



First Steps
Women's Centre

ANNUAL REPORT

2013 - 2014



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | Silver

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Chairperson's Report 2013/14

My final year in office has seen the continued development of the Centre which has become an integral part of our expanding and diverse community. We strive never to lose sight of our ethos of *"improving the quality of life for women through education and personal development"*.

This year has seen a marked increase in the uptake of all our services. The Benefits Checker Service has helped local people to access over £160,000 in unclaimed benefits and our minibus has trebled its mileage in the last year. 367 women have availed of courses in the last 12 months.

First Steps Women's Centre is on the brink of great, and potentially momentous changes. The emergence of the new Mid-Ulster Council and the new European Social Fund 2014-2020 will bring both new challenges and opportunities to the Centre. I feel that we are best placed to deal with these new structures and requirements whilst still meeting the diverse needs of local people.

I would like to acknowledge the continued support of our main funders including the European Social Fund, the Department for Employment and Learning, the Department for Social Development, the Big Lottery, Awards for All, Lloyd's/TSB Foundation Northern Ireland, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council, Dungannon Surestart, Neighbourhood Renewal, BBC Children in Need, CFNI – Northern Bank, CFNI – Comic Relief, Leonardo Grundtvig Transversal and PBNI. I would also like to thank Dungannon Youth Resource Centre for the use of their facilities and Dungannon Surestart for the continued funding of childcare places.

Finally to close I would like to offer a sincere thank you to all my fellow directors, our staff and volunteers, who by their unfailing duty and commitment to the Centre make this such a welcoming and special place to come.

Maria Donnelly
Chairperson

Chief Executive Officer's Report

Our Continued Success Is A Team Effort

In my eighth year as Chief Executive Officer of First Steps Women's Centre I am struck at how quickly time has passed. Looking back at how far we have travelled gives me an immense feeling of pride in what has been achieved. This year we have continued to provide a training and education programme for hundreds of women. We have created an expectation of high pass rates, high retention and progression on to further and higher education and employment which we continue to meet and exceed.

It is my daily honour to work in this Centre - a place where everyone is treated with respect, looked after and guided. We are a non-judgemental organisation. We continue to strive to create a space for women to learn, to share, to heal, to be listened to and to be understood. The key to our success is our innate ability to enable women to trust us. They know that the staff and volunteers care for their well being and will go that extra mile for them. Our staff are not clock watchers but we are time movers. We help women juggle their busy hectic lives to come here and to make time for themselves.

A new video was made this year highlighting why women attend our Centre and the participants amazed me by their depth of feeling and enthusiasm. The common words and expressions from the video include the following:

- **homely,**
- **friendly,**
- **genuine,**
- **unique,**
- **special**

Investors In People Silver

FSWC was awarded IiP Silver in January 2014. This means that we are recognised as a very special place to work. It proves what I already know to be the foundation to our success - that we care about our staff and volunteers. It also proves that the staff fully understand why we do what we do.

Deepest Sympathy

It is with a heavy heart that I acknowledge the death of one of our greatest supporters. Vera Henderson was an octogenarian who became a dab hand on a computer. She passed away this year and will be missed by everyone.

The Future

Our future is the same as it's always been. It is full of uncertainty and unknown in terms of funding. However that has never stopped us from believing that we will get through it and continue to do what we do. I have witnessed many successful and happy outcomes. Women becoming more confident in their own ability. Women improving the quality of their life through education and making their own choices for the future.

Michael McGoldrick
CEO

Training

During the academic year commencing in September 2013 to June 2014 66 courses and 3 workshops were provided in the areas of Health Promotion, Information Technology, Life Skills and ESOL. Once again there was high demand for this service and 367 women attended the courses offered.

Overall average attendance was 83% and exam pass rates ranged from 78% to 100%.

Formative and summative comprehensive evaluations were carried out for each course during the year and overall feedback was extremely positive.



“Most definitely recommend the course and Centre to my friends.”

“I have loved this course and I feel like a complete new woman with tools to deal with everyday issues.”



“It’s brilliant – hope to do other courses in September to help increase my chances of getting back into the workplace. I feel this is the best place to do it.”



Courses 2013 - 2014

Health Promotion	
Alexander Technique Workshop	Mood Matters Workshop
Confidence Booster	Personal Development
Down Memory Lane	Small Changes
Dressing on a Budget	Stress Lives
Health4Life	Time4Life
Holistics	Walking Group
Laughter Yoga Workshop	Wellbeing Techniques
Minding Me	Yoga and Relaxation
Minding Me – Laugh It Off	

Information Technology	
Advanced ECDL	Making the Most of Your iPad
ECDL	Next Steps to Computing
ECDL Fast Track	Payroll Levels 1 & 2
Food Hygiene	Sage Accounts Levels 1 & 2
First Steps to Computing	Text Processing Levels 1, 2 & 3
Internet Taster	

Life Skills and ESOL	
Allotment Project	Family Money Management
ESOL – Reading, Writing & Listening	Job Search
Essential Skills English Entry Level	Personal Money Management
Essential Skills English Higher Level	Polish ESOL
Essential Skills Maths Entry Level	Portuguese ESOL
Essential Skills Maths Higher Level	

Childcare

In September 2013 the new term commenced with 58 new children and 26 children returning for another year. The Crèche provides childcare for children aged 4 months (or until they receive their immunisations) until their 5th Birthday.

The Crèche moved into a bigger room in Dungannon Youth Resource Centre and the children settled in very well, enjoying the extra space and the opportunity to make use of the gym to play games.

This year, the creche catered for children from different nationalities including Hungarian, Lithuanian, Northern Irish, Scottish, Polish, Portuguese and Tetum.



“I would like to thank all the staff for their attention and caring for my child so I could do my course.”

“What I like most is First Steps Childcare. The place is secure for the children to play and it’s clean”.

“I like how the staff work and communicate with the children”

Marketing

In keeping with the growth and popularity of technology, we have adapted our website to be compatible with iPads, mobile phones and tablets. This continues to be a popular form of marketing with an average of 351 people visiting the site over the year. Facebook Likes have risen from 140 to 421.

A new Corporate brochure was designed and delivered to GP surgeries and mother and toddler groups in the Dungannon and surrounding areas. Contact was also made with local Church Ministers, Mother's Unions and Women's Institutes.

Promotion days were organised in Sainsbury's and DHSS Office.

Fundraising

In October 2013 McAleer's Bar kindly hosted a quiz night in aid of FSWC. The total amount raised was over £370.

In February 2014 Dungannon Rugby Club kindly hosted a quiz night with proceeds going to FSWC. The total amount raised was over £650.

An innovative new course "Making the most of your iPad" was kindly developed and provided for free by Mrs. Patricia Hynds, Tr@inIT, and raised £440 for the Centre.

As well as fundraising for the Centre, FSWC also organised a Christmas Fayre and divided the proceeds, amounting to £590, between St Vincent de Paul and The Vineyard Church.

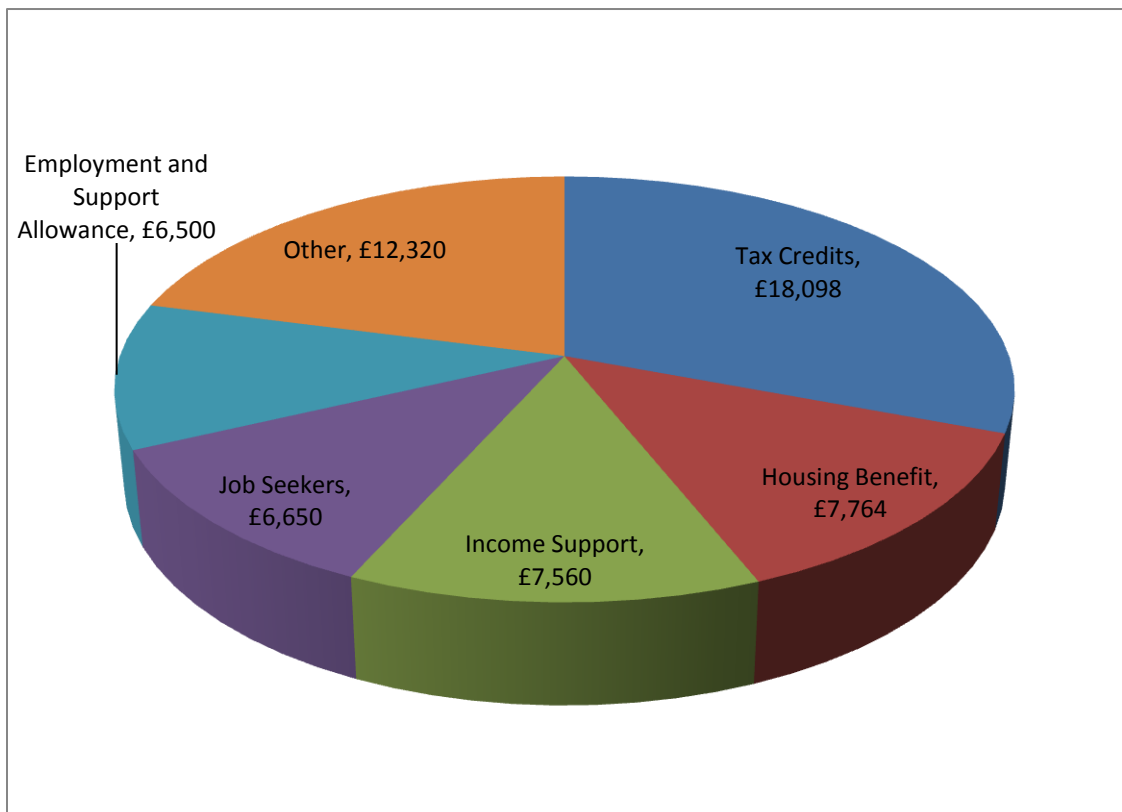
A Coffee Morning was also hosted by FSWC to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer. The total amount raised was over £630.



Benefits Checker Service

To the year ending March 2014 156 people availed of the Benefits Checker Service. Of the 156 people, 47 were found to be potentially eligible for benefits, amounting to £158,372 per year. Fourteen people successfully claimed £58,892. A breakdown of the type of benefit found is shown below (Graph One).

As well as providing this service in FSWC, an outreach service was also provided at The Vineyard Church, St Vincent de Paul, R.E.A.C.T. and Milford Senior Citizens Centre.



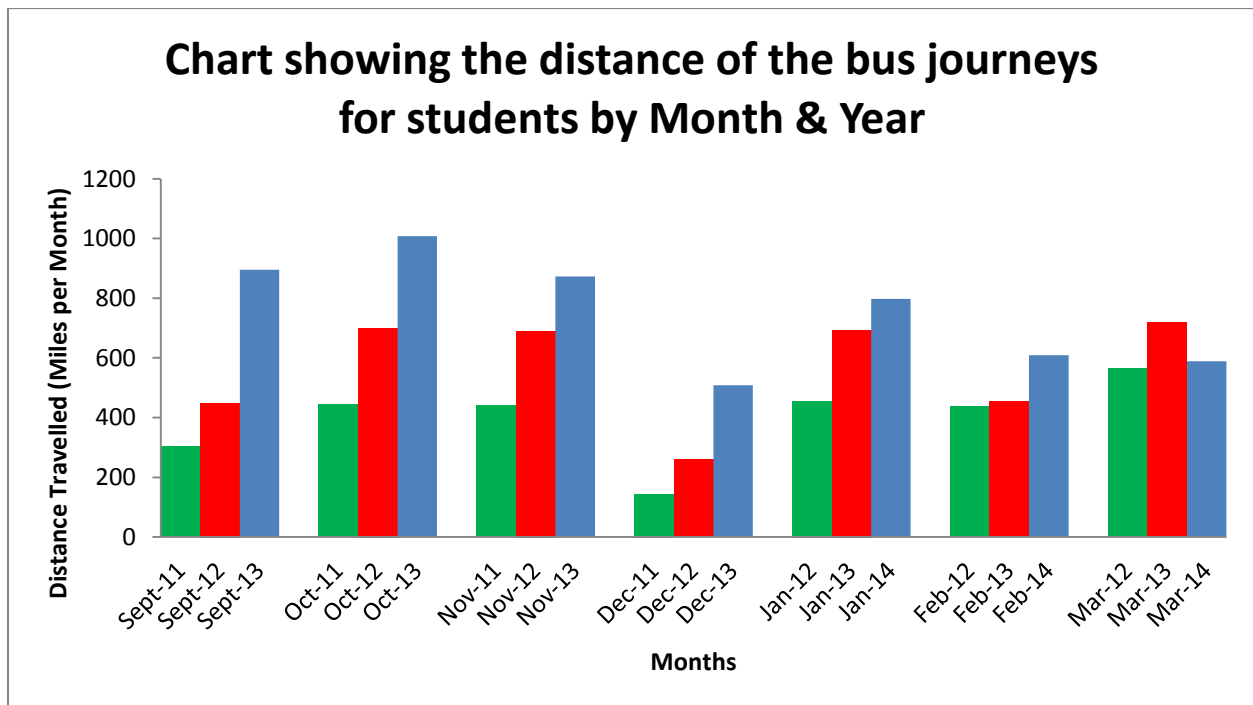
Graph 1 Breakdown of types of benefits successfully found

Transport

In response to increased demand for FSWC’s services, Transport has proven to be very popular this year and milage has increased dramatically from 2011 – 2014, as shown in the table and chart below.

Year	Milage
2011/2012	3,741
2012/2013	6,913
2013/2014	13,818

Table One Minibus Usage



Counselling

Free confidential Counselling has continued to be a vital aspect to the work done at FSWC. Between September 2013 and June 2014 29 women have availed of the service. Evaluations completed before attending Counselling and after have highlighted the great benefits attending Counselling sessions have had on the lives of clients.

Volunteers

This year FSWC has had a number of people lending their support in various ways. Karolina and Sylwia provided language support to Polish people attending courses and helped with administration and Katalin provided Reception cover. Karolina is now undertaking a Postgraduate qualification at Queen's University, Belfast and Katalin gained employment at Dungannon Enterprise Centre.

Justyna and Marlene provided classes for Polish and Portuguese women respectively.

Sara, a local school student, assisted the crèche staff with creating artwork to decorate the room.

The Directors all give their time freely to help provide strategic direction for the Organisation.



Financial Accounts

FIRST STEPS WOMEN'S CENTRE
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31 March 2014

	2014 £	2013 £
Incoming resources		
Incoming resources from generating funds:		
<i>Voluntary income</i>		
Gift AID	-	5,705
Donations	14,560	15,520
Other Income	-	56
DSD	103,426	103,425
DSD - Pre ESOL	8,501	-
Sure Start	5,444	11,484
Dungannon & South Tyrone BC	500	4,035
New Life Directions	-	3,600
Live and Learn Funding	15,246	15,214
Awards For All	9,840	-
Lloyds TSB	4,013	5,000
EGSA	-	120
Neighbourhood Renewal	29,418	5,915
DEL/ESF WTEE 19410	195,135	189,679
PBNI	4,000	-
Children in Need	8,000	4,500
SH & SCT	-	2,376
Early Years Development Fund	-	2,340
Pfizer	1,932	9,543
MSE Charity	(445)	4,995
Peace III	528	-
Santander	-	9,410
Pilgrims Trust	-	2,897
Public Health Agency	-	4,000
CFNI - Ulsterbank	8,455	-
Leonardo Grundtvig Transversal	965	-
	<u>409,518</u>	<u>399,814</u>
<i>Investment income</i>		
Bank Interest	193	238
	<u>193</u>	<u>238</u>
Total incoming resources from generating funds	<u>409,711</u>	<u>400,052</u>
Total incoming resources	<u>409,711</u>	<u>400,052</u>

Charitable activities

Education and personal development

Grant funding activities

Printing, Postage and Stationery	7,587	5,864
IT Support	3,808	6,484
Wages and Salaries	212,469	202,923
Rent, Rates and room hire	23,688	25,561
Light and heat	8,479	7,363
Repairs and maintenance	12,224	5,319
Creche equipment	684	3,033
Insurance and bus insurance	2,835	2,878
Staff travel and subsistence	5,113	4,873
Staff training and recruitment	3,387	2,001
Motor tax and maintenance	1,507	2,435
Course expenses and tutor fees	75,093	56,564
Legal and professional fees	2,407	1,305
Emergency Assistance	1,246	140
Subscriptions	398	424
Health and Safety	321	992
Telephone and fax	3,640	4,856
Marketing, advertising and seminars	5,081	2,281
Evaluation Fee	3,334	-
Depreciation	5,317	9,027
Childcare and travel	4,294	371
	<u>382,910</u>	<u>344,695</u>
Education and personal development total expenditure	<u>382,910</u>	<u>344,695</u>
Total charitable activity expenditure	<u>382,910</u>	<u>344,695</u>

Governance costs*Activities undertaken directly*

Audit fees	2,145	2,328
Salaries	33,321	33,662
Sundry and cleaning expenses	50	1,626
Bank charges and Interest	390	544
	<u>35,906</u>	<u>38,160</u>
Total governance costs	<u>35,906</u>	<u>38,160</u>
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year	<u>(9,105)</u>	<u>17,197</u>

Our Funders

