

Independence Inclusion Recovery



Birchwood Highland



Company Annual Report 2010/2011

A Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in Scotland 105400

Registered Office Address: 27 Huntly Street, Inverness, IV3 5PR

Registered Charity No: SC003198

www.birchwoodhighland.org.uk

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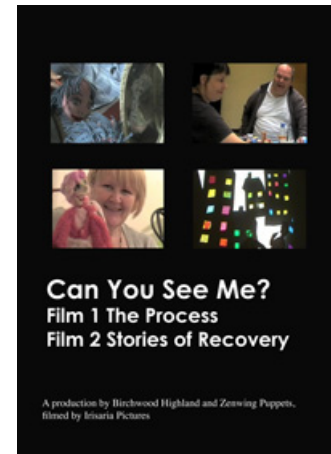
Executive Summary

Birchwood Highland's mission is to improve the quality of life of vulnerable individuals by promoting Recovery, Inclusion and Independence. Predominantly the people we currently support have severe and enduring mental ill health, but our skills and expertise are relevant and helpful to people with a range of needs in helping them to move forward with their lives. Our aim is to achieve the following outcomes with the people we support:

- Increased independence;
- Reduced financial hardship;
- Increased ability through self-confidence and self-worth to achieve personal goals;
- Reduced feelings of isolation and better integration into the local community;
- Increased readiness for work, education and volunteering;
- Reduction in unnecessary hospital admissions, through better self-management of symptoms;
- Adopting a lifestyle that promotes health and wellbeing.

In 2010/11 we supported 123 people in their local communities of Caithness, Easter Ross, Lochaber and Inverness in their own homes, and worked with a further 80 individuals on their recovery programme at our Recovery Centre in Inverness. Of these, 54 benefited from our short-term respite service, which helped to prevent the need for hospital admission.

At the end of March 2011, we were supporting 124 people and employed over 50 members of staff.



DVD of puppet project

Some of the things we are proud of achieving this year include:

- All our services maintaining their 'excellent' ratings by the Care Commission in our annual inspections ;
- Maintaining our Investors in People award and achieving our Approved Provider Status Award for the management of befriending services;
- Creating a major anti-mental health stigma project – Can You See Me? A film telling individuals' stories of recovery through puppets;
- Attracting a range of new volunteers into a variety of roles;
- Working in partnership with others to create an outdoor survival and peer mentoring course for service users.
- Gaining the support of a number of funding organisations, enabling further investment and development of our services;
- Developing new ways to ensure service user involvement and feedback on the quality of the support we provide.

The key achievements of Birchwood Highland staff, service users and volunteers over this past year are highlighted in this annual report and in the individual annual reports of each of our services. All of these are available on our website at: www.birchwoodhighland.org.uk

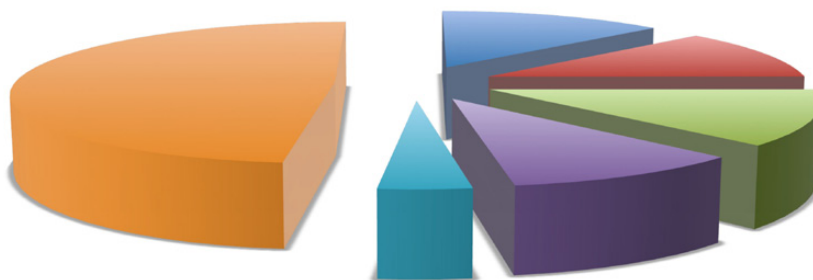


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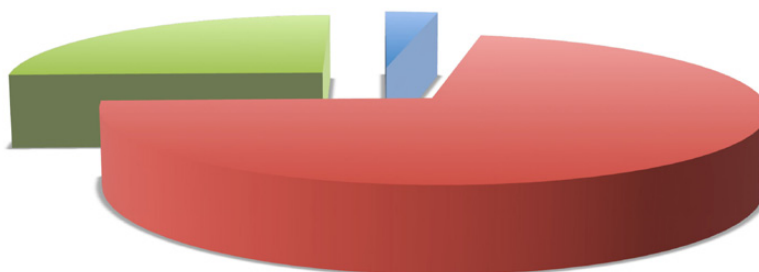
Expenditure 2010/2011

Total Spend for Services including depreciation



1	Head Office	£190,441.38
2	Inverness	£165,575.68
3	Easter Ross	£176,877.54
4	Lochaber	£146,858.13
5	Caithness	£55,525.26
6	Recovery Centre	£689,122.94
	TOTAL	£1,424,400.93

Spend for Area of Activity



1	Administration	£44,319.16
2	Staff costs	£1,016,569.96
3	Project overheads	£363,511.81
	TOTAL	£1,424,400.93



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Maintaining excellence whilst striving for continuous improvement.

Our aim is to continuously improve the services we provide and for our staff, volunteers, service users and carers to be at the forefront in driving this forward. We believe in the importance of having a staff and volunteer group who take pride in the work they do, and in the Company as a whole. It is also important for our service users to feel that they are receiving the best possible support and that they can help to influence this.

We were delighted to maintain our 'sixes' this year, the highest ratings awarded by the Care Commission (now known as SCSWIS). This applies to all the services we operate in Birchwood Highland. Two inspections at our residential Recovery Centre, one announced and one unannounced, reinforced the quality of the care and support we provide and of our management and leadership skills.

Key to our success and this recognition was the evidence of our 'active promotion of service user involvement, independence, inclusion and recovery in the work we do, through actively seeking the views of people and involving them in their care and support, and in assessing and developing the service'. It was reinforced that our focus is on person

centred work and that we demonstrate a commitment to the continuous improvement of the quality of the service we provide. Some of the ways that we do this is through: setting joint annual objectives and joint leads to take forward areas of development with staff and service users; regular audits of our work and action plans from these; regular service user meetings regarding day to day management of our services; and ways in which we can improve both the environment we work and for some service users live in and the support provided.

As part of their inspections, the Care Commission officer meets with service users, the feedback from which endorsed everything that staff and our paperwork told her.

"Birchwood is a brilliant place, the staff are brilliant."

"Birchwood is really good. It's alright and you can speak to the staff about anything. No way could it be improved."

"A very good place for people to come and then move on."

We were also assessed in year for our Investors in People accreditation, which we successfully maintained. Our Board has agreed to move to more regular reviews in



Staff and service users at the Recovery Centre

future years to ensure we gain the maximum benefit from this review process. We were pleased to hear that feedback from new starters emphasised the “thoroughness and comprehensiveness of our induction process and the supporting paperwork for staff”, and that Birchwood Highland’s commitment to developing people to their full potential to increase satisfaction and motivation was recognised by staff.

Our service users told us that our support helps them to stay well, to make informed decisions, gain back their self-respect and improve their independence and recovery.

One of the ways in which we continuously measure the work we do and ensure that we are focussing on achieving outcomes and individual goals for service users is through our annual survey. We received very positive feedback on the relationships with staff, about how staff attitudes assist in people’s recovery, how they feel healthier and more in control of the decisions they can make in their lives and how generally individuals feel that the quality of their life has improved through the support of staff and through setting goals to measure their own achievements and realise their own aspirations. Some direct comments

from service users are listed below.

“Gives me 100% support in the areas I need it”.

“They give me safety, help, support, encouragement”.

“Personally, it has helped me gain back my self- respect”.

“Self- respect and family being aware of huge improvements and changes in my life which they all know I cannot sustain without all the help and support I receive from Birchwood”.

“Being able to go out and about in town with reassurance that Birchwood Highland staff are there gives me confidence”.

“I know and trust them, feel I can tell or ask them anything, they are helpful and easy to talk to, other than family, they are everything to me”.

We also received overwhelming feedback from carers and other professional teams who jointly work with our service users, many of whom recommended our staff for awards in Birchwood Highland’s annual awards process this year, for the difference that our staff have made to individual’s lives



Group attending Service Users' AGM at Wick



Service users attending joint training

and for the professionalism of our staff.

Service user involvement and empowerment

Our service user groups established several years ago are becoming increasingly independent and the Annual Service Users' General Meeting is testament to how much each group has developed and achieved, with individuals presenting the work of their group over the past year at their September AGM. A number of service users have also been involved in presenting training to others and each service produces its own newsletter on a regular basis. Service user groups manage their own finances, funded through their fundraising activities and this opens up opportunities for members of the group to access events, training, activities and celebrations throughout the year.

In 2010/11 we looked at new ways with staff and service users to assist staff in self-reflection and development in their roles. We did this through introducing a new appraisal feedback system, with staff receiving feedback from peers and service users they support prior to them completing their appraisal paperwork for their appraisal reviews with their line manager. This has proved to be an extremely positive experience for staff,

with direct feedback enabling individuals to focus more clearly on their objectives and training requirements and provides more insight into their communication skills. We are extremely grateful for the commitment of service users who are regularly asked to provide what is proving to be such helpful and direct feedback and for their recognition of how important this is to assist in the ongoing development of staff.

Increasing numbers of service users attended our joint recruitment and selection training sessions with staff this year, enabling us to ensure that we always have service user representation on all our staff and volunteer interview panels.

Keeping our staff happy, healthy and safe

We appreciate the excellent job that our staff do on a daily basis and to enable this to continue, we do our best to ensure that our working environments are healthy, happy and safe places to work in and this year we have been looking with staff at what makes a 'mentally healthy workplace' and identifying action we need to take from the feedback we receive.

Regular reviews of policies and procedures and ongoing improvements to these



Tending the veg in the Recovery Centre garden



Learning woodcraft skills at Abriachan

alongside supervision, team meetings and a focus on health and safety are all extremely important in achieving the above. Last year we undertook a Stress survey with staff and this year we have been implementing positive actions from this, one of the main priorities being ensuring that all our staff in the Company attended communication skills training that we tailored specifically to raise awareness of how we interact with others and how this can impact on how people perceive us and the feedback we give to them.

We have made significant and consistent progress in working towards the Gold and the Mental Health Commendation Awards in NHS Scotland's Healthy Working Lives programme.

Promoting physical activity and well-being

We strongly believe in the importance of promoting and achieving positive mental health and well-being through physical exercise and outdoor pursuits and continue to place a high emphasis on this. Progress continues to be made in the Recovery Centre garden, which is now producing a range of vegetables that can then be used in the kitchen during cooking support sessions and for service users cooking their own meals.

Our Lochaber service was successful in receiving a grant from Community Food and Health (Scotland) for a community garden project, linked with healthy eating and learning new skills. The service are working in partnership with other groups and volunteers to learn about plants, grow fruit and vegetables and try out new recipes. It is hoped that as this project develops that the garden will be able to supply a local charity cafe' with vegetables and reinvest the money from these sales into the project to sustain its future.

Following on from the eight week course funded last year by the Forestry Commission Scotland, Birchwood Highland worked in partnership with the Abriachan Forest Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland and New Craigs Hospital to create a Forest School Project between October 2010 and March 2011.

The emphasis of this project has been on promoting outdoor physical activity for service users, learning navigation skills, knowledge sharing and becoming experts on tree species and animal tracks. Learning how to campfire cook, create drainage, build a fire pit, firewood collection, creating paths and planting trees. All service users involved in the project received John Muir



Easter Ross team take a break during the Marie Curie Trust 10K



About to climb the Ben

Discovery Awards. The project culminated in the building and sailing of a boat along the river. Some of the added benefits of the project have been the building of informal support networks and friendships and the camaraderie in the group has been commented on by many.

The weekly project made such a noticeable and significant difference to a number of service users, that the service user groups in Inverness and the Recovery Centre, organised and ran a Ceilidh in January 2011 to raise funds to enable it to continue for a further 14 weeks. More permanent funding is being sought to sustain its ongoing future as its benefits to the physical and mental well-being of all attending are very clear to our staff.

“Unmissable, fantastic. I feel lucky to get the chance of doing it. It’s fun learning about the forest with a great bunch of people who are friendly and keen to help.”

Service user groups have also initiated pursuits of their own, with football teams now formed in Caithness, Lochaber and the Recovery Centre all of whom came together a number of times this year to compete in ‘The other world cup’.

Staff, service users and a dog called Sapphire also climbed Ben Nevis to raise monies for their respective service users groups. It was a fabulous achievement and has spurred on a number of individuals to take up hill walking on a regular basis.

Staff have also participated in fundraising events for other charities to increase their well-being and as part of their commitment to healthy working lives, with our Easter Ross team getting into the spirit of the 10K for the Marie Curie Trust.

Strengthening our skills base and recovery ethos through volunteers

We have continued to benefit this year from attracting a variety of individuals offering new skills and opportunities for our service users and services. Very important to the success of the Abriachan Project for example, has been the availability and enthusiasm of our volunteer driver of the minibus, enabling service users to travel to the forests. We have also attracted a number of volunteers at the Recovery Centre who have offered therapeutic massage sessions and have had an excellent year for attracting new befrienders, who are increasingly important for a number of service users to prevent them from becoming isolated and to enable them to achieve things they otherwise would not have had the confidence to do or attend on



Brian Smith, volunteer, Lochaber



One of the puppets

their own. Working in conjunction with Befriending Highland, we have been able to secure befrienders for a much higher number of service users. We have also successfully appointed three new volunteer directors to our Board. Other volunteers give support to outside sporting and social activities for service users or help to raise funds for their local service.

“I retired a year ago and missed the contact I’d enjoyed with the public over a long period. Volunteering has helped me to meet new people and to do something I feel good about.

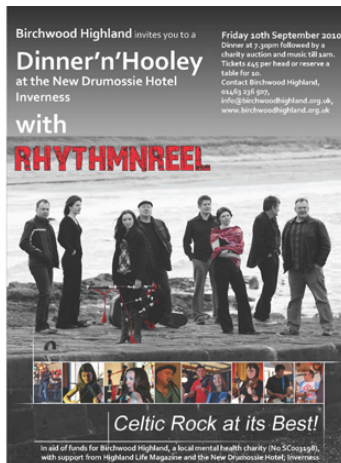
“I would very much recommend befriending. The training and ongoing support offered by Birchwood is excellent.”

We were delighted to have achieved accreditation this year from The Befriending Network Scotland as an approved provider of befriending services through volunteers. This is a quality standard developed by the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation and is valid for three years.

Developing our services and promoting recovery to others

The ongoing adaptability of our staff and their enthusiasm to embrace and initiate new ideas is what keeps Birchwood Highland innovative and continues to drive up our standards. This year, we successfully secured a grant from ‘See Me’, Scotland’s national campaign to end the stigma of mental ill-health. Lots of people who use our services have experienced discrimination and have been excluded due to their illness. We wanted to let everyone know how damaging and disabling negative attitudes can be and how empowering and inspiring positive attitudes are in people’s recovery journeys.

We commissioned Zenwing Puppets and Irisaria Films to work with us to develop, stage and film a puppet show of people’s stories of what’s helped and what’s hindered their recovery. A series of workshops were held for people to make their own puppets and tell their stories and 33 people participated. The workshops proved to be very therapeutic and the resulting film ‘Can You See Me?’ was premiered at Eden Court Theatre in October 2010 as part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival, with approximately 150 people attending. The two DVDs from



Poster advertising the New Drumossie event



New Facebook page

this project, the first comprising material from the workshops and the second the film itself, were then used and are available on an ongoing basis for training and awareness purposes. Inverness and Easter Ross service users and staff have also screened clips of the film and participated in discussion groups in local schools in the Highlands.

“It’s been fun, interesting, friendly. Telling my story made me realise things. Took me back to remember the past and where I am now. It’s been a journey. I feel stronger knowing when things go wrong I can control them.”

“I really enjoyed it. They took their time to show me how to make the puppets. I don’t like to talk about myself, but I felt ok expressing myself through the puppets.”

“Thanks for the DVD, which we have found fascinating and really useful. We’re in the process of putting together an evaluation for the puppetry and mental health project we ran with young people here in Brighton over the summer which should be up on our website in the next few weeks - perhaps this might be of interest to you, reciprocally?”

Promotion and raising funds

Each service supports their local service user group to raise funds for additional activities, training or events throughout the year and link in with community events to both promote the work of Birchwood and raise funds at the same time.

Fundraising events were held at the New Drumossie Hotel, with band Rhythm’n’Reel, and at the Columba Hotel where Inverness service users groups held their second fundraising ceilidh.

We have also had an extremely successful year in attracting the support of a number of funders for specific grants, which have helped us to improve the services and facilities we provide, despite increasing cost pressures to our budgets. The support of the Robertson Trust has assisted us in funding our continual development of services at the Recovery Centre in line with our recovery model and has ensured significant progress over the year and taken together with the support of the Scottish Government’s Resilience Fund, we have been able to expand and promote our respite facilities and service provided at the Recovery Centre, which two years on has moved from providing respite support to 16 people to 54 service users.



At the Highland Cross finishing line



Recovery Centre nursing staff successfully completing training

We have also been able to put to good use the monies raised through the Highland Cross event in 2009/10 and service users in our single rooms now benefit from the availability of an additional shower room and the upgrading of facilities in their rooms.

We were also delighted to receive a cheque on behalf of the former Nairn and Northern Counties Convalescent Home, whose assets were finally redistributed. Our Board of Directors have agreed to use these monies to further the development of our services on behalf of service users and we hope to be able to take forward some new initiatives during 2011/12.

Highly trained and motivated staff group

Birchwood Highland has built a reputation for having a highly skilled and motivated staff group and this remains a priority for us. Continuous development includes providing staff with opportunities to take on new areas of responsibility, for example, a number of our support staff now have responsibility for volunteer management in their service areas. Staff are involved in taking forward service objectives, in leading on audit activities and in leading on particular projects with service

users. A growing number of staff support and deliver training within their teams. Our main priority for training this year has been the rolling out of WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Training) to all of our staff and to as many service users as are interested and this has been undertaken by our own WRAP Facilitators.

Other training held within the year has included Communication training for all staff, restraint, assertiveness training, challenging behaviour, STORM, Hepatitis C Awareness.

Shared training sessions with service users have included first aid, WRAP, inclusion and recovery, food hygiene, recruitment and selection training, moving and handling, Human Rights Act. We fully recognise the value of shared training opportunities and all our services are committed to ensuring that training for staff and volunteers is inclusive to service users.

A number of our staff achieved their professional qualifications this year, with 2 staff achieving their Professional Development Awards and one their SVQ IV in Management. 3 staff achieved their professional development award unit in Health & Social Care Supervision and one



The other World Cup!

member of staff achieved their SVQ 111 in Health & Social Care with six other staff progressing their SVQ qualification in year.

2010/11 has been another hugely successful year.

In summary, we have had another excellent year. Despite pressures on finances, we have been able to maintain and improve the quality of the services that we provide on a daily basis and this has been recognised by the body who regulate our services, the Care Commission and by other external accreditation bodies. As important to us, is the extremely positive feedback from staff, service users, volunteers and carers on how they feel about working for Birchwood Highland and how well the support we provide meets people's needs. On behalf of our Board of Directors, we would like to offer a huge thanks to all organisations who have supported us this year, but even more so to our staff, volunteers, service users and carers who continue to contribute so much to the organisation's ongoing development and continuous improvement.

John Palmer
Chairman

Emily Stokes-Reid
Chief Executive



Birchwood United

Birchwood Highland

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