

The Garvald Training Centre Ltd

Review of Activities and Future Developments for the year ended 31 August 2006

Introduction, Values and Principles

Garvald Centre Edinburgh started in 1969. We are also known as Garvald Centre. We are inspired by the work of an Austrian philosopher called Rudolf Steiner. We were initially focussed around 3 community houses providing activities for people with learning disabilities. These activities have now expanded and become re-sited over the years. We now provide accommodation and day services for in the region of 150 adults with learning disabilities.

Over the years we have continued to provide a much sought after service for members (ie those who attend our day services), residents (ie those who live in Napier Road) and tenants (ie those who are supported in their own accommodation).

Our values and principles aspire to operate within a creative environment. We try to ensure that everyone has a chance to grow, and recognise the value and uniqueness of all of us as individuals , to enable the potential that we all have within us, to be realised.

The Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (Care Commission) undertake annual inspections of our services. The Care Commission is an independent regulator of care services in Scotland. Its inspection reports are available on line at <http://www.carecommission.com>. Reports on our provision continue to reflect very favourably on the quality and standard of our work.

Our accounts at 31 August 2006 show an overall income over expenditure surplus. Breaking the figures down, part of the explanation for this is due to an accounting requirement to show a grant from the Garvald Trust towards our Orwell Arts (Horne Terrace replacement) project, and fundraising for Orwell Arts being recorded. Our Day Services are in fact, operating at a loss. Our Community House in Napier Road and our Supported Accommodation services are in surplus. The financial position is outlined in further detail below.

Financial Position

As in previous years Garvald Centre has continued to seek a better funding agreement with our principal funders the City of Edinburgh Council's Health & Social Care Department and the other eight Councils that purchase the services we provide. Service Level Agreements for Day Services and Napier state what we will agree to provide, and at what cost. The previous 3 year Service Level Agreements with the Health & Social Care Department came to an end in April 2005. We have, since that time, been seeking to negotiate new Service Level Agreements and an uplift in our Day Service fees. This has been broadly successful with seven out of the nine Councils we work with. However, the City of Edinburgh Council's Health & Social Care Department has only approved an uplift in our day service one-to-one hourly rate charge (to April 2007): no uplift for the day service fee was received in April 2006. One other council (Midlothian) has given an inflationary uplift in both fees and the one-to-one rate, but for lesser amounts than the remaining seven councils, which have met our fee charge requests, for which we are extremely grateful. We will continue to seek full cost recovery from all councils, whilst also seeking to establish alternative sources of funding for non-council responsible costs.

Our negotiation with the City of Edinburgh Council Health and Social Care Department regarding Napier costs for 6 of the 8 places available has been more successful; once more, this has only been agreed up until April 2007. The other two councils had agreed to inflationary uplifts for 2005/06.

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Supported Accommodation provision is principally funded through Supporting People and has been subject to a national review. This year has been dominated by seeking clarification on the hourly rate and a contracted hours reduction which is to be imposed on us from April 2007. We will be operating with a smaller number of hours and contracted value. We have therefore had to make adjustments within the organisation whilst trying to ensure tenants' quality of service is maintained.

We have decided to change our financial year, and the next Annual Report and Accounts will be for the 7-month period to 31 March 2007. Thereafter we will report annually to 31 March in each year. This will help us to present financial information to funders in a way that will allow them to better understand our financial position.

Members, Residents and Tenants

139 adults with learning disabilities choose to access the services we deliver. Age ranges span 19 to 75 years. Although we do cater for the needs of some older people, particularly in day activities, the average age of people at Garvald Centre is nearer the mid-thirties.

Our Members' Representatives Group is made up entirely of Day Service users and meets regularly. They are called Reps because their job is to represent their workshop group. They report and discuss what people in their workshop group are saying. Staff who support the Reps group hear this, and reps meet with the Board of Management once a year. This is an important way for managers and other people who run Garvald Centre to learn what is important to members.

In November a representation from Garvald Centre took part in the Citizenship for Everyone consultation that took place to look at some of the major issues affecting the quality of life for people with learning disabilities. The initiative led by the City of Edinburgh Council, enabled those who attended to express their views on a range of services that they would use as citizens and were of particular importance to them such as accommodation, transport and activities.

Earlier this year another initiative, this time Lothian Health led and aimed at adult males with learning disability, made it possible for 37 men to be seen by two community nurses. In addition to checking specific health indicators, they were able to take health history and other lifestyle information. This was concluded in July and became known as the Men's MOT.

Some members and residents also attended the launch in February of a Calling the Shot interactive training resource which specifically involves people with learning disabilities as trainers and decision makers. This may prove helpful when individuals want to become even more involved in the activities affecting their everyday lives.

An annual event that assists all 3 groups of users of our services coming together with a common purpose, is the Skills Accreditation Awards Ceremony. This is held in conjunction with BC Consultants (Borders College and Ncfe which was formerly Northern College of Further Education). Once again it was held in the City Chambers in September, hosted by the Lord Provost Lesley Hinds and certificates were presented by Sir Tom Farmer.

We are grateful to the Lord Provost and the Council for allowing us to use this prestigious venue, and hope that, after its refurbishment, we will next year be able to hold the celebration in the Chambers again.

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Parents and Carers

This year parents and carers have been particularly active on our behalf eg many returned a questionnaire which we sent out to gain a measure of the level of satisfaction they had in our day service in particular. This was conducted as part of a response to the City of Edinburgh Council's Health & Social Care Department view that our activities were less attractive to young people with learning disability, and more traditional than what was available elsewhere in the city. Over 50 responses were received (an almost 50 % return), all entirely supportive of the Day Service work, and many helping us consider further integrative and inclusive activities to be taken forward. A number of parents and carers wrote to their councillors about supporting our Day Service fee negotiations (see Day Services section).

Letters from the director to parents and carers, updating them on activities both within and outwith Garvald Centre have continued throughout the year. Parents and carers' contributions to our activities, and particularly fundraising events, have been very much appreciated over the course of the year.

Staff

The number of staff employed by us registers at 79 Full-Time Equivalent. Part-time contracts, however, have increased, which means that overall numbers of people working in the organisation is nearer 130.

In October a range of staff took part in the biennial cross Garvald (there are five other Garvald Organisations in Lothian and the Borders) Social Therapy workshop held in the Gillis Centre. Discussion, sharing experiences and workshops on a theme of personal leadership (developing self-awareness in relationships) took place.

In December a celebration and thank you took place to recognise those members of staff who had completed 14 or more years at Garvald Centre. Fifteen members of staff were recognised during a fun night in Gorgie.

As part of our involvement in moving towards the Scottish Health at Work Silver Award, staff were able to take advantage of a health check. Around 50 were seen by a Lothian Workplace Health Promotion Team member. This person provided a mini health check which included measurement of height and body-mass index, and the completion of a lifestyle questionnaire.

Accommodation Services

Residents and staff in Napier have benefited from the involvement of an organisation called Diversity Matters. This has focussed on person-centred service planning. It has allowed both individuals and the group to develop a better understanding of what is important for each resident and gives indications about future developments. The exercise has allowed us to better understand the dreams and aspirations of all eight residents. This will, in the coming year, furnish us with appropriate information to work with them, their parents and carers, the Garvald Trust (which owns the property) as well as other stakeholders, including the City Council of Edinburgh Health & Social Care Department.

Accommodation staff have also embarked on training in a Higher Education Certificate in person-centred approaches. This provides a choice for staff as it is an alternative qualification to the SVQ training route. Both levels of training are recognised by the other independent safeguarding agency, the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). SSSC is responsible for registering people who work in social services and regulating their education and training.

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The supported accommodation service has been developing its expertise in supporting tenants with higher support needs whilst also working with individual tenants who require a more “visiting support” type of service.

One factor that has been clearly conveyed by tenants as a result of this person-centred approach to working has been a desire to live in smaller tenancy numbers.

The desire for community living is, however, still apparent for some, and our future development challenge will be to balance community house provision as well as two person and single tenancies in the years to come.

Meetings have taken place with staff and representatives from the supported accommodation arm of our service. These have been convened to ensure that the Supporting People and Service Level Agreement funding challenges are conveyed in such a way that we can respond to staff concerns.

Most recently a structure has been mapped out about the future style, shape and size of the service in order to meet the demands of a new budget requirement next year.

A Care at Home application to become an approved provider within the City of Edinburgh was submitted to Health & Social Care and this is currently being held over whilst the consultation exercise by the Lothian Learning Disability Strategic Review is being conducted (see next section).

Day Services

Some aspects of the Day Service activities have already been covered. 125 members benefit from the activities, both within and outside Garvald Centre premises. Members have been involved in a wider joint Garvald/Camphill series of day conferences, focussing on a number of themes and offers opportunities to meet with other staff and service users throughout Scotland.

Many additional opportunities outwith the Centre have been developed over the years. Amongst others these include: Biodanza (members participate through the stimulation of music, rhythm and emotion), keep-fit groups, swimming, horse-riding, an ever expanding exhibition work programme, and the John Muir Trust sustainable conservation award programme.

Commissions are another way in which members’ skills and talents are being recognised by the wider public. Examples of particular commissions include a candle-holder for Polwarth Church, a stained glass window for St. Mary's Star of Leith and a book-case for Dunedin Canmore Housing Association.

Members took part in the World at Work Exhibition in the Assembly Rooms in March and examples of members’ artistic and craft are regularly sold or exhibited in various venues around Edinburgh, Lothian and beyond. (see Fundraising section below)

This year has been a particularly challenging one for Day Services. We felt challenged by the City of Edinburgh Council Health & Social Care Department to show how our ethos and way we work has relevance and meaning for new people considering our activities and services. However our links with Careers Scotland and both special and main stream schools have confirmed that we are held in high regard and a valued source of referral. Referrals from the ‘older’ group ie over the age of 25 also remain constant.

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We remain actively involved in negotiations with the City of Edinburgh Council Health & Social Care Department about the future direction and emphasis of our services. We will seek to keep this on the Council agenda leading up to the May elections this year and the Lothian Learning Disability Strategic Review report due to be published in the summer.

Administration

The new IT system installed last year has assisted communications both within and outwith Garvald Centre. Donated computers have now been replaced as part of an upgrading programme.

Our re-styled website, www.garvaldedinburgh.org.uk was launched in December 2005. By February this year there had been over 238,000 'hits' logged since recording started in February 2006.

A Sage software package has been installed to assist the financial presentation of figures to management, the Board and other stakeholders.

Changes to locations will be inevitable as a result of the move to Orwell Arts.

Fundraising and Orwell Arts

The name Orwell Arts emerged out of a 'Name the Building' competition which members were involved in. Members are also involved in contributing to ideas for the building, and fundraising events.

The fundraising post-holder has now been in post for fourteen months of a two year fixed-term contract. This will be extended. In this time substantial progress has been made, not only in raising money for Orwell Arts, but also in the profile and promotion of our work.

Over £125,000 has been raised. The Orwell Arts building (a former primary school) was purchased by the Garvald Trust in 2005 but work did not start until July the following year. The whole project will cost £2million to bring it to fruition. We have been particularly fortunate in securing £1.1 million from the Garvald Trust to be used not only for the purchase price but also to assist with the refurbishment of the premises and also the building of the extension. The balance of the funds required will be drawn from Garvald Centre's own reserves and supplemented by fundraising. This latter source has benefited greatly from the significant contributions from members, residents, tenants, parents and carers, staff and the wider community. Details of donors to Orwell Arts are set out on page 11.

The building work is due at to be finished by Easter 2007 with members moving in at the end of May.

As indicated previously the involvement of all, including parents and carers, staff, service users and many others connected with Garvald Centre has been richly satisfying and appreciated. Community events and venues where members and tenants art and crafts have been exhibited and sold and fundraising has taken place have included the St Bride's Centre, the Corstorphine Fair, Gorgie Dalry Fair in Murieston Park, and the TreeFest in Inverleith Park.

The Board

Garvald Centre Edinburgh Board Directors were involved in a Social Therapy workshop last year. Two meetings with Garvald Trust trustees and their legal representatives were also arranged. The meetings helped to establish a better link with the workings of the Trust and a wider understanding of their remit. The Chair of the Trust is a regular attender at the Board and the Premises Committee meetings. The

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Board would like to extend again its thanks for the substantial assistance the Trust has given over this past year. This is particularly with regards to the purchase of Orwell Arts and generous assistance towards the refurbishment costs and building of the extension.

Conclusion

Even in such a short report the various achievements recorded indicate significant examples of the work Garvald Centre achieves in partnership with members, residents, tenants, parents, carers and other stakeholders.

Nevertheless, we will continue to be faced with challenges and uncertainties particularly in relation to our principal funder, the City of Edinburgh Council, Health & Social Care Department. A satisfactory outcome to our continuing negotiation with it is essential not least in the manner of service we wish to provide and what they will want to purchase.

Supporting People funding cuts will continue to test our ability to provide meaningful support and development for tenants within the financial parameters we will be given to operate within.

The next year therefore provides us with opportunities in both are Accommodation and Day Service delivery. We see the future as being part of an alternative package of care that offers activities and services that people want to choose which is different to that which is available elsewhere in the City. Our goal is to adapt to the current changing environment we live in and ensure that 2007/08 continues to sustain our values and meets the demands of those who want to share in what we do.

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Victor Chlebowski
Chief Executive
March 2007

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Donors to Orwell Arts

Charitable Trusts and Foundations

Abbey Charitable Trust
Cruden Foundation
JWHB Younger Trust
Lang Foundation
McCorquodale Trust
Miss BW Muirhead Trust
Miss Hazel M Wood Charitable Trust
Nancie Massey Charitable Trust
Robert O Curle Charitable Trust
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