vegetable consumption is low and that foods consumed on an everyday basis were high in fat. The study was part-funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and by the Department of Health.
- Two other studies on family homelessness were launched by Minister Eoghan Murphy in December 2017. These studies focused on the two pillars of our strategic plan – prevention and exits out of homelessness. The prevention study entitled **‘Keeping a Home’** was carried out by researchers Neil Haran and Séan O’Siochrú (part-funded by Bord Gáis Energy) and the second report entitled **‘Finding a Home’** was led by Dr Kathy Walsh and Brian Harvey (part-funded by Human Dignity Foundation).
- Focus Ireland continued to develop our **‘Insights into Family Homelessness’** series and published six additional papers, including an important trend analysis of family homelessness and quarterly surveys of the pathways that result in families becoming homeless. This work helps to inform and influence policy and services in these areas.

All research and evaluation reports can be accessed at bit.ly/FIReports

Consolidated Statement of Financial Accounts

The financial results for the year are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities. The significant surplus achieved in the year was mainly driven by the fundraising income which increased by 44% on 2016 and now represents 40% of total income (2016: 40%).

Fundraising activities included working with corporate partners, supporting those who choose to fundraise for us and organising national events and campaigns. Each year the generosity of our supporters amazes us. Without them we simply could not do it. A total of 1,187 people signed up to support Focus Ireland with a monthly direct debit donation. Over 50% of our total fundraising income now comes through individual / public giving.

Fundraising income includes a one-off donation of €1.6m from the Immigrant Investor Program. The Board have decided to ring-fence this donation for specific expenditure. This expenditure will incorporate three main objectives:

1. Strengthen the future viability of Focus Ireland through donor acquisition
2. Improve internal efficiency of Focus Ireland through digital strategy
3. Create competitive advantage for our Focus Housing property strategy

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

Grant income remained relatively consistent compared to 2016 and now accounts for 44% (2016: 49%) of total income.

Focus Ireland continued to deliver our housing programme, with our property portfolio increasing by almost €8.3m in the year. A total of 176 new housing units were acquired through various channels such as CAS, the private rented market and managed properties.

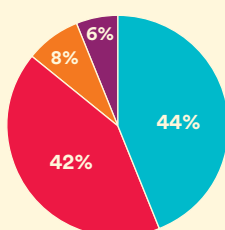
In the past number of years the organisation has invested significantly in services provision, housing, and capability building within the organisation to counteract the effects of the economic recession. As a budgetary strategy, the board had decided, in the interests of organisational stability and sustainability, to concentrate on replenishing the reserves of the organisation over the coming two years and have a reserve by the end of 2018 of 13 weeks.

This was achieved earlier than expected with the help of an exceptional year of fundraising, with the organisation finishing the year with 16 weeks of cash reserves (13 weeks if we exclude the one-off donation of €1.6m).

Analysis of income and expenditure

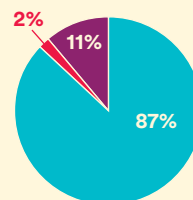
Mix of Income

Grant income
Fundraising income
Rental income
Other income



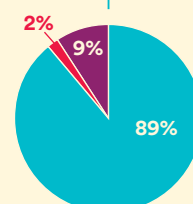
Mix of expenditure

Direct charitable activities costs
Governance and support costs
Fundraising and events costs



Mix of expenditure (Excluding retail)

Direct charitable activities costs
Governance and support costs
Fundraising and events costs



Statement of Income and Retained Earnings

For the financial year ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2017	2017	2016	2016	2016
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
	€	€	€	€	€	€
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	10,446,570	1,478,897	11,925,467	10,433,300	217,348	10,650,648
Charitable activities	-	12,709,515	12,709,515	-	12,789,719	12,789,719
Other	3,997,972	12,430	4,010,402	2,860,041	77,810	2,937,851
Total income	14,444,542	14,200,842	28,645,384	13,293,341	13,084,877	26,378,218
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	2,758,241	-	2,758,241	2,301,770	-	2,301,770
Charitable activities	9,059,114	14,121,865	23,180,979	8,389,171	12,766,845	21,156,016
Interest on borrowings	315,880	-	315,880	99,418	-	99,418
Total expenditure	12,133,235	14,121,865	26,255,100	10,790,359	12,766,845	23,557,204
Net income	2,311,307	78,977	2,390,284	2,502,982	318,032	2,821,014
Taxation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year	2,311,307	78,977	2,390,284	2,502,982	318,032	2,821,014

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

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

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

To review Focus Ireland's full Financial Report please go to bit.ly/2017FOCUS

Consolidated Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2017

	2017 €	2016 €
Fixed assets		
Fixed assets - properties	86,144,733	77,817,469
Other tangible assets	137,698	176,476
Total fixed assets	86,282,431	77,993,945
Current assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	8,089,378	5,064,188
Debtors	2,752,150	3,085,448
Total current assets	10,841,528	8,149,636
Liabilities		
Creditors: amounts falling due within one financial year	(5,907,777)	(3,567,658)
Net current assets	4,933,751	4,581,978
Total assets less current liabilities	91,216,182	82,575,923
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one financial year		
Capital Assistance Scheme Loans	(63,598,297)	(60,849,213)
Capital Advanced Leasing Facility Loans	(1,607,088)	(824,274)
Bank Loans	(8,008,346)	(5,290,269)
Total creditors falling due after more than one year	(73,213,731)	(66,963,756)
Net assets	18,002,451	15,612,167
The funds of the charity		
Restricted income funds	2,421,916	2,342,939
Unrestricted funds	8,078,003	7,346,627
Capital grants and donations	3,312,267	3,332,336
Unrestricted capital reserves	2,590,265	2,590,265
Designated funds	1,600,000	-
	18,002,451	15,612,167

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