



Independence  
Inclusion  
Recovery

# Annual Report

2007/08

Registered Office: 27 Huntly Street, Inverness, IV3 5PR  
A Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in Scotland 105400  
Scottish Charity Number SC003198

## Chairman's Report

**2007/08 was a year of realising many of our aims and of celebrating some landmark achievements.** In our 20<sup>th</sup> year, we officially launched the first Mental Health Recovery Centre in the Highlands – Birchwood Highland Recovery Centre (formerly Birchwood House), and hosted a major Recovery Conference for the Highlands and Islands in Aviemore.



**We raised the profile of mental ill health and of Birchwood Highland as a leader in mental health recovery in the Highlands.** In our 20<sup>th</sup> year, we celebrated and raised our public profile more than we have done previously, with a focus on the importance of good mental health for all and inclusion of individuals within their local communities. It was also a year where we commanded recognition as the leaders in mental health recovery in the Highlands.



**Recovery, Inclusion and Independence** are the overriding principles that guide our work with service users and inspire us to help service users set and achieve their own personal goals.

**This year's Annual Report reflects the fact that our company is continuing to evolve and develop 20 years on,** through the excellent work that staff and volunteers throughout the company are doing and their commitment to ensuring that our services are service user informed and led.



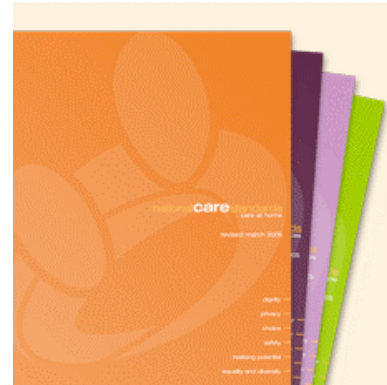
**It has been a year of modernisation, of creative and inspiring developments.** I hope that this report gives an insight into the vision, hopes and aspirations that Birchwood Highland staff, service users and its Board of Directors share and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the above mentioned for helping us to realise some of our aims this year and for enabling us to make those landmark achievements.

**John Palmer  
Chairman**

## Birchwood Highland Annual Report 2007/08

At the end of March 2008, Birchwood Highland was actively supporting 99 service users and employed over 50 members of staff.

**The quality of the services that we provide remains paramount to us.** Two great achievements this year were regaining our Investors in People accreditation, which reflects how we are rated as an employer and how well we train and develop our staff; and in being invited by the Care Commission, our regulatory body, to participate in the pilot of their new grading system by which they measure how a service is working to the required Care Standards. We were delighted that our Lochaber housing support service was asked to participate in this and that we were able to demonstrate how our services strive to seek, learn from and act upon the feedback and involvement from our service users and carers in the delivery and development of our local services.



**Our service users told us that our staff value and encourage their strengths.** Service users responding to our annual survey stated that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with their support and felt sufficiently involved and had good relationships in place with their Support Workers. Some direct comments from service users included:

*“Birchwood Highland helps folks who have had setbacks towards an independent life”*

*“They support me to recover and get my outlook back on track”*

*“They encourage me to go to work when I don’t feel like going”*

**Genuine service user involvement in the running and development of our services is fundamental to the organisation that we strive to be.** Last year



local service user groups were established in each service area and this year for the first time, the service users’ Annual General Meeting was arranged and co-ordinated by the local groups, with each group presenting information at the AGM.

Over the past year, each group have been active in fundraising in their local areas to raise funds for their group to enable them to participate in activities, training events and celebrations, whilst at the

same time raising awareness of mental ill health in their communities and assisting in breaking down some of the barriers that can exist.

The local groups also provide the service and the company as a whole with an excellent opportunity to ensure that our staff receive regular feedback on the services we provide and an opportunity to consult and obtain views on different initiatives.



Birchwood Highland's Disability Equality Scheme was an example of this, with over 50 service users helping to shape our scheme, statement and associated action plan.

**We value the role that carers have in an individual's recovery** and seek to work more closely with carers where this is acceptable to service users. We developed a carer's pack this year and have looked at ways in which we can support carers more directly in their role in supporting an individual's recovery.

**Joint training is of prime importance to us all and an area we must continue to develop.** During 2007/8 this included, recruitment and selection training, with service users serving on recruitment panels for a whole range of posts including, service managers, support workers, relief staff, domestic staff and volunteers. Other training has included The Mental Health Act, Role of the Care Commission, Recovery, Values of Inclusion, the Human Rights Act, Risk Assessments and Health & Safety.

**In Mental Health Week our staff and service users raised awareness in their local communities and promoted 'good mental health'.** Our staff and



service users have become increasingly active in raising the profile of and promoting mental ill health within their local communities in an attempt to breakdown the misconceptions and stigma around mental health that may still exist. All services arranged a number of activities that were open to the public as well as staff and service users, with the aim of promoting how important good mental health

is to us all and the importance of social activities, inclusion, companionship, diet and physical exercise in achieving this.

**We aim to lead on recovery in the Highlands and promote the value of recovery to others.** In 2006/7 we agreed a new vision for the provision of rehabilitation services at Birchwood House and this year, following nine months of building works, we were able to start fully realising our vision for the delivery of the first Mental Health Recovery Centre in the Highlands.



Our modernised and innovative centre, Birchwood Highland Recovery Centre, was officially opened by Shona Robison, MSP, Minister for Public Health in March 2008 and two days later, Birchwood Highland hosted a Recovery Conference, with speakers from the Scottish Government, Scottish Recovery Network, Highland Users Group (HUG) and NHS Education for Scotland.

Our staff have become increasingly passionate about working within the recovery model this

past year, with the focus being on the specific recovery objectives of building confidence and self-esteem and establishing individual goals and purpose. 34 staff and service users attended our Recovery Conference and a further 22 attending a 2-day training course on recovery and person centred planning developed by two of our Managers, which we will run again in 2008/9.



**We continue to prioritise the training and development of our staff. 83 training sessions were provided** in training that is mandatory for all staff from managing violence and aggression, moving and handling, food hygiene and first aid. Staff participated in many other training opportunities during the year. Alongside Recovery based training outlined above, priorities included a 2-day dual diagnosis course, attended by 29 staff, Suicide Prevention Training, attended by 9 staff, peer support training and management and leadership training.



**We were delighted by the great successes of our staff this year in achieving their professional qualifications.** 2 staff completed their SVQ in Care, 1 member of staff achieved their SVQ4 and Registered Managers Award and one their HNC in Administration and Information Management.

**The successes of our staff in their studies and in the jobs that they do on a daily basis were celebrated at our annual staff awards ceremony at the end of March.**

We were delighted with the number of staff nominated by service users this year for recognition and an award and that our Caithness service were nominated for the team award for 'making an outstanding contribution to the care and support of an individual or a group of service users'.



**Providing safe services and equipping others with basic health & safety skills is a priority for us.**

As a company, we take our health & safety responsibilities very seriously. This year a number of our teams ensured that basic tips and skills in home safety and maintenance were provided to service users by staff or through inviting professional staff, such as the Fire Brigade along to training sessions, from safely changing fuses and light bulbs to ensuring appropriate smoke detectors are in place in their homes. Where possible joint training has also been held with services users on different aspects of health and safety such as risk assessments and fire safety.



Each of our services in Inverness, Easter Ross, Lochaber and Caithness have particular highlights and successes from the past year and each service has opted to reflect some of these in their own service specific annual reports, which can be downloaded from our website at: [www.birchwoodhighland.org.uk](http://www.birchwoodhighland.org.uk) or obtained through our local offices or

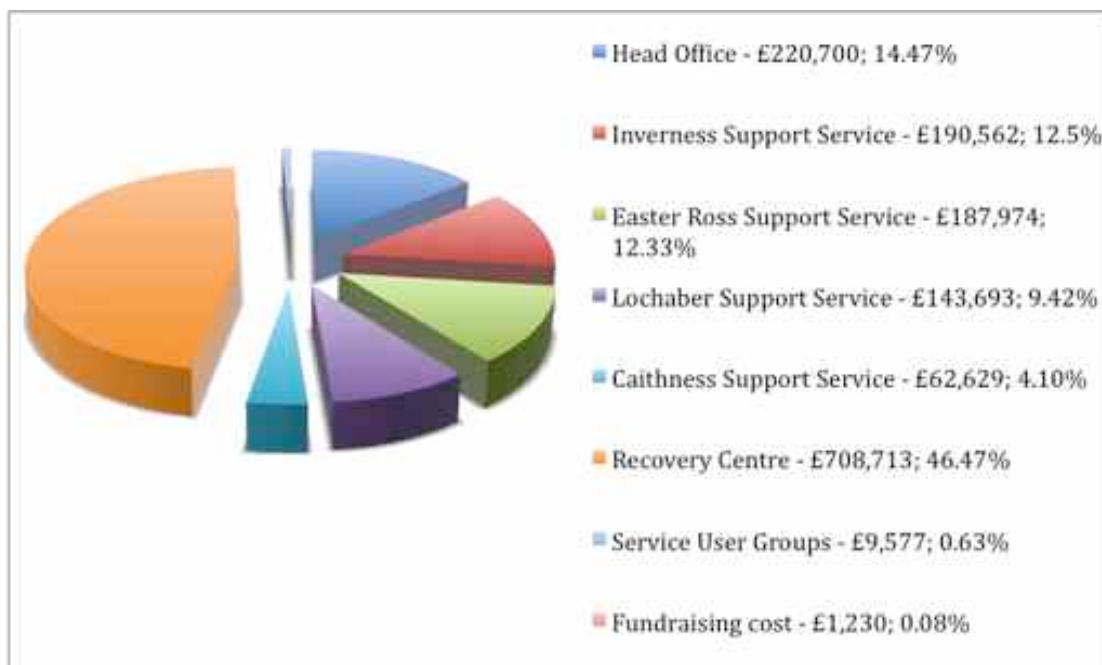
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e-mail: [info@birchwoodhighland.org.uk](mailto:info@birchwoodhighland.org.uk)

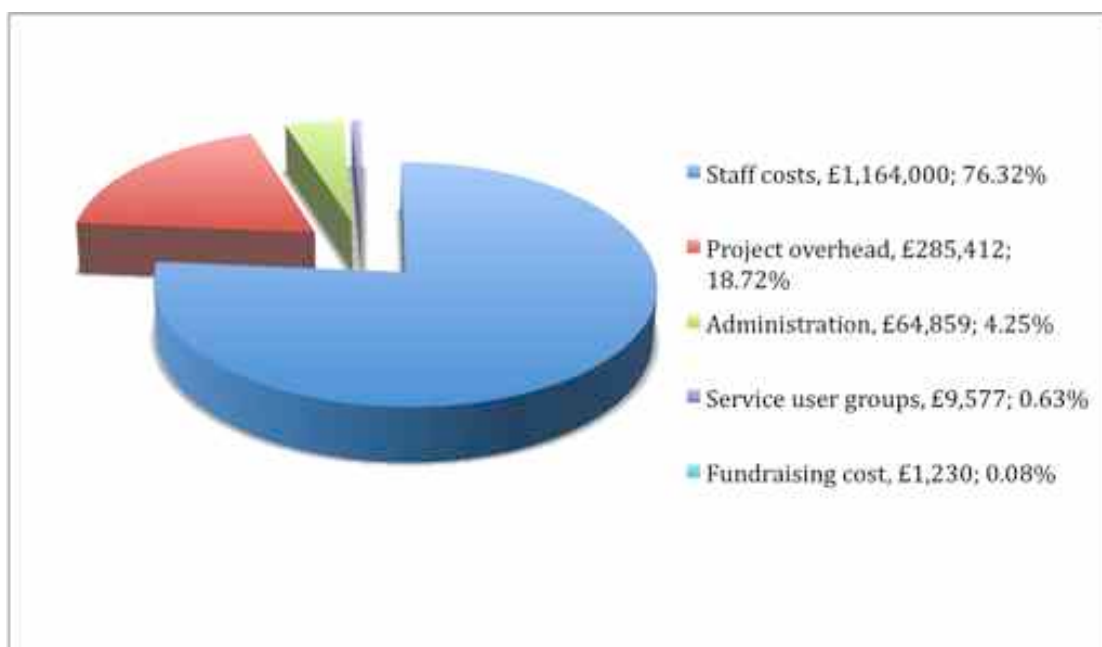
## Expenditure

**Total expenditure including depreciation, £1,525,078**

Total spend per project



Spend per area of activity



## Contact details

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REGISTERED IN SCOTLAND 105400, SCOTTISH CHARITY NUMBER  
SC003198

