

THE GARVALD TRAINING CENTRE LIMITED

Year ending 31 August 2005 REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Introduction

The accounts for the year **ending 31 August 2005** reflect an Income & Expenditure which shows an overall surplus. Within this, however, Day Services operated at a deficit. This is not a stable position for the new financial year. Uncertainty remains around the Service Level Agreement income we will receive from the City of Edinburgh Council for our Day Services and Napier Road Care Home provision. Alongside this, the certainty of a Supporting People budget cut for our supported accommodation services means that we are operating in an extremely challenging financial environment.

Protracted negotiations on funding mean that, even now, it is difficult to determine what our position for the new financial year will be. The result is a fair degree of apprehension amongst staff and parents/carers, with a consequential concern for the quality of the services able to be sustained for members, residents and tenants.

The number of staff employed by Garvald Centre amounts to 79 FTE though in actual number terms this is well over 100 individuals.

Mission statement

It is appropriate that Garvald Centre Edinburgh's statement is reproduced at this point:

“Inspired by the ideas of Rudolf Steiner we provide day and accommodation services to people who have a learning disability. In striving to build community together, we recognise and value the uniqueness of each person and seek to create a quality of environment, activities and social relationships enabling people to realise their potential.”

Garvald Centre continues to receive good Care Commission reports, positive feedback from our funders and a steady flow of requests for applications to come and use our services. This is very heartening. We will need to be responsive to needs, and be clear about the costs of meeting these needs.

Over the year our accommodation services have reviewed and developed the values and principles they apply within their service delivery. This is work in progress that will need to be adapted further to take into account the anticipated changes we will have to make in the light of the Supporting People budget reduction. Day Services too need to develop new ways of responding, e.g. by exploring ways to offer more provision to school leavers or developing provision for older people with learning disabilities. Day Services also need to respond to changes in funding to ensure the service is affordable. The balance of doing this and continuing to maintain quality services within budget restrictions continues to be the challenge.

The Board of Management this year also took time to hold a development session to focus on the history and application of our Principles of Social Therapy values.

It is important at these times of uncertainty that the values and principles of our organisation are revisited and understood, and that future developments are informed by them.

THE GARVALD TRAINING CENTRE LIMITED
REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS (Continued)

Members, residents and tenants

Over 140 adults with learning disabilities use our services. There is a Members Representative group which is entirely made up from Day Services users.

A shadow was cast over the organisation in March 2005 when one of our tenants died unexpectedly in hospital after a short illness. A celebration of his life was enjoyed and poignantly remembered in both the Day and Accommodation service settings.

More joyfully, in September 2005, members, their families and staff greatly appreciated our second 'hosting' of the Annual Award Ceremony held in conjunction with BC Consultants (Borders College) in the City Chambers. We are very grateful to the City of Edinburgh Council and to the Lord Provost, Lesley Hinds who hosted the event and to Sir Tom Farmer who presented the certificates. It is hoped that this excellent venue can be used again in years to come.

Links to Healthy Living

Garvald Centre have benefited from an emphasis on healthy living, working with psychologists from Lothian Primary Care Trust as well as Edinburgh University in research and advice, both in formal Well Woman Groups and in promoting Men's Health.

The staff group have also benefited from the involvement of Scotland's Health at Work scheme and were rewarded with a Bronze Award for our promotion of a healthy work environment and promoting healthy living lifestyles.

Parents and carers

Regular updates of developments within the service are sent to parents and carers. Their support and encouragement has been very much appreciated, with their particular focus on promotion of our services and involvement in our fundraising activities.

Accommodation services

A number of changes have taken place within the service, with changes to the management structure, and the acknowledgement through Person-Centred Planning of different ways to meet residents' and tenants' needs. Consequences of this planning have been a reduction in the numbers of places in certain flats as well as an increase in the number of residents within Napier. This building has benefited from front door wheel-chair ramping and downstairs accessible walk-in shower facility. The number of flats available in our Management Agreement with Dunedin-Canmore Housing Association has also increased. Identification of changing resident and tenant needs through Person-Centred Planning will ensure that changes will continue.

Supported accommodation offices have been provided within Polwarth for the Outreach team and refurbishment of Gorgie Park Road premises for the Slateford Green flats.

As reported earlier, we first learned in October 2004 that there was to be a significant cut nationally in the Supporting People budget. It was not, however, until August 2005 that we heard of what this might be in Edinburgh; furthermore, what these cuts would mean for us was not conveyed until early in 2006. Work has now begun to restructure, again, the accommodation services as a result of these cuts.

Day services

Our numbers remain healthy, with a steady flow of applicants seeking the opportunities that Garvald Centre offers. Commissions have been sought from different sources, e.g. St Mary's Star of the Sea in Leith seeking a stained glass window, and Polwarth Church a large alter candlestick. Exhibitions have also been significant, with different venues e.g. the Traverse Theatre, the Royal Museum for Scotland and the Theatre Workshop, Stockbridge – all promoting and exhibiting Garvald members' works, skills and talents.

A significant achievement this year was our entry to a City of Edinburgh Council's competition to raise the awareness of its policy of Reduce, Re-use and Recycle. We were the overall prize winner. The work itself, entitled 'One Hundred Honey Pots', allowed each workshop to convey in eight recycled jars a reflection in some way of their workshop. These were then preserved in apple jelly (to simulate honey as Rudolf Steiner had talked at length about the workings of a beehive) and displayed in an old shopping trolley (salvaged from the canal). The finished piece illustrated the exciting contributions of each (named) individual within a unified concept of the community as a whole. The prize money went towards the continuation of Garvald's exhibition programme.

In June we had, for the first time, a stall at TreeFest in Inverleith Park.

Orwell Place

After several years of searching for alternative premises for our Horne Terrace Day Services workshops, the former Orwell Primary School was acquired for us by Garvald Trust in June 2005. Considerable refurbishment and an extension to the building are required before it is suitable for our occupation, and Garvald Centre will contribute funding towards this. The total cost of the project, including the purchase price of the property, will be around £2 million. Refurbishment plans are currently being finalised and it is hoped that the new building, to be called Orwell Arts, will be available to use in mid-2007.

Fundraiser

In July 2005 Garvald Centre appointed a Fundraiser for two years to raise funds for the new replacement building in Orwell Place. This post has, in addition to seeking procurement of a target £750,000, sought to make new links and associations within Edinburgh to raise Garvald Centre's profile. Links between Garvald Centre residents, tenants and members with their local churches and communities, and their families' involvement within these, are greatly appreciated.

THE GARVALD TRAINING CENTRE LIMITED
REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS (Continued)

Admin

This year saw the implementation of the recommendations of the review which established three Administrators specifically for Accommodation, Day Services, the Board and Director, as well as a Finance Assistant to the Finance and Admin Manager.

The new IT system commissioned in the previous year was installed, IT training was conducted for all staff and a new maintenance agreement established with a local support service.

One reassuring element, following changes in personnel over previous years, has been the stability of staff over this past year. No changes at Management level have taken place.

In conclusion

Throughout this short report various achievements have been recorded. Garvald Centre seeks to promote the individual abilities and skills of its service users, in a nurturing and inclusive environment. It is important that, in the coming year, we establish a clear understanding with our principal referrer of applicants, the City of Edinburgh Council. We will hear of the outcome of our Care at Home application and will seek to establish ways in which alternative forms of income, in addition to fundraising, can be established.

A committee structure within the Board of Management was established at the beginning of 2005 to assist the Director and the Senior Management Team in fulfilling these tasks. This covers Finance, Premises, Services and Fundraising. The Board of Management has appreciated all the work and commitment of members, residents, tenants, families, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

We look forward to the challenges of a new year with our eyes open and the intent to ensure that the work we undertake is conveyed, understood and valued by all of those involved.

On behalf of the Board

Victor Chlebowski
Director, Garvald Centre Edinburgh
March 2006