

ANNUAL REPORT

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This is the 16th Annual Report of Birchwood Highland reflecting a modern organisation that provides acknowledged high quality services to people and families who experience mental health problems. The challenge of providing such support across the Highlands is met by an organised staff that continues to evolve and develop responding to needs which are evermore demanding as mental health services move to a more locally based community model.

As someone who has lived and worked for twenty years in the North of Highland I am delighted that we have expanded our services into Caithness (with Highland Council support). In February 2004 we appointed Trevor Walker, an experienced mental health worker from Manchester, as the Caithness Team Leader. He is undertaking preliminary work to set up the service. He will appoint staff and take referrals from September 2004.

I would be unable to undertake the role as Chairman without the support of John Palmer, Vice Chair and other Directors who meet bi-monthly to plan and monitor the strategic direction of the Company. I, and the Directors greatly value the support and advice given to us by Alastair Chisholm, Strategic Director and Peter Cattanaich, Operational Manager, without whom Birchwood Highland would be a much less dynamic company. Three Directors have resigned during this year – Dr. S. Gordon, Mr. J. Docherty and Ms. M. Haswell. They all served Birchwood Highland with commitment bringing particular skills, their wisdom, financial scrutiny and personnel management to the Company. They are all missed by staff and service users alike.

Birchwood Highland now has a staff of 49 who clearly demonstrate their ability to go one step further on behalf of residents and service users, whether actually working as frontline staff or as the established back office administration. Finally, my thanks to all our volunteers working with clients in numerous ways and not forgetting our Directors who are volunteers also.

Helen Betts-Brown



This poster is part of the "See Me..." campaign which aims to stop the stigma of mental ill health. Birchwood Highland fully supports this campaign. For more details please see: - www.seemescotland.org

In Brief

Mental Health Week 6th to 12th October 2003

Birchwood Highland raised more than £500 at a Sale of Work and display of information and available services in Dr Black's Hall on the 11th October to raise awareness of mental health issues.

Birchwood House

During the summer we were given the use of a caravan at Nairn for a week. In all 7 residents (in 2 groups) had a short but very enjoyable break.

Service Users' Association

A successful sponsored cycle was held in Invergordon in September and all participants were refreshed by a BBQ. The total sum raised was £450.

Ben Nevis & Skye

In August, Lochaber staff and tenants visited Skye to make links with a drop-in centre in Portree. On another day (!) tenants and staff climbed Ben Nevis to raise funds for service user activities.

STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

STRATEGY

Members of the Board of Directors met in January to agree key developments for the Company over the next year and in preparation for a full strategic 3-year plan that is to be finalised in Autumn 2004.

The day was very productive and key developments were identified for all our services in Caithness, Easter Ross, Lochaber and Inverness, as well as key developments for service users, staff and the Company as a whole.

Five particular key developments are:

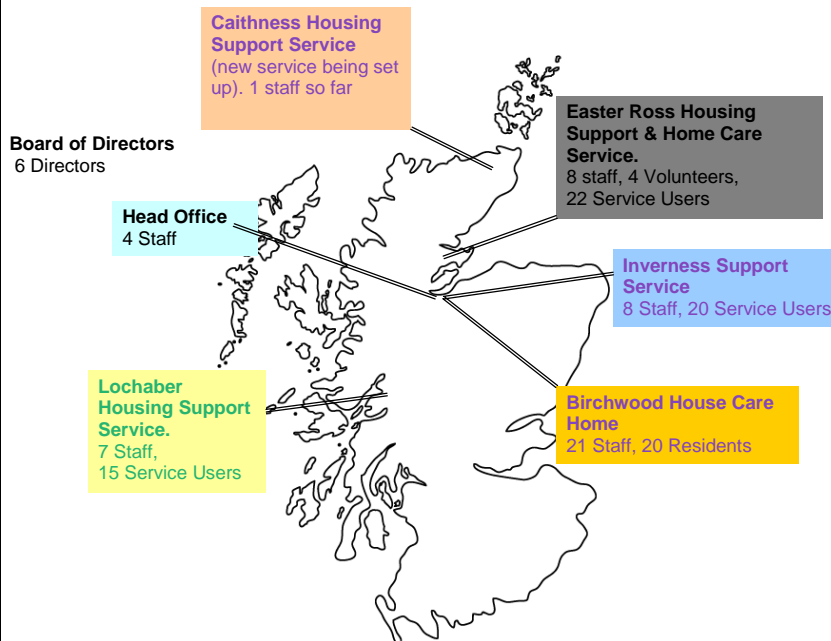
- **Birchwood House:** Highland Council and NHS are seeking providers who can help some people in Hospital move on to specialist residential services. We will re-focus our residential service to help meet those needs.
- **Staff Training and Development:** We will put substantial investment into staff training and development not only for staff at Birchwood House but for all our front-line staff to help them work more effectively with people who have complex needs.
- **Employment and training opportunities for service users:** This is one of the most important areas for development and the Company will create a post in the next financial year with the clear objective of supporting Birchwood Highland service users into training and employment.
- **Structural Changes:** It was agreed to implement some structural changes now and then review the need for further change later on in 2004. All this is to enable us to deliver our full strategic plan.
- **The Roles of Directors:** In a rapidly changing world and with new Charity Legislation in the pipeline, the Company will recruit additional Directors with a range of skills and experiences to help us continue to improve our services.

Alastair Chisholm

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT

Support to staff

49 permanent staff work across various locations to help and support 77 service users at any one time. The service at Birchwood House runs 24 hours every day and across the housing support services we run evening/night and weekend on-call services in addition to our daytime services. The operational management team consider it is vital that all staff feel valued and supported through regular supervision, appraisal and an excellent development and training programme.



Befrienders

Volunteers make a valued difference to service users in the Easter Ross Befriending Scheme. Plans are underway to recruit volunteer befrienders in Inverness and Lochaber.

SVQ

In order to meet National Standards on staff competencies we have 12 staff undertaking SVQ's at level II and level III. Easter Ross has one person working towards level II and one working towards level III. Fort William has 4 people working towards level III. Inverness Support Service has 2 people working towards level III. Birchwood House has 4 people working towards level III.

Registered Managers

5 Managers started the Registered Managers Award by enrolling in August 03 at Inverness College. Commenced college in October 03 and met with Assessors in December 03. All of which are still ongoing. First units are well on the way to completion.

Values

A series of in-house staff training days on Values of Inclusion and Principles of Person Centred Planning were held throughout the year for staff of the company. Added value was gained by the attendance of colleagues from other agencies in the Highlands at each of the training days.

Peter Cattnach, Operational Manager

Housing Support— What is it?

Inverness Support Service describe it thus—

Inverness Support Service has changed its registration in the past year to now providing Housing Support to people in their own tenancies. The main focus is about enabling service users to maintain their tenancies by dealing with all aspects of this i.e. Housing Benefit, Council Tax, paying utilities bills, security of the house, upkeep of the house and social inclusion.

Inverness is now providing a service over a wide area of Inverness. Staff are making themselves aware of what is available in the local community they are working in, so they can support their service users to build a supportive network of friends and join in with groups and events locally.

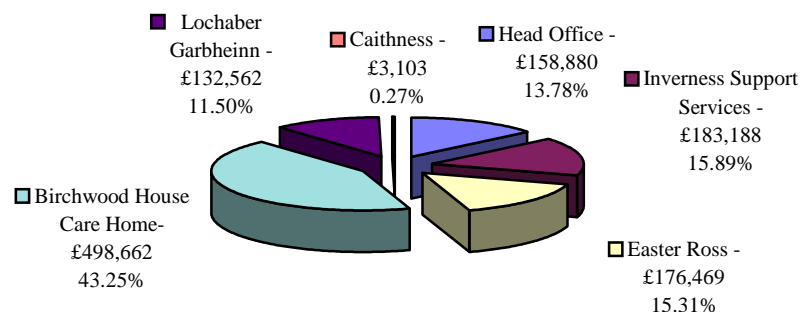
Birchwood Highland Head Office
5 Wells Street
Inverness
Te: 01463 236507
Fax: 01463 236522



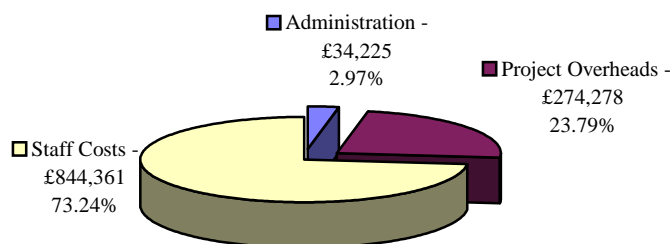
www.birchwoodhighland.org.uk

EXPENDITURE £1,152,864 (INCLUDING DEPRECIATION)

SPEND PER PROJECT



SPEND PER AREA OF ACTIVITY



Copies of the 2003/04 Annual Accounts are available from Head Office

Birchwood Highland. Registered Office: 27 Huntly Street, Inverness IV3 5PR
A Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in Scotland 105400
Scottish Charity Number SC 003198