



# ANNUAL REPORT 2014

**ALONE**

Helping older people in need

*Vision Statement*

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

*Mission Statement*

ALONE supports older people in need through Support Coordination, Befriending, Supportive Housing and Campaigns for Change.

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## Chairman's Message



I had the privilege of being appointed Chairman of at the end of 2014, having taken over from Aidan Bowers who had held the role for two years. Aidan has been a volunteer and trustee with ALONE for many years and has seen great change, challenges and growth. He was a very effective leader and during his term as Chairman he steered ALONE through huge developments in structure, governance and transparency. I would like to sincerely thank him, on behalf of all the staff, volunteers and older people for the dedication and leadership he has devoted to ALONE for many, many years.

I hope that during my time as Chairman I can continue on in his legacy and build on the strong foundations that have been achieved. As our population ages, the housing crisis worsens and health services for older people becomes more and more stretched, I believe as an organisation we must be ready to take leadership and be creative in

response to the many challenges ahead. Through our new strategic plan we plan to be leaders in area of high value, low cost models of support that will allow older people to age at home.

Over the next two years in my role as Chairman I will continue to honour the past, be effective in the present and lead the organisation in the planning for the future.

I would finally like to say thank you to all the staff, volunteers and donors for their contribution to ALONE and the vulnerable older people we work with.

**Eddie Matthews**

## Chief Executive's Message



Firstly I want to thank all our staff, volunteers and donors who have supported us in the last year. Without you, the stories and outcomes outlined in this report would not be possible. I believe that we in ALONE must be out front in providing a service to those in need, through the use of new knowledge and new technology. We must always work to be the best we can and continue to uphold a long tradition in ALONE that ensures we are both effective and compassionate.

2014 was the first year of new strategic plan '**No one left behind**'. Throughout the year we focussed on promoting and developing our unique ethos, continuing to be leaders in the development of low cost, high value services and adapting to the emerging needs of older people. Our ageing population and government policy all pose challenges to us. We believe that our new strategic plan will enable us to adapt and change to the

challenging times ahead and we are delighted to say that we have gotten off to a strong start in the achievement of our plan.

In the last few years we have responded to all calls we have received from across the country, through direct work and partnership with others. I would like to thank all the staff in other charities, health services, government, councils other agencies and who have been supportive and worked with us to ensure that all the older people who come to us get a positive outcome and can remain at home for as long as possible.

Regards

**Seán Moynihan**

## 'No One Left Behind' Strategic Goals

### Service Goals

- Increase the capacity of our Campaigns Service to effect change
- Expand our Supportive Housing model for ALONE residents
- Explore partnerships with statutory and voluntary sector agencies
- Increase long term housing capacity and ensure it is linked to supports.

### Organisational Goals

- Develop participation and feedback to include older people in decision-making
- Develop our Board and organisational structure to increase diversity and expertise
- Discuss and decide on the national dimension of our activities to offer training, supports and services

### Knowledge Goals

- Develop training for staff and volunteers for the changing needs of our services and link these to new quality standards.
- Utilise new technology to maximise our impact.

### Examples of key projects include

- Develop a National Befriending Quality Standard
- Develop a National Befriending Network
- Double the number of supportive homes for older people in need

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## 2014 in Numbers

**12** staff

**178** active volunteers

**680** older people supported

**108** residents in 2014

**14** new residents, **8** from homeless services

**29** new emergency cases per month (351 per year)

Over **50%** of calls to ALONE are housing related

Number of older people befriended increased by **25%**

**15,440**

hours offered by volunteers

**100%** of donations went on front line services

Increased our housing stock by **5%**

**93%** volunteer retention rate

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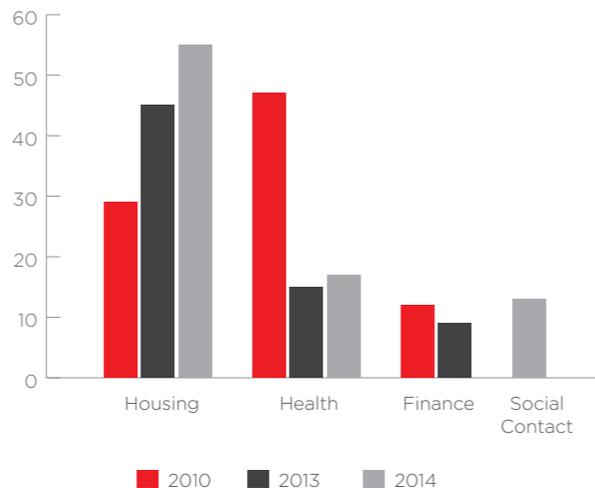
Helping older people in need

ALONE's Support Coordination works with older people who are in crisis situations and need extra support to age at home. Our staff work with the older person to address their immediate situation and when necessary link them in with the relevant services in the community. We maintain contact with the older person as required to ensure a long term solution has been achieved.

In 2014:

- Over 50% of older people came to use for support around housing
- Community Support helped 371 individual older people in need
- 64 of these older people came back for support around a second issue
- The majority of older people supported are between 70 and 79, while we supported 38 people over the age of 90

- Area of need (demonstrates the difference through the years)



There were over almost 3,385 interventions carried out by the Support Coordination team

Personal Care	126
Physical Health/Mobility	439
Emotional & Mental Health	372
Social Contact/Integration	597
Housing*	1321
Finance	223
Elder Abuse	69
Safety/Security	73
Other	165

- Poor housing conditions, issues with landlords, rising rents and eviction notices were some of the main issues regarding housing

**John** is 78 and lives on his own in South Dublin. At the beginning of January John was improperly sold a phone service which he did not need and locked into a very expensive contract. John became increasingly worried about the spiralling costs and contacted ALONE. One of our Support Coordinators was able to advocate on his behalf, get in touch with the correct authorities and ensure John was released from the contract.



## ALONE's Befriending Service

ALONE's Befriending provides companionship to older people who are socially isolated through a weekly volunteer visit. The service is designed to alleviate the negative impacts loneliness has on mental and physical health. Volunteers are trained and supported by professional staff. If the older person's needs change, staff also work with them to coordinate the additional supports they need to age at home.

In 2014:

- 201 older people were visited through the services
- This was an increase of 25% on the previous year
- 128 new referrals to the service
- A number of events for older people were held throughout the year including the Annual Summer Holiday, 3 Dinner Dances, monthly Cinema Clubs as well as a number of Small Events.

**Barbara** is 83 and has lived alone since her husband died over 20 years ago. She has one daughter and although she is in regular contact with her, she does not see her as often as she would like as she lives in the UK.



Barbara's limited mobility means that she has trouble getting out and about and meeting new people. She said that she could often go for days without speaking to anyone face to face. A friend of her daughters put her in touch with ALONE. She was visited by Gary, an ALONE Support Coordinator who spoke to her about her needs and concerns. She was then introduced to Craig, her Befriending volunteer. Craig now visits her once a week and they both look forward to catching up. Barbara can also get in touch with the ALONE office if she needs support around anything else.

*'This service has given me the feeling that I am not alone anymore. There is always someone at the end of the phone, I didn't have that before.'*

## ALONE's Supportive Housing Service

ALONE Supportive Housing provides homes to older people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and need a level of support. Our Support Coordinators work with each resident to ensure they have the relevant services they need to live independently. The level of support an older person receives changes with their needs. Every ALONE home is age friendly, has its own front door and is maintained to a high standard.

In 2014

- A total of 108 older people lived in ALONE Supportive Housing
- We welcomed 14 new residents with 8 coming from specific homeless services
- The main issues that residents received support with were physical health and mobility followed by housing, then social contact, finance and mental health. (46% Health 16% Housing 13% Social Contact)
- 11 Community meetings were held throughout the year. These meetings allowed the older people to give structured feedback and actively engage in the work of ALONE.
- There were over almost 3,587 interventions carried out by the Supportive Housing team in 2014

**Des** is a 75 year old man from Dublin. He was living in private rented accommodation however when he went into hospital he was unable to pay his rent and became homeless. Following this Des spent time in emergency accommodation with limited facilities. This was having a seriously negative impact on his physical and mental health. Thankfully, we were able to offer Des a new home in February and he is now settled in to his new home and helped by ALONE's Support Coordinators. 'I couldn't ask for more, it's given me a new life and I'm very happy'



Our daily work with the older people who use our services gives us a unique insight into the challenges facing vulnerable older people. With over 300 individuals using our service on a weekly basis, we are acutely aware of the issues they face around poor housing, social isolation, loneliness, health, disability, poverty and elder abuse. In our campaigns we use this experience, that of professional we are in contact with and statistics and research to campaign for change and better services for older people. Some of the campaigning activities we carried out in 2014 included:

- Meeting with various Councillors, TD's and Ministers to discuss our campaigning issues and the issues affecting the vulnerable older people
- Submitting a Pre-Budget Submission to the Department of Social Protection
- Submitting two proposals on Social Housing Strategy to the housing agency and we were one of the few agencies invited to participate in the Housing Summit in June
- Launching our Home Truths campaign – a national campaign to raise awareness of the number of older people currently in need of housing.



We launched our first major campaign 'Home Truths' in 2014 that was targeted at local election candidates in the run up to the local election. We asked them to commit to releasing boarded up properties and unused land to ALONE and other social housing providers so that we could develop social housing. This resulted in:

- ALONE securing CAS funding under the 'Special Initiative for Homelessness in Dublin City' category, which meant we could purchase 5 new homes.
- Dublin City Council releasing 8 units to ALONE so we could provide housing for older people in need.
- Widespread coverage and awareness building on the issue of homelessness among older people

## No one deserves to live like this.



Our Housing Development Campaign urgently needs your support.



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[www.alone.ie](http://www.alone.ie)



### Housing Development

2014 saw a rise in the number of homeless people in Ireland, and older people were not immune to this trend. We saw the number of older people coming to us with a housing need significantly increase. As the need for housing grows, we knew that we must respond to this housing need. As a result we established a new department that would deal specifically with securing additional homes for older people so that we could provide more homeless older people with the supports they needed. Throughout 2014 this department:

- Secured €750,000 of CAS Funding for the purchase of 5 new homes
- New residents were allocated these new homes
- Dublin City Council transferred 18 boarded up bedsits to ALONE
- Design and construction tenders were received for the development of two new houses
- 4 properties were refurbished to an age friendly standard and 3 properties redecorated



### National Befriending Network

Over the years we received countless calls from befriending services across the country seeking support and advice for running an effective service, as well as calls from older people looking to access a similar services in their areas. To respond to this need we began the process of establishing a national network of quality Befriending Services for older people. In November 2014 we held a National Befriending meeting that was attended by over 40 Befriending organisations from across the country.

We also launched the following publications as vital resources to the network.

- **National Directory of Befriending Services for Older People**

As there was no current database for befriending services for older people we spent over 12 months mapping all the befriending services currently available for older people across Ireland.

- **Befriending Coordination Pilot Guidebook**

The Befriending Coordination Guidebook draws on over 37 years of experience in befriending and was developed as a tool for those who are coordinating befriending services for older people.

This was the first step in an ambitious path of developing a National Befriending Network for befriending service for older people nationally.

## Volunteers

In ALONE we have a strong team of active volunteers, with over 95% volunteering their time on a weekly basis. Volunteers are involved in all levels of the organisation from the Board, Leadership Group to vital frontline services. All our volunteers are trained, Garda vetted and fully supported by professional staff. Our team of volunteers ensure that as an organisation we can expand our reach and ensure we can offer a service to those who need our support.

- In 2014 we benefited from the active involvement of 178 volunteers
- We had 1 staff member to every 15 volunteers
- The total number of hours volunteers have contributed is estimated to be 15,440
- A high level of satisfaction experienced by volunteers, with a 93% retention rate
- All volunteers are Garda vetted and trained

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**Fiona** is a Befriending volunteer. Wanting to help isolated older people Fiona began her training in Spring 2014 and during the year she visited Mary and Barry, for an hour each week.



*"I love the friendships that have developed between myself and Mary and Barry," says Fiona. She thinks her visits are just as enjoyable for her as for the older people. "When I visit them I am greeted with open arms and a big smile! We usually enjoy a cup of tea and a biscuit and catch up on the most recent gossip or things like that."*

## Communications

A major rebranding of all our Communications material was carried out in 2014 free of charge by Bonfire, a well-known Dublin agency. This was worth over €22k to ALONE and offered a unique opportunity for us to redevelop our brand with the support of a dynamic creative agency. The following results were also achieved:

- Issued 34 press releases throughout 2014
- Secured €1.2 million worth of media coverage in 2014, this was double the previous year's figures.
- Increase Facebook followers by one third
- Won the 'Sockie' Award for 'Best Facebook Page for a Non-Profit Organisation.'

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# 100% of donations go to front line services

ALONE is committed to being transparent across all our activities and using monies donated to achieve outcomes for older people most vulnerable in our society.

The total voluntary income for 2014 amounted to €709,283 and was raised through a variety of sources including the following:

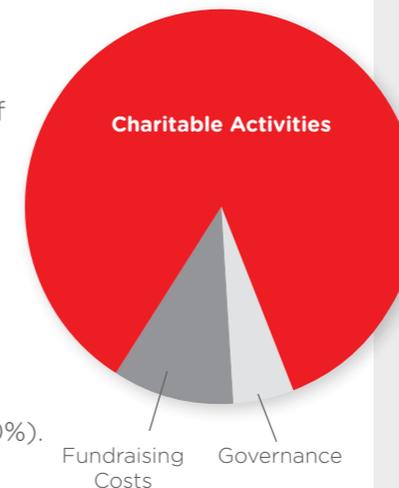
- Legacy donations accounted for 63% of total income received in 2014
- Funding from companies accounted for almost 20% of total income.
- Companies supported ALONE through corporate volunteering days, donations and grants
- Community groups showed increasing support for ALONE
- Our school talk programme continued with renewed enthusiasm for CSPE classes specifically
- Several companies supported us through product donations and skill-sharing including Unilever, JCDecaux and Bonfire



In 2014 the essential work of ALONE was dependant on the support and generosity of members of the public and business communities. Once again demand for our services increased and once again, with your contribution, we expanded our services to meet the demand.

In 2015 we will extend our reach more nationally and work in partnership with others to meet the need of our ageing population.

- 100% of all donations go towards services
- Expenditure is broken up into cost of charitable activities (85%), governance (5%) and fundraising costs (10%).



Our full Audited Accounts for 2014 are available on [www.alone.ie](http://www.alone.ie)

Income	
General Donations	€ 93,070
Corporate donations	€ 131,529
Legacies	€ 451,865
Rent	€ 338,111
Grants	€ 196,851
Investment Income	€ 34,451
Court Fines	€ 30,070
	<b>€ 1,281,445</b>

Expenditure	
Charitable Activities	€ 774,677
Governance Costs	€ 35,678
Cost of Generating Funds	€ 95,389

Capital Income and Expenditure	
Capital Income	€ 728,000
Capital Expenditure	€ 831,971

As a dynamic organisation we are committed to continuous improvement, development growth at all levels of the organisation. In 2014 we continued to develop as an organisation

- Two new and independent board members were appointed
- The Board ran three active subcommittees – Finance, HR, Governance and Services
- We signed up to the Housing Regulator and the Charity Regulator
- Trustees declared, and created procedures to deal with conflict of interest and code of conduct
- With the introduction of a new IT system we transferred all of our case notes to a secure online system.
- We continued to develop and improve all procedures in line with our ISO Quality Standard for Services

### Trustees

Mr Aidan Bowers (Chairman until early December)

Mr Eddie Matthews (Chairman from December)

Mr. Gerard Cosgrove (Treasurer)

Ms. Annette Gavigan (Secretary)

Ms. Liz Kilcommons

Ms. Patricia Larkin

Mr. Pat Morgan

Mr. Michael Hodgins

Mr. Jeremy Chapman

Mr. Joe Sheedy

Mr. Kevin McConville (Honorary Member)

### Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Sean Moynihan

In ALONE we are committed to producing honest and transparent statistical data. All the statistics that we present are accurate. We don't double count the older people we support, the volunteers who support us or the impacts we achieve. We are committed to producing authentic figures that demonstrate the work that we do, in the most honest and reliable way possible.



**Helping older people in need**



ALONE, Olympic House, Pleasants St., Dublin 8 Tel: 01 6791032 [www.alone.ie](http://www.alone.ie)

