



ALONE

there when you need us

ANNUAL REPORT 2011

VALUES

PARTNERSHIP

INNOVATION

DIGNITY AND RESPECT
FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

TRANSPARENCY

COMPANIONSHIP

NON-JUDGEMENTAL

VISION STATEMENT

A society where all older people are included as valued and empowered members of the community.

MISSION STATEMENT

ALONE supports older people in need through a befriending service, long-term housing and crisis support in the community.

ABOUT ALONE

ALONE is an independent charity that works with older people who are at risk of homelessness, in crisis or socially isolated.

We work with the 10% of older people who are considered to be vulnerable and at risk of poverty.

ALONE services are based on the belief that every citizen's dignity and human rights should be honoured, regardless of their age or circumstances.

We operate with a ratio of 1 staff member to 12 volunteers. Services are delivered 365 days a year.

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THANK YOU	BACKCOVER

IN 2011

We housed 100 older people and provided them with personal support plans

Our front desk responded to over 8,000 requests for assistance

Our volunteers made more than 10,000 visits to isolated older people

We provided direct support to 330 vulnerable older people on a daily basis

Garda vetting was introduced and 81% of volunteers were vetted by the end of the year

22 volunteers delivered 500 Unilever hampers throughout Dublin city and county

On Christmas Day and St Stephen's Day, ALONE volunteer's delivered 90 hot Christmas dinners to vulnerable older people living on their own

In November and December we responded to more than 1,400 calls for assistance.
(A significant number of cold weather crisis calls were answered outside office hours)

We were nominated for our Outstanding Contribution to Dublin Life and voted by the public into the finals of the Dublin Living Awards



“One afternoon in the ALONE offices I answered the phone to hear a voice saying. ‘Hello, I am 80 years old and my husband passed away 5 months ago. I get very lonely and sometimes I would really love to have someone to talk to.’ Hearing this lady’s problem had initially made me feel very sad. However I was comforted to know that ALONE could make a real difference in her life and that because she had made contact with us, she would no longer be lonely.”

Gabi, ALONE intern 2011

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I would like to express my gratitude to all our Staff & Volunteers for their endless energy and hard work for ALONE again in 2011.

I would, having regard to the changes in our structure, like to thank all the Volunteers who have joined the Leadership Group and pay special regard to all the Volunteers over the past twenty years who came forward to share the executive membership of the Voluntary Organisation, what great work they did.

The year demanded the most from all of us, particularly the winter of 2010/11 one of the worst on records.

We are so grateful to our supporters and particularly for the generosity of our donors over all the years, without whom our work could not continue on the present scale.

ALONE met unprecedented demand on our services in 2011. We have responded to this need and increased our services and improved their quality.

On behalf of the older people assisted by our organisation, I extend deep thanks to every one of you.

ALONE believes that all of us should have the chance to age at home, with the support of the community.

In the coming years we will continue to answer the call of ALONE and simply look after our older neighbor who needs us.

Pat Morgan





CEO'S MESSAGE

I would like to thank everyone involved in making ALONE the crucial organisation it is today – staff, volunteers, trustees, supporters and friends.

Our resolve was tested in 2011 as the recession deepened and the need for our services increased dramatically.

ALONE believes strongly that the best way forward is to work in partnership, both internally with volunteers and staff and externally via community and government services to provide help to those in need. This is not only the most efficient means of getting the job done but also most economical (low cost, high value). It means every older person who contacts us gets the time, support and friendship every citizen deserves.

As we compile our Annual Report, we take the time to reflect on the residents and older people who have passed away and were part of the ALONE family. It is with great pride that we know that their final years were made more comfortable and that they knew that we valued and respected them as individuals.

The next few years will be challenging, especially for those already on the margins of society. We will continue to be a voice for those most in need and do everything in our power to ensure that older people who require our support will be assisted.

ALONE benefits from a unique blend of volunteer energy and skills fused with committed and hard working staff. Thanks to all involved for your dedication and support for one another. This report is a tribute to each of you. It indicates that we have the spirit and the skills we can rely on to overcome the challenges we will face together in the future. It shows our commitment to continue to be there for the older people who need us the most.

Seán Moynihan

ALONE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

'I never thought I'd see the day that I would become homeless but unfortunately it happened to me. After many years struggling on the streets, I eventually overcame my addictions and began the slow process of rebuilding my life. Thanks to the support of ALONE I was able to secure a safe and comfortable place to live. I am now determined to enjoy every day that I have left' Raymond (78)

ALONE is committed to delivering person-centred services that enable residents to live independently in their homes, for as long as possible. Throughout 2011 our Housing Support Workers liaised with all ALONE residents to develop and review their individual support plans. These bespoke support plans covered a wide range of potential issues including physical, mental and emotional health, social integration, elder abuse and finance.

Our Supportive Housing consists of the following elements.

- Initial comprehensive assessment
- Care and Support planning with continuous reviews
- Ongoing contact with residents, by phone or in person

The level of care and support that each resident receives varies as their individual needs change.

In 2011 we reviewed and improved our Housing Support to ensure that we were delivering on clear measurable goals. One of the main changes to our approach was the introduction of tenancy agreements for all residents. These new agreements would ensure legal protection of their rights. Our Housing Officers visited each resident to explain to them in detail the terms and benefits of these new agreements.

"The happiest moment of my life was when I heard that I had a place in ALONE." Kay (81)

“After I split with my partner I moved into a women’s refuge for emergency accommodation. The refuge put me in contact with ALONE who thankfully were able to provide me with a safe home of my own. Since then my life has changed for the better and I now go to bed each night feeling safe and protected. I couldn’t ask for anything more.” Rachel (69)

ALONE provided 95 homes for life for 100 older people who were facing homelessness. We are committed to ensuring that all housing is up to a standard that allows people to age at home comfortably and safely. In 2011 we implemented a Quality Standard for Age Friendly Homes which each of our homes must meet. These age friendly specifications ensure our homes are;

- Bright, warm and welcoming
- Located near transport links and public amenities
- Single storey, with own front door and a small yard or back garden
- Well-insulated with A-rated appliances
- Double-glazed
- Compliant with building standards
- Designed for ease of movement and access
- Fitted with grab-rails, easy-reach cupboards, ergonomic design, non-slip surfaces and broadband
- Fitted with secure-locking doors

We continue to work to ensure that every ALONE home meets these standards and reflects a holistic approach to ageing at home, comfortably and securely. The cost of this programme over 3 years is estimated to be in the region of €1 million. This demonstrates our long term commitment to providing high quality, age friendly homes for our residents.



COMMUNITY RESPONSE SERVICE

“Sometimes people find it hard to pull themselves out of a difficult situation and they can just wither away. It’s great to know there are good people out there who are concerned about the vulnerable and want to help us. God bless all in ALONE” Bernadette (83)

ALONE Community Response Service provides crisis relief and advocacy for older people facing issues including sub standard housing conditions, physical and mental health issues, poverty, elder abuse and isolation.

The service works in close partnership with local authorities, the HSE and state and community agencies to ensure comprehensive supports for the older people it assists.

IN 2011

- 90 older people in emergency situations were supported through the Community Response Service
- 120 people were helped with advice over the phone or brief visits to their homes
- Over €100,000 in grant entitlements were source for older people
- Day-time volunteers distributed pendant alarms connected to a 24 hour emergency response service
- 66% of the issues brought to the Community Response Service related to finance (entitlement and grants) and sub standard housing

“Thank you for being there for me. To me it was like winning the lotto. It’s the first time that anyone has helped me. Thanks again.” Eomann (76)

BEFRIENDING SERVICE

“Having a volunteer come and visit me every week has really made a difference to my life. I look forward to chatting with them and telling them all my news.” Colleen (67)

VOLUNTEER COORDINATION

Volunteers are the ‘lifeblood’ of ALONE, and without them we would be unable to deliver the range or scale of services that we currently provide. By the end of 2011 there were over 120 volunteers involved in every aspect of ALONE’s work from communications and maintenance to finance and befriending. We recognise the huge contribution that our volunteers make and are keen to ensure that they continue to have positive and meaningful experiences while volunteering with ALONE. We are pleased to say that with a low turnover of volunteers and continuous recruitment, our volunteer numbers continue to grow.

VOLUNTEER STATISTICS IN 2011

- 120 ALONE befriending volunteers visited over 200 isolated and lonely older people on a weekly basis
- 8 day-time Volunteers joined the team to work with staff in Housing Support, Community Response, Befriending and Administration
- Our first intern came from America through the Global Experiences Programme and we are increasing opportunities for interns in the year ahead
- Monthly volunteer meetings were held to discuss organisational and planning issues
- A series of talks on various issues concerning older people were held for the volunteers – issues included Alzheimer’s, the ageing process, depression, alcohol, loss and anxiety
- Support sessions were introduced for small groups of up to 10 newer volunteers, to allow them space to discuss their experience with peers

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP GROUP

The new Volunteer Leadership Group (VLG) demonstrates ALONE's commitment to ensuring volunteer involvement in planning, communications and peer support. The group responds to issues and ideas raised by volunteers, Volunteer Coordinators and the organisation in general. Membership is made up of Project Leaders (who oversee our large and small social events and communications), Mentors and the Volunteer Coordinators. The VLG also elects three members to the Board of ALONE for a two year period.

VOLUNTEER MENTORS

Seven experienced volunteers trained as Mentors. They began their new role by checking-in with newer volunteers to see how they were getting on. They also phoned all the older people visited by our Befriending Service to get feedback. More volunteers are currently training as Mentors to offer increased support for volunteers and sharing of experience.

“I knew they were there but it never dawned on me that I would end up in an ALONE house. But I am a lot happier because I have a safe home and great friends in ALONE. I get invited to lots of places and I really enjoy getting out and meeting other people at the events.” Tony (88)

SERVICE USER HANDBOOKS

We believe that the older people should play a key role in developing the services of ALONE. To lay the ground for formal structures for service user feedback to be developed in 2012, we have published handbooks for our residents and for people visited by the Befriending Service. The handbooks provide information on what older people can expect from the service as well as health and safety information and information about other ALONE services. The handbooks were distributed to the older people in draft form, to invite their input to their writing and design. The final editions were distributed in person and the content explained by staff and volunteers.

SOCIAL PROGRAMME

“Thank you all for a beautiful event and for making me feel special” Brigid (76)

Isolation remains the greatest challenge facing older people, however this is particularly relevant to those who are marginalised or have mobility problems. ALONE events give older people the chance to socialise and engage in cultural activities, in a safe and supported environment. For many of our service users these events represent the only social contact they have with their peers on a monthly/annual basis.

ALONE'S 2011 SOCIAL PROGRAMME INCLUDED:

- 3 dinner dances, each attended by about 140 older people and 40 volunteers
- The annual Summer Holiday (in Kilkenny) was enjoyed by 43 older people, supported by 11 volunteers and two staff members

SMALLER EVENTS IN 2011 INCLUDED;

- A visit to the Botanic Gardens
- A theatre outing during the Dublin Theatre Festival
- A story-telling night during the Bealtaine cultural festival for older people
- The ALONE Wild Strawberries Film Club
- A weekly exercise group met in our housing development in Kilmainham, with the programme including Tai Chi and Line Dancing. There was also dominoes and a knitting circle.

Volunteers surveyed older people who had not yet attended an ALONE social event to see what their interests were. On this basis we are developing a wider range of social opportunities, responding to requests for more theatre and gallery outings, more day-time trips and extra provisions for people with restricted mobility.

“Thank you to everyone. I had a wonderful night... dinner was beautiful, dancing, everything... the men weren't bad either!” Anne Maria (72)

Michael was an ALONE resident. When he was 86, his wife died leaving him without any close family. Michael was a very private man who found it difficult to ask for the help that he needed. ALONE worked with the HSE to put in place a comprehensive care package that enabled Michael to continue to live independently in his own home after his wife died. Michael received home help to assist him with daily tasks, weekly visits from the public health nurse to monitor his medical conditions as well as frequent social visits from neighbours, our staff and volunteers. Due to his deteriorating health Michael was admitted hospital. We continued to visit him to ensure that he had everything he needed and to provide him with emotional support in his last few days. Michael passed away in 2011. With the support of Michaels caring neighbours we were able to ensure that the last few months of Michael's life were comfortable and secure and filled with company and friendship.

The name of the person in this story has been changed to protect her privacy. No photo's of 'Michael' appear in this report.



CAMPAIGNS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Our campaigns are based on the experiences of the older people assisted by ALONE. Wherever possible we facilitate these older people to speak for themselves.

In 2011 we issued a number of press releases and statements on various issues concerning our service users.

- We called for political parties in the general election to address;
 - Consistent provision of home help and care
 - Retention of the Ministry for Older People
 - Completion and implementation of the National Positive Ageing Strategy
 - With inflation rates doubling and costs of energy, food, and health insurance rising we asked for assurances for older people.
- We opposed department of Social Protection cuts of €65 million to telephone, gas and electricity allowances, plus HSE proposals to cut home care packages and home help hours.
- We highlighted the risks to older people of fuel costs and across-the-board cuts of 19% to fuel allowances, as Bord Gáis prices rose by 22% and ESB prices by 12%.

- We welcomed HIQA's closing down of nursing homes which put older people at risk and called for the introduction of compulsory standards across the sector.
- Following HSE closures of nursing homes we urged the government to reinvest savings in home care.
- In our annual Christmas campaign we urged people to spend some time supporting older neighbours who were isolated or at risk.

STAYING IN TOUCH

- We published a quarterly ALONE Newsletter and a monthly ALONE Update for volunteers and older people.
- Our popular Schools Talks Programme was presented to hundreds of students.
- We set up an 'ALONEIreland' channel on YouTube, with content including a 25 min documentary, news features, archive footage and TV advertising campaigns.
- Our new-look website www.alone.ie attracted a 36% rise in page-views, up to 4,891 a month.
- Our Facebook 'likes' increased by 25% with updates reaching over 900 people per week.



Stella is an ALONE Resident. She became housebound after a fall left her mobility severely impaired. Because of further complex medical problems ALONE's supportive housing staff secured a HSE Home Care Package for 1.5 hours daily. They also liaised with Dublin City Council and an Occupational Therapist to install an electric profiling bed with railings, to assist her in her independence. Stella now lives by herself in her age-friendly home, assisted by ALONE staff and volunteers and community services.

The name of the person in this story has been changed to protect her privacy. No photo's of 'Stella' appear in this report.



FUNDRAISING

“Thank you for your help with my gas bill as I was afraid to leave it on in the snow. May God bless you, I light a candle for you.” Michael (96)

We were grateful to the hundreds of donors who supported us throughout the year despite the economic downturn. Without this support, our work simply would not be possible. Thankfully our corporate support continued to rise and we received financial support from a range of large and small companies throughout the year.

Electric Ireland committed to retrofit insulation on 30 ALONE houses in January resulting in reduced energy bills and warmer homes for our residents. They also gave a generous financial donation to allow us to support older people suffering fuel poverty during the winter months.

JC Decaux continued their support for a nationwide billboard campaign.

Unilever donated 500 household hampers which were distributed to our service users last Christmas.

Staff from UPS gave their time to carry out general maintenance work at our main housing complex at Willie Bermingham Place.

Legacies continue to be vital for ALONE, accounting for 75% of total income received.

We received over 350 donations from individuals, which comprised 15% of all income received.

Fundraising events in the community included the annual volunteer-organised Christmas collection of food, gifts and donations, the Larkin College Christmas party, and runners in the Flora Women’s Mini Marathon and other local races.

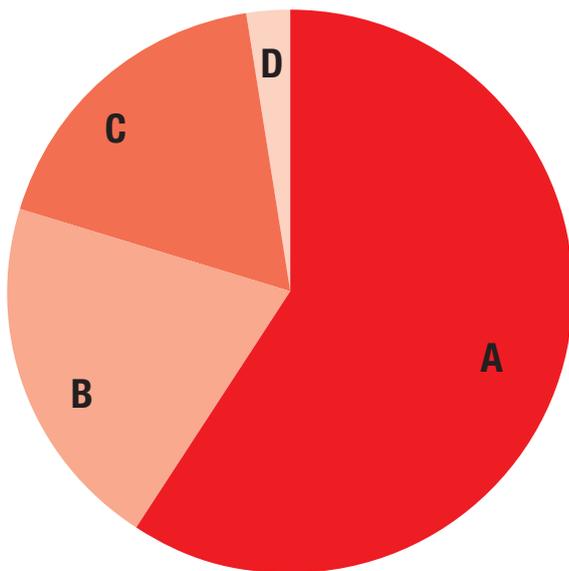
Mick O’Shea walked the Grand Canal from Dublin to Athlone, raising more than €3,500 for ALONE in June 2011.

“My mother died in March 2011, and she was very lucky to live a full and independent life up until a few months before she passed away. ALONE works with older people who are much less fortunate than Mam. I hope my walk will make a small contribution to help them continue to improve the lives of older people who do not have friends and family looking out for them. I know that times are tough, but I believe that those of us that can afford it have to make an even greater effort to help those less well off. ALONE helps people who have already made their contribution to society, it is now up to us to help them in return.”

FINANCIAL SUMMARY – VALUE FOR MONEY

We hope this report clearly demonstrates that we value every cent that we receive, and that each donation no matter how large or small, goes a long way in helping us deliver our services. With your help we continue to maximise the range of supports we provide to older people through strategic planning that focuses on long term solutions.

We would like to thank all our supporters for their help in 2011. We hope that you will continue to support us in our work with isolated and vulnerable older people in the years ahead.



ALONE 2011 INCOME

- A** Legacies
- B** General Donations
- C** Rent
- D** Court Fines

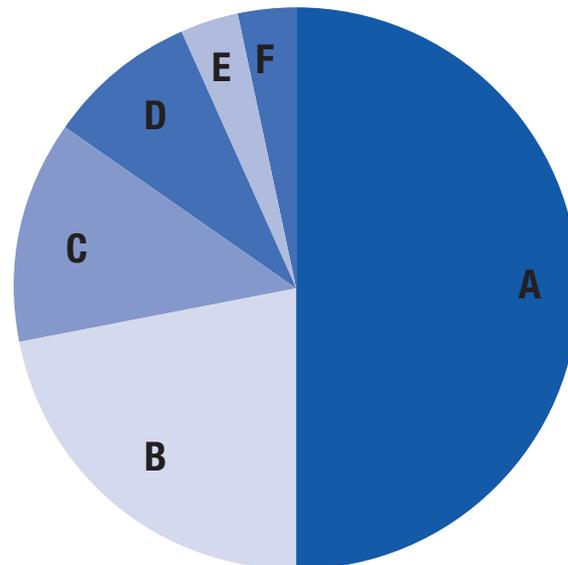
INCOME	2011
Legacies	€443,735
General donations	€152,869
Rent	€132,030
Court fines income	€18,111
Total Income	€746,746

ALONE 2011 EXPENDITURE

- A** Staffing*
- B** Service-Related
- C** Office, Administration & Misc
- D** Campaigning and Communications
- E** Charitable Trust Donations
- F** Professional Fees, Legal Costs, Memberships

* In the charity sector the average expenditure on staff is >70%

EXPENDITURE (operating)	2011
Staffing	€394,037
Volunteer Activity	€56,929
Transport	€8,111
Office , Admin, day to day running	€96,377
Property Insurance	€22,000
Property repairs & maintain	€84,611
Provisions	€3,032
Communication and campaigning for change	€67,430
Professional Fees/legal costs memberships	€24,664
Other (Charitable Donations)	€27,000
Total Expenditure	€784,191



ACTION PLAN ITEMS 2011

→ INITIATED AND ONGOING

✓ COMPLETED

- 1. Increase number of volunteers to 150
- 2. All volunteers to be offered Garda vetted and supplied with core training
- ✓ 3. Complete development of new organisational structure and governance
- ✓ 4. Communication strategy: Position papers to be agreed on all areas affecting older people
- ✓ 5. Introduce staff support structures (more actions planned)
- 6. Introduce staff-training plan
- 7. Supply each resident with a handbook explaining rights and responsibilities
- 8. Implement the recommendations of the latest volunteer consultation process (2010)
- ✓ 9. Housing strategy to be completed and plan to implement recommendation passed by the Board
- ✓ 10. Roll out funding plan in respect to income management
- 11. Develop a library of information on services available to older people
- ✓ 12. Supply all visitees with a short booklet on ALONE visitation service
- ✓ 13. Complete a quality manual (policy and procedures); agree a quality standard and implementation plan
- 14. Agree and plan further practical supports for all older people who use our services

- ✓ 15. Publish an Annual Report 2010
- ✓ 16. Roll-out safety and security plan for residents
- ✓ 17. Finalise a case management system with measurement of outcomes and performance management
- ➔ 18. Develop an archive section on the website, an archive library and publish as short history of ALONE
- ✓ 19. To develop an I.T. plan for 2012 onwards so we maximise our communications
- ➔ 20. Introduce system to honour and express thanks for volunteer service
- ✓ 21. Introduce programme of smaller social events for service users
- ✓ 22. Agree models for case management and housing support and befriending services
- ✓ 23. Introduce day-time volunteers (8) to work alongside staff
- ✓ 24. Launched ALONE Community Response as a service emergency intervention and support in crisis
- ✓ 25. Ensure occupancy of all habitable properties
- ✓ 26. Develop database of donors and introduce system to thank and stay in touch
- ✓ 27. Financial management measures; develop quarterly report against budget, review investments risks
- ✓ 28. New website to be developed and launched
- ✓ 29. Offer tenancies to residents and introduce rent system (ongoing for the next few years)
- ✓ 30. Increase and formalise involvement of service users in the development and review of services
- ✓ 31. extra supports and training for volunteers with challenging visits if required

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES WHO SUPPORTED ALONE IN 2011

AA Ireland

AIB

AOL Global Operations Ltd

BAE Systems Detica

Beachcroft Solicitors

Bentley International Systems

Brady Properties

BT Ireland Fund/The Community

Foundation for Ireland

Citybus Employees Credit Union Ltd.

Civil, Public Service & Eircom

Sports Club

Colfix Dublin

Dunnes Stores

Ebay Foundation

Electric Ireland

Feedme.ie

Game Stop

GMC Civil & Mechanical

Engineering Ltd

Irish Life Staff Fund

JC Decaux

Jefferson Smurfit Trust

Johnson & Johnson Medical

Kentz Engineers & Constructors

Marks and Spencers

McGowans Print

nSpire Re Ltd

O'Donnell Sweeney Eversheds

O'Leary Arnold Solicitors

Overseas NEIL

Paddy Power

Rehab Recycle

Roche Ireland

Royal College of Physicians of Ireland

Sceptre Foundation;

Matheson Ormsby Prentice

Servier Ireland Industries

Toys of Yesterday

Tramex Limited

UCD (Bursars office)

Ulster Bank Staff Charity Fund

Unilever

UPS

WEEE Ireland

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