

Annual Review 2013/14



preventing homelessness, transforming lives

Message From the Board

On behalf of Board of Directors I am pleased to report the progress made in 2013-14.

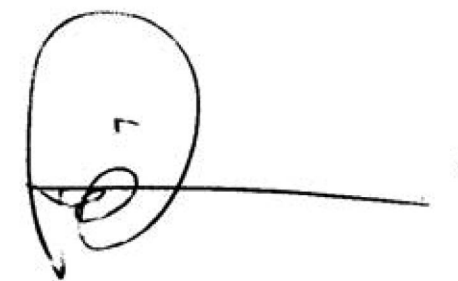
As I reflect on the past twelve months it is clear that the external environment has, and will continue to be, challenging. Moving forward into the final year of our current strategy, we find, like many charities across Scotland, that funding is proving to be a challenge. I am however confident that we, as an organisation, will work to achieve the best possible outcomes for clients and communities across Fife.

Today, we are dealing with homelessness which even in 2014 represents a huge challenge to Frontline Fife and many other organisations on a day to day basis. Security in your home matters and we, as our name suggests, are dealing with not just housing but also all the associated difficulties and problems that often go with not having a roof over your head. We are asked by society to do a difficult job on their behalf and we should be proud of our achievements and the continuing progress we are making. No one should be in any doubt that helping to rebuild lives is worthwhile. The success of what we do may be overlooked in the busy world we live in. We, at Frontline Fife know all too well the real human stories that lie behind our annual report.

Our staff team's unwavering commitment, along with the generous support of our volunteers, partners and donors, have made it possible for us to continue to provide services to prevent those at risk from becoming homeless and give much needed support and guidance to those who find themselves without a home or on their path to sustainable living. For this, I thank you all.

Our plan to continue to consolidate our service, has given way to our performance being strengthened. Working in partnership continues to be fruitful, helping us to gain a broader understanding of the underlying causes of homelessness as well as assisting us to develop better community links to support our clients in gaining direct access to services.

The theme of this annual report is Looking Back, Moving Forward. It is with this in mind that we close this year's activity while focusing on the road ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line and a small dot.

Rosyln Blair, Chair

*“I am a homeless superhero.
What I do can seem invisible.”*

Written by Billy Burton, Gillespie Drop In (2010)

General Manager’s Report

Some years ago we expressed our vision for preventing homelessness; we painted a picture of agencies working together, sharing premises and expertise. We believe we’ve to be where anybody can be comfortable and have no qualms about coming in from any reason or none; inclusive rather than exclusive.

Over the past year it has been signalled that Home4Good Centres may well be sold on and that a new approach to service delivery will be in place by 2015. We participated in the public and third sectors ‘partners for change’; a series of sessions looking to influence the shape of future commissioning. As this was happening Housing Services were working with consultants who were facilitating Housing Options Hubs across Scotland, to explore models for alternative delivery in Fife.

In preparation for integrated working, we restructured our operations to become area based with mixed skilled teams rather than traditional project teams. Three area Co-ordinators were recruited, starting in May 2013 to spearhead this change. The area teams are already showing improvement in joint working with housing advice, housing support and case management with accommodation working together more coherently around the client. This augurs well for the future as we foresee even more dynamic co-working between agencies.

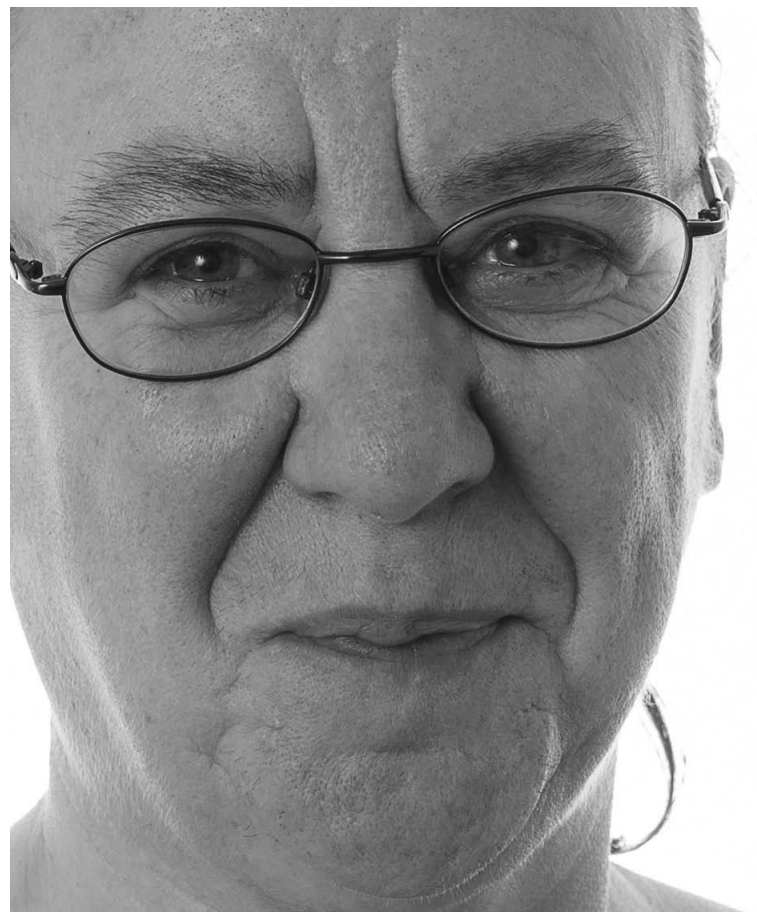
Over the year we also secured additional resources to work with people who are vulnerable due to the impact of the UK Government’s Welfare Reform. Frontline, as lead agency for the Fife Advice Partnership, successfully applied for funds from the Scottish Legal Aid Board’s ‘Making Advice Work’ initiative.

The past year was not without its challenges. As a major player within Fife’s Housing and Homelessness Sector, we have had to make a number of changes and this process was testing. Frontline commissioned an external audit of process and structure to ensure we’re robust and fit for future risk and opportunity.

We know that if we’re to be relevant over coming years of continued austerity, we’ll have to be forward thinking, embrace change, know what we do and do well. We will also have to be able to work in partnerships and places that can realise economies so that clients or customers receive the best possible service in more difficult times. I think that our expertise, experience, ability to visualise future possibilities and lead on important strategic partnerships should offer the best opportunity for our future in a fast moving landscape.

Billy Lynch, General Manager

What we do,
What we've delivered....



“My life before I had Frontline Fife was terrible. I couldn’t manage on my own and was struggling with everything. Frontline Fife has helped me with budgeting, shopping, letters, phone calls and attending appointments. They’ve helped me come off the drink as I had a bit of a problem with alcohol. I am happy now and I feel able to go to appointments myself, I am starting college next week and I manage better now and make better choices. If I hadn’t met my workers I would have been sad and alone in my house, or sitting in the pub drinking.”

Liz Goodall, Client

CORE SERVICES

Frontline Fife, funded by Fife Council, provides essential help, advice and assistance at a time when it’s most needed.

PREVENTION

The Prevention First approach aims to achieve the Scottish Government’s objective for reducing the number of homeless presentations across Scotland. Frontline Fife is one of the key partners providing Prevention First for Fife Council, delivering approximately 75% of the service across Fife region. Preventing people from becoming homeless is at the heart of our work. By providing advice and assistance as early as possible, we aim to help people resolve issues, sustain tenancies and ultimately avoid becoming homeless.

We understand the importance of having a secure and safe place to live and are aware of the trauma that someone can go through when this security is threatened. Our priority is to ensure that information on all of the available options is given and support is provided to assist clients to pursue their own chosen path.

During the period 2013/14, our caseworkers:-

- assisted 2,725 people through Prevention First.
- completed 2,555 Triage Assessments (72% of whole of Fife).
- undertook 919 Enhanced Housing Option Assessments.
- undertook 1,178 Crisis Assessments.

What we do, What we've delivered....



“We are very passionate about being part of a team where everyone has the same goal - assisting people work through their housing crisis. Team work is an integral part of our day to day work, ensuring that the people we work with receive the best service.”

**Sharon Sullivan, Susan Rae, Morag Weir,
Anthony McManus, Caseworkers**

SUPPORT

Housing Support Service

Our Housing Support Service assists people to sustain their accommodation and helps prevent homelessness. Caseworkers offer assistance to people of all ages. Many of the people we work with have complex personal, social and medical needs. Increasingly, we are seeing the financial problems of Welfare Reform impact on people's lives.

We adopt a flexible approach to ensure we can help on a wide variety of issues or make a referral to specialist services, both internal and external.

During the period 2013/14, our Housing Support Service:-

- assisted 215 people with issues relating to finances, benefits, employability, health & wellbeing and independent living skills.
- provided an average of 390 support hours per week to clients.

Accommodation Service

Our Accommodation Service consists of Core & Cluster and Shared Accommodation.

Core & Cluster is a 24 hours supported housing service, comprising core staff facilities with satellite cluster accommodation. The team manages ten self-contained flats in the Kirkcaldy and Levenmouth areas. Eight of these flats are shared properties and two are single occupancy. They also provide support and assistance to the residents as well as overseeing the management of the properties.

Shared Accommodation provides housing management for 60 properties in the Levenmouth, Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline areas. The properties are maintained and serviced when residents are admitted and when leaving. While in accommodation, residents are encouraged to take up Housing Support to help them stabilise their situation and find a more suitable, permanent tenancy.

During the period 2013/14, the Accommodation Service:-

- admitted 80 people to Core & Cluster and 218 people to Shared Accommodation.
- achieved 91% occupancy rate for Core & Cluster and 88% occupancy rate for Shared Accommodation.

What we do, What we've delivered....



Home4Good Cupar



Home4Good Leven



Home4Good Kirkcaldy



Home4Good Dunfermline

ADVICE AND INFORMATION

Housing Advice

Highly experienced Housing Advisors (HAs) provide free, confidential, independent advice and representation on a wide range of housing areas of case law. Through this work, our HAs aim to assist people to retain their tenancies and find the best possible solutions to their housing problems. Work includes assisting in rent arrear court actions, challenging housing decisions and dealing with all aspects of Housing Benefit for both social and private tenancies.

Over the past year HAs have been particularly involved in dealing with the consequences of the introduction of the 'Bedroom Tax,' wider Welfare Reform and enforcing compliance relating to the reforms in the Private Rented Sector. HAs work to influence new legislation and communicate changes in law to the wider community.

During the period 2013/14, HAs:-

- assisted 771 people with 1910 areas of case law including disrepair, eviction, homelessness, housing benefit mortgage and rent arrears, security of tenure and statutory tenancy rights.
- carried out 475 court representations for 212 people, with a 91% positive outcome.
- recovered £91,000 in housing benefit for our clients.

Home4Good Centres

In Partnership with Fife Council, Frontline Fife manages four Home4Good Centres across Fife. The centres provide a base within the community for people who need help or advice with their housing issues, including homelessness (see Prevention). The Home4Good Centres are located in Kirkcaldy, Cupar, Leven and Dunfermline.

Staff working in these centres help people with a number of issues which have an impact on their ability to manage and / or sustain their tenancy. This can include health, addictions, employment or general support. People visiting the centres are also able to access other services provided by Frontline Fife, including fast-track referrals to money, housing and debt advice.

A variety of specialist agencies such as NHS Fife Addiction Services and Fife Keyfund also use the centres to enable them to provide outreach clinics.

What we do, What we've delivered....



"I started working in the homeless sector about 11 years ago. I had been caring and supporting a family member who became homeless and it made me realise that I wanted to help other vulnerable homeless people as homelessness can happen to anyone. I enjoy working with people and the challenges my job brings."

**Morag Weir, Caseworker
with Angela Irvine, Client**

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

Frontline Fife dedicates a small proportion of its resources to discreet project and programme work.

Our project work is vital to building public awareness of homelessness and prevention across Fife. This work allows us to develop and improve upon existing provision and helps us to further develop our services to meet the needs of the people we serve.

Private Landlord Advice

Our Private Landlord Advice project offers advice to new and existing private landlords. By providing this service we aim to help landlords set up, run and end tenancies legally thereby providing benefit to both the landlord and tenant. This year we gave advice on the new legislation regarding increasing tenant's rights which was introduced in April 2013.

During the period 2013/14, the project:-

- assisted 109 private landlords with information and advice on setting up tenancies, continuing tenancies, terminating tenancies, letting agency contracts, deposits, and obligations to the tenant.

Leaving Home Education Programme

The Leaving Home Education programme offers a variety of learning opportunities for Secondary Schools and Colleges throughout Fife. The aim of the programme is to raise awareness and provide insight into the potential problems young people may have when leaving home and how they can access help.

The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence presented additional challenges this year. To address this, our programme was adapted to meet the needs of each school, ensuring all essential information is included.

During the period 2013/14, the programme:-

- delivered 191 sessions with 26,000 students.
- worked with nine High Schools and one College.



“Working for Frontline Fife allows me the opportunity to advise people on all manner of housing issues, including eviction, benefits and rent arrears. By providing information, advice and advocacy, people become more empowered and in many cases, we prevent them from losing their homes.”

Fiona Dunwoody, Housing Advisor

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Partnership working is an integral part of what we do. Working with other organisations towards a joint goal enables us to provide comprehensive solutions to the myriad of issues people face. By combining the skills and expertise of different Partners, we can provide services which offer more sustainable solutions for our clients.

Fife Advice Partnership

The Fife Advice Partnership was formed as a result of funding from The Scottish Legal Aid Board. The Partnership brings together Frontline Fife, Citizens Advice & Rights Fife, The Fife Law Centre, Fife Council (Housing & Neighbourhood Services), The Fife Rights Forum, The Fife Housing Association Alliance and The Fife Migrants Forum. The aim of this partnership is to provide an integrated approach to the provision of advice services in Fife.

Making Justice Work

The Making Justice Work project aims to help people who experience debt issues and find themselves at risk of mortgage repossession or eviction. Partners provide advice and assistance to resolve debt issues, negotiate with lenders / landlords or look at alternative housing options. The work also includes the provision of Lay and Legal Representation at Court.

During the period 2013/14, the project:-

- assisted 478 people with issues around debt, mortgage arrears, rent arrears, repossession, eviction, and sequestration.
- assisted 220 people to remain in their home.

Wise2Welfare and Wise2Money

The Wise2Welfare project delivers co-ordinated advice for people who present with multiple benefit, debt and / or housing issues as a result of Welfare Reform. The Wise2Money project brings the addition of language support from The Fife Migrants Forum and enables people from all communities to access this service.

Since the projects started in December 2013, the project:-

- assisted 132 people with benefit advice (including entitlement, disputes, applications), and debt and housing options.

What we do, What we've delivered....



“Working for Frontline Fife has been a varied and enriching experience. Having the opportunity to work in partnership with different Projects within FLF allows us to utilise different knowledge and experience which ultimately gives the best service to the people we work with.”

**Ruth Livingstone, Caseworker &
Rebecca Hyndman, Recovery Link Worker
with Liz Goodall, Client**

RECOVERY LINK

The Recovery Link project is a partnership with Fife Intensive Rehabilitation Substance Team (FIRST) which is funded by the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. The project works with people at a time of addiction crisis and links them into recovery services. By encouraging client engagement with these services and helping them with their recovery plan, it is hoped that they will reduce their alcohol / drug use and become more stable and better able to sustain their tenancy. We provide flexible, on-going support which aims to encourage clients to adopt healthy lifestyles and to take steps towards improving their physical and psychological wellbeing.

During the period 2013/14, Recovery Link Workers:-

- assisted a total of 103 people (87 new referrals). Of which 30% fully engaged and achieved a planned exit from the service and, a further 30% partially engaged with the service.

UPFRONT SOLUTIONS - RELOVE IT!

Relove It! charity shop is a partnership venture between Frontline Fife and Scottish Christian Alliance.

Established as a social enterprise, Relove It! is committed to supporting the local community and wider environment through its employability scheme and recycling projects. This year Relove It! supported and trained 14 people in retail skills of which 50% progressed into paid employment. Through the unique working partnership between Frontline Fife and St Andrews University Student Halls of Residence, it also helped to reduce waste by recycling and reusing four tonnes of clothing, home furnishings and other lifestyle goods.

Located off Kirkcaldy High Street, its boutique styling presents fashionable used clothing and goods to the market without compromise. Trading this year has been favourable with volume of sales being maintained. This year's performance has been encouraging given the shop's relatively short trading period of three years.

STUDENT PLACEMENTS

Working in partnership with Dundee University and Fife College, we have provided student placements over the past year.

Students work alongside our caseworkers, assisting with our Housing Support Service. After training, and with weekly peer support, students manage a small caseload of clients. Invaluable 'on the job' experience is gained which helps each student to continue with their studies and career.

What we do, What we've delivered....



"Frontline Fife has helped me with everything; finding accommodation and volunteering. Now I spend my time helping other people."

Krystian, Volunteer
with Pat McAllister, Volunteer Development
Co-ordinator

VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYABILITY

The Volunteer Development project aims to offer worthwhile volunteering opportunities to people which complements the existing work carried out by Frontline Fife and provides additional activities not currently provided by paid staff.

Activities undertaken during 2013/14 include:-

- Gardening Project
- Allotment Project
- Painting and Decorating
- Footsteps Befriending
- Dunfermline Drop-in Centre
- Clerical / Administration
- Employability / Outdoor Activity Project

Everyone receives ongoing support and training to provide them with useful skills which can be used to help secure paid employment, or advancement to education or training.

During the period 2013/14, the project:-

- recruited 62 volunteers, of which 10 moved into paid employment, eight into other voluntary work and six moved into further education / training.
- provided approximately 3,000 hours provided by volunteers.
- employed two young people through funding secured by Community Jobs Scotland.

St Andrews University Recycling Project

For the third consecutive year, we have worked in partnership with St Andrews University Student Halls of Residence with their End of Year Recycling Project.

With the help of our staff and volunteers, we successfully collected over four tonnes of unwanted clothing, bedding and household items from eleven Halls of Residence. Items were sorted and distributed to people who we work with and to Relove It! charity shop. A total of 570 hours were dedicated to the project.



"I was homeless - forever, or so it felt. I stumbled on Frontline Fife, or they stumbled on me. With their help I found a lovely flat, in a quiet setting, with all I needed. And, I had a Caseworker at my side, to help with bills, letters and anything else."

Angela Irvine, Client

A SUMMARY OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the year we assisted a total of 4,893 people.

With our prevention work we:-

- prevented 7 illegal evictions.
- assisted 115 people to secure more sustainable housing.
- assisted 22 people to enter employment, training or education.
- provided Leaving Home Education sessions to 26,000 students.
- provided advice and information to 109 private landlords on legally setting up, maintaining and ending tenancies.

In supporting people we:-

- assisted 40 people to register with health services.
- assisted 224 people to better manage / resolve their financial issues (including benefits, awards, and repayment of rent arrears).
- undertook 494 referrals to specialist agencies.

Through our advice and information services we:-

- secured £7,500 of alternative sources of finance.
- secured £91,000 in HB for 72 people.
- represented 212 people in court, with 91% positive outcome.
- administered 1,900 instances of case law (including housing options, housing and council tax issues, eviction, rent arrears, discrimination in housing statutory tenancy rights and homelessness).

What we do,
What we've delivered....



"I am a Social Work Student at Dundee University. I am doing my placement with Frontline Fife. I am looking forward to help with the variety of housing needs Frontline Fife clients experience and hope to gain a solid knowledge and understanding of housing concerns and solutions through working with clients, colleagues and partner agencies."

Nadine Mack, Student

Income and Expenditure Summary Year Ended 31 March 2014

	Total Funds £
Incoming Resources	
Grants Received	1,586,332
Income from Tenants	883
Donations	5,389
Fundraising Income	534
Cafe Income	1,068
Investment Income	5,581
Other Income	22,665
Total Incoming Resources	1,622,452
Resources Expended	
Direct Charitable Expenditure	1,640,561
Cost of Generating Funds	1,650
Governance Costs	4,072
Total Resources Expended	1,646,283
Net Movement in Funds	(23,831)

THANK YOU

Frontline Fife would like to thank our:-

Funders and Sponsors

Fife Council	Fairer Scotland
Scottish Legal Aid Board	Fife Health & Wellbeing Alliance
Alcohol & Drugs Partnership	Carnegie Trust
SCVO - Community Jobs	

Donors

Liane Bauer	Sandy Wood	Merchant House Bed & Breakfast
St John's Episcopal Church	St Michael's Episcopal Church	Pitreavie Primary School
Pittencrieff Primary School	East Wemyss Primary School	Trefoil Guild
Crossford Primary School	St Peter's Episcopal Church	St David's Church
John Free	Rachael House Hospice	Janet Marshall
Mary Ritchie	Lynne Docherty	Dunfermline Abbey
Cupar Baptist Church	Adam Smith College	Dunfermline High School
Canmore Primary School	Asda St Leonards	Asda Kirkcaldy
Clydesdale Bank	Dobbies, Dunfermline	Dog's Trust
Fife Voluntary Action	Tryst Centre, Dunfermline	Kingdom Vineyard
Morrisons Glenrothes	Saline & Blairingone Church	World of Parties
Dalgety Parish Church	Gillespie Church, Dunfermline	St Andrews University

We would like to thank all individuals and organisations who have given us support over the past year. We rely on the generosity and goodwill of individual donors, churches, community groups and businesses of Fife who donate food, clothing, money and other goods. This helps us to provide essential services to the people we work with.

Donate via **JustGiving™**

INTRODUCTION FROM THE INTERIM CEO

I'd like to first take this opportunity to formally thank everyone at Frontline Fife for their warm welcome. The generous spirit afforded to me by all has been truly felt.

Taking cognisance of the breadth of work accomplished in 2013-14, and seeing at first hand, the commitment and passion staff members have when working with clients, I am mindful that as an organisation, we are ready and able to build on our consolidated efforts.

Though we may continue to be tested by changes in the external environment, I believe that we can become even more responsive to clients and local communities. Through employing a 'one team' approach in all that we do, by improving the integration of our services, and by focusing on achieving and measuring quality through skills and knowledge development, we can achieve a great deal more. This will require us to take a step change in practice while demanding of ourselves greater clarity about the way we do things and what we should do to support people to make long lasting differences to their lives.

I invite everyone to work together to help create our new future.



Caryn Nicolson, Interim Chief Executive Officer

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Company No: 179304
Scottish Charity No: SC021832



preventing homelessness, transforming lives