



LEEDS IRISH HEALTH & HOMES



ANNUAL REPORT 1998-1999

LIHH is a voluntary organisation providing culturally sensitive housing and support services to single Irish people. We recognise how this community's experience of factors such as homelessness, poor quality and transient housing, discrimination, isolation and heavy manual labouring have contributed to a marked deterioration in Irish people's mental and physical health in Britain.



Some people are born into a fortune, some are fortunate, and others are unfortunate. This is not a reflection on the person, but it does make a big difference.

Life can be very difficult for those who do not have the resources to live Independently.

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WHO ARE LEEDS IRISH HEALTH & HOMES?

Leeds Irish Health & Homes (**LIHH**) has developed from a steering group set up in 1992, which was made up of service users, and professionals from the voluntary and statutory sector working in mental health, housing, and community research and development.

Formed in an attempt to respond positively and innovatively to 'The NHS and Community Care Act' (1990) and the Government document 'Health of the Nation' (1991), **LIHH** was officially constituted in 1996 as a member of the National Housing Federation and as an Industrial & Provident Society with charitable status.

Specifically, **LIHH** are responding to:

- ♦ The high number of homeless Irish people in Leeds:
- ♦ The over-representation of Irish people in Leeds admitted to hospital and referred for assessment under the Mental Health Act 1983:
- ♦ The lack of culturally appropriate support and services to Irish people in the community setting

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- ♦ We will provide accommodation and associated support services to single Irish people who are homeless, insecurely housed, experience or are vulnerable to mental or physical ill-health.
- ♦ We will support and assist our tenants to develop their skills for independent living.
- ♦ We will raise awareness within the public and voluntary sector to the specific needs of Irish people in terms of their housing and health needs.
- ♦ We will bring to the attention of the wider public, the needs of vulnerable Irish people.
- ♦ We aim to establish a network of Irish people who are interested in the need for culturally sensitive support and mental health issues surrounding Irish homelessness.
- ♦ We have a commitment to lobbying for an Irish category in all ethnic monitoring. We will act as an information exchange, providing a network for the various agencies concerned with Irish mental health issues.
- ♦ To work in counteracting direct and indirect discrimination in the mental health service.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

This has been a year of continued growth and consolidation of our existing services.

During the year our staff team has grown under the solid direction of Ant Hanlon, and we have moved into more spacious office accommodation. We now have a drop in facility where our tenants can meet each other over a cup of tea.

We have increased the number of supported tenancies that we manage by 40% while at the same time our voids and bad debts have remained at a minimum.

We are committed to raising awareness of the needs of vulnerable Irish people and we do this by working closely with Leeds City Council and national organisations such as Shelter, the Irish Housing Forum and the Federation of Irish Societies.

Whilst our campaigning work is of great importance, our tenants remain our first priority. We have built our reputation of a quality service and this is reflected in the feedback from our tenants in this Annual Report.

My final comments are ones of thanks to my fellow Management Committee members for all their commitment and advice.



Mary Sheard

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS 1998-99



Left to Right:

LORRAINE MANGAN

CLODAGH MURPHY (Vice-Chair)

BRIGID O'CALLAGHAN

JOHN MELAUGH

MEL NALLY (Treasurer)

PETER McHALE

PATRICK O'CONNOR

AGGIE NOTHARD (Secretary)

GARY BURNS

CLARE WHELAN

MARY SHEARD (Chair)

Social Worker

Training Officer, Mental Health

Expert Through Experience

Senior Probation Officer

Relationship Manager, Bank of Ireland

Development Worker, Catholic Care

Manager, Community Mental Health Team

Manager, Leeds Carers Health Project

Social Worker, Mental Health

Community Mental Health Support Worker

Director, GIPSIL

STAFF TEAM



Director

ANT HANLON BA (Hons), MA/DipSW

Housing Support Workers

KAREN MALLON BA (Hons)

KEVIN PONTING BA (Hons)

Administration

JANET STEPHENS

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

This has been an exciting year for us at Leeds Irish Health & Homes. We have seen the fruition of new partnerships, whilst strengthening our existing ones.

The successful development of partnerships begun in 1998 with Leeds City Council and North British Housing Association has allowed us to surpass our planned housing management development by 40%. This has meant we have been able to offer 14 further tenancies to single homeless Irish people this year, into a variety of accommodation types, and in a variety of areas. We have been able to offer our tenant's more choice.

We have worked hard with representatives from Housing, Health, Social Service and Voluntary Sector representatives throughout the past year to ensure that the support our tenant's need is delivered in a way that does not disregard their cultural needs and experiences.

We continue to raise awareness of the needs of vulnerable Irish people in Leeds through national bodies such as the Irish Housing Forum, the Federation of Irish Societies. In Leeds, we have been invited onto various decision-making bodies such as the Housing & Community Care Strategy group and our training sessions are being accessed increasingly by various agencies throughout Leeds.

We have seen the successful development of a partnership with Leeds Health Authority, which resulted in LIHH being invited on board to evaluate the health and support service needs of older Irish people in Leeds through the Reconfiguration of Older People's Services. This has led to the development of an Irish Elder's Outreach Worker's post. This is as a direct result of our 'Green, White and Invisible' Report produced last year.

Our plans for 1999/2000 include the development of the Elder's Outreach service; the addition of further supported housing units and an Irish Mental Health Outreach post.

I would like to thank members of the Management Committee whose commitment, enthusiasm and longevity bring strength, stability and vision where it is needed.

Finally, I would like to thank and congratulate Karen, Janet and Kevin. Their care and sensitivity to the needs of our tenants has allowed many of them to share their experiences, hopes and fears which I hope will be our guiding forces in the development of our services throughout the coming years.

Ant Hanlon

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

- Moving to better office accommodation in the heart of our community
- Providing an increase in our Housing and Support service to members of our community
- Seeing an increase in numbers and diversity of Irish people seeking our service
- Being invited onto Leeds City Council's Housing & Community Care Strategy group for Ethnic Minority Development
- Successfully achieving support from Leeds Health Authority to look at the support and service needs of Irish Elders
- Being able to successfully develop our proposal for an Irish Elder's Outreach Worker
- Positive reaction to our awareness raising activities
- Becoming more involved in the work of the Irish Housing Forum and the Federation of Irish Societies
- Increase in the skills and knowledge of our staff
- Involvement in developing a factsheet on Irish Mental Health for the HEA
- Involvement in developing information around Irish specific service provision for Irish homeless people for Shelter and UK/Ireland Construction magazines.
- Successfully forging new working partnerships
- Improvement in the duration of tenancies
- Seeing a growth in the confidence and self esteem of many of our tenants throughout the past year
- Supporting the development of Leeds Irish Women's Social Group
- Adopting Standardised Information System (SIS) monitoring which feeds into national statistics on Irish need and service delivery.
- Successful St Patrick's Day and Christmas Events
- Setting up of an Activities Group with help of Leeds Social Services' grant

TENANTS' COMMENTS

"You have helped me a great deal, the service is great.

There is no word in the English dictionary to describe you.

Since I have been with LIHH, no matter how big the problem, you have tackled it."

Irish Homes have given me luxury and health that I needed and wanted. The support has always been pleasant. The manager, Anthony Hanlon, has given me everything I would expect from any Irishman. I am grateful."

C

"No matter how small or large the problem, I get total support from the staff.

The staff are totally committed and professional about the job they do.

They also have hearts of gold.

It has improved my health. I'm a lot healthier than I was. The support I get from staff is superb. They go out of their way to do things, which is very nice.

LIHH have a heart of gold."

T

"The staff from Irish Health and Homes are almost like my adopted family."

L

"Irish Health and Homes is a lifeline."

CD

"Karen is a lovely lady, you have none better. She has done a lot for me in the past.

She is a big hearted lady - solid gold."

J

CELEBRATING IRISH STYLE!!!

During the year we held well attended celebrations to mark St. Patrick's Day and Christmas.

HAREHILLS IRISH MUSIC PROJECT: Brought some of their young musicians to entertain us at our Christmas Party.



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS: "Brilliant entertainment on a brilliant evening".

We now have a regular Tenants' Activities Group which through various outings and events has helped to combat the isolation and loneliness that many of our tenants can find themselves enduring.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING: SUSTAINING & DEVELOPING

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

IHH continues to work successfully in partnership with other housing agencies to provide a culturally sensitive housing and support service to Irish people living in Leeds.

The organisation has worked hard to ensure that the views and needs of Irish people in Leeds are taken into account in the planning of future supported housing services within the city.

SARAH BEST

SPECIAL PROJECTS OFFICER, DEPT. OF HOUSING SERVICES

RIDINGS HOUSING ASSOCIATION

1998/99 has seen yet another successful year in the partnership between Leeds Irish Health & Homes and The Ridings Housing Association.

The association monitors the work of its managing agents and was pleased with the results from Irish Health & Homes. We have monitored IHH responded to the demands for its services and their

appropriate increase in provision of accommodation. During this time, The Ridings main concern was the management of the properties managed on our behalf by Irish Health & Homes. The organisation continued to carry this out successfully whilst also handling their growth.

The tenants in our properties have sustained their tenancies well during 1998/99. Losses

from voids and bad debts remain well within the target of 5% for the scheme. Staff from IHH have liaised well with staff from the association in managing the scheme.

The association looks forward to continued success with Irish Health & Homes in 1999/2000.

HELEN LENNON
SUPPORTED
HOUSING MANAGER

NORTH BRITISH HOUSING ASSOCIATION has been pleased to continue working with Leeds Irish Health and Homes during the last year. We have been able to provide more units to them so that they can provide their quality service to more of the Irish community in Leeds.

Having developed our relationship over the last couple of years, we are looking forward to continuing working with Leeds Irish Health and Homes on existing and future developments. By working in partnership we will continue to provide quality solutions to the problems facing the Irish Community in Leeds.

PAT EGAN
AREA DIRECTOR

LEEDS HEALTH AUTHORITY

Irish Health and Homes offer us vital links with older people in the Irish community of Leeds. We are delighted to be working with them and value the role they play in helping us to work together to change services for older people.

SUSAN CONNOLLY
RECONFIGURATION PROJECT TEAM

LEEDS SOCIAL SERVICES

A few months ago, some training took place at York Towers Social Services area office to look at the different communities in our area. As part of the training staff from Irish Health and Homes talked about the history and way of life of some older Irish people who have worked here for many years but few, if any, family networks to support them in older age.

Although other agencies can offer essential services, such as Housing and Home Care, some of these residents of Leeds need the additional support that the

staff of Irish Health and Homes can give, due to their sensitivity and awareness of their needs.

Social Workers and Home Care staff have been impressed by the support people receive from Irish Health and Homes and the quality of the homes and surroundings in which they live.

The York Towers office has always valued having a close working relationship with Irish Health and Homes. Ant Hanlon and other staff are familiar faces in the office, attending staff team meetings to promote their work and more recently playing an active part in our local training on cultural awareness.

I believe the model works well, whereby our work is complementary. Some services the Local Authority is best suited to provide – but other smaller voluntary organisations are often much better placed to develop and provide services for specific groups of people whose needs require particular consideration and care.

At York Towers we look forward to working with Irish Health and Homes as its services continue to develop.

FRANCES LOWE
COMMUNITY CARE MANAGER

FEDERATION OF IRISH SOCIETIES

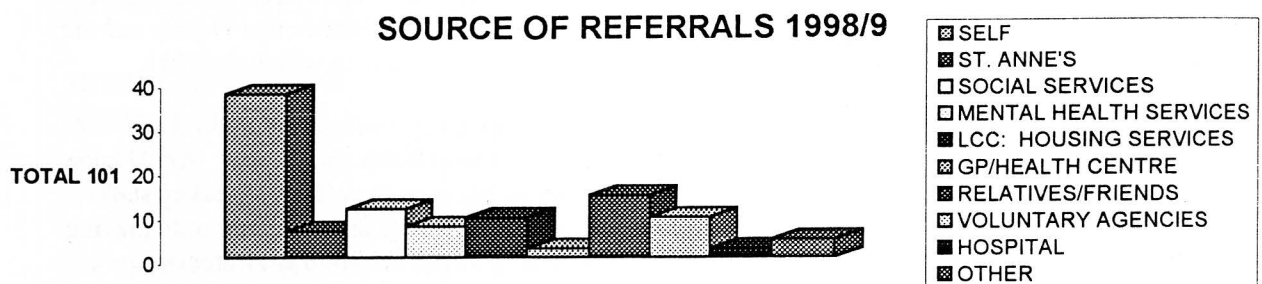
The Federation of Irish Societies welcomes the opportunity of this Annual Report to congratulate Leeds Irish Health and Homes on its successes throughout the year. We appreciate Leeds Irish Health and Homes' participation, as an affiliate, in FIS and, in particular, the assistance and participation of your organisation in two initiatives this year to raise awareness of issues around Census 2001: a public meeting at Leeds Irish Centre on and the distribution of a Census information leaflet at Leeds Irish Festival.

We appreciate greatly the professionalism which your organisation brings to the delivery of services to members of the Irish community; and we wish you every success in the coming year.

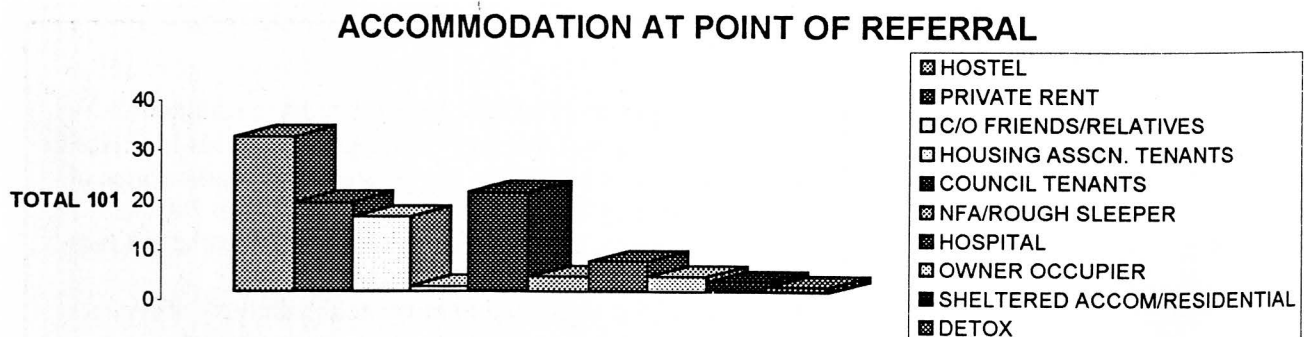
MARY TILKI
COMMUNITY CARE OFFICER

HOUSING MANAGEMENT REPORT ALLOCATIONS POLICY

LIHH is committed to housing single Irish people in greatest need. We meet these needs by working with a wide range of referral agencies, making a full assessment of someone's support needs and working with the individual to secure the most appropriate support services.



Our referral statistics show that most people who are referred to our service find themselves in very transient, insecure and unsuitable accommodation where their mental and physical health is at risk.

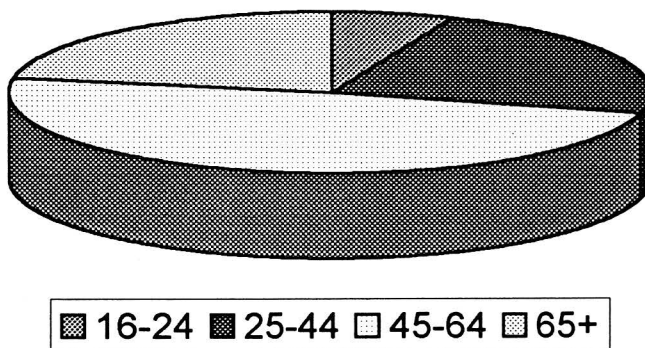


EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

LIHH acknowledges that in society certain groups and individuals are unfairly discriminated against. We are committed in taking positive steps to help to redress the effects of unfair discrimination and disadvantage in order to ensure that equality of opportunity becomes an integral feature of all its activities. **LIHH** aims to eliminate discrimination on grounds of race, colour, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, Aids/HIV status, disability, age or history of mental health or addiction problems. The Equal Opportunities Policy of this project is applicable to all Tenants, Committee Members and Staff. We also aim to encourage co-operation from consultants, suppliers and associates.

Within **LIHH**, we monitor age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and disability. We will endeavour to balance access to housing for men and women and ensure that a percentage of our stock meets disability standards.

AGE RANGE OF REFERRAL



TOTAL: 101

SERVICE DELIVERY

LIHH continues to improve and develop its housing management policies and service delivery.

We would not be as rich without the input, experience and voice of our tenants. Our aim is to recognise the individuality of our tenants in addition to their Irishness and to try and provide a service according to that need. Our tenants views are gained both formally, in a quarterly Tenant's group, and informally in one-to-one discussions which take place on an everyday basis. We find at **LIHH**, that once Irish people are given a voice, they will use it effectively!!

Our voids and bad debts figures for the year were 5% which is exceptionally good for a special needs organisation like ourselves. We had in fact budgetted for a 10% figure.

FINANCE

INCOME RAISED FROM:-

HOUSING RENTS	90,129
HOUSING CORPORATION	28,080
LEEDS CITY COUNCIL	26,460
DION FUND	11,232
OTHER INCOME & GRANTS	4,981

MONEY SPENT ON:-

HOUSING SERVICES	118,338
CENTRAL & ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	31,275

LIHH would like to record our thanks to I.M.E. Omar & Co. who have audited the full accounts for 1998/99. The Auditors opinion was unqualified and our accounts were approved by the Management Committee on 19 July 1999. A full set of accounts can be obtained from LIHH.

AUDITORS:

**IME Omar & Co.
St. Albans House, 577/587 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NQ**

BANKERS:

**Bank of Ireland
31 King Street, Leeds LS1 2HL**



A member of the
National Housing Federation