

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2003

**BOARD FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (NI)
REPORT 2003**

MEMBERSHIP

House of Bishops

Rt Rev AET Harper (appointed July 2002)

Elected Members

Mrs SL Ayling	(Mothers' Union, Down & Dromore)
Rev Canon JPO Barry	(Down Dromore & Connor Joint Social Services Committee December 2001)
Mrs J Bunting	(Mothers' Union, elected December 2002)
Rev JNT Campbell	(Down Dromore & Connor Social Services Committee Resigned September 2001)
Dr J Evans	(Men's Society)
Rev D Ferry	(Derry Diocese)
Mr G Glenn	(Derry Diocese)
Captain C Harris	(Church Army)
Mrs R Mullen	(Resigned June 2002)
Rev J Pickering	(Armagh Diocese)
Mrs P Scott	(Mothers' Union, Connor – term completed June 2002)
Mr R Stinson	(Down Dromore & Connor Social Services Committee)
Rev RC Thompson	(Clogher Diocese)
Mrs J Thompson	(Down Dromore & Connor Social Services Committee)
Dr J Turner	(Down Dromore & Connor Social Services Committee)
Very Rev TR Moore	(Clogher Diocese)
Rev ASJ Warke (Hon Secretary)	(Armagh Diocese)

Co-opted Members

Rev Canon GF Anderson	Mr JTN McGaffin (Vice Chairman)
Rev G Clunie (Resigned January 2002)	Mr GS Shaw (Hon Treasurer)
Lt Col CGH Filor (Resigned September 2002)	Mr TN Wilson
Dr JH McGaffin	

Staff

Mr I Slaine, BA (Hons) MSW CQSW CMHSC	Chief Executive
Mrs P Gilbert, BSSc (Hons) DipSW CQSW	Senior Social Work Practitioner
Mrs A Milligan, BA (Hons) DipSW CQSW PQA (Resigned September 2002)	Social Worker
Post Grad. Dip Guidance & Counselling	
Mrs M Giff, CQSW PQA	Sessional Social Worker
Mrs M Walker	Administrator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Board is involved in providing social work/care services and in the promotion of social issues within the Church of Ireland in Northern Ireland.

The social work/care services are:

- The Church of Ireland Adoption Society;
- The Fertility Counselling Service;
- Financial Assistance to Families and Individuals in Need;
- Ministry to the Deaf;
- The Central Belfast Child Contact Centre.

The promotion of social issues through:

- Providing Training Courses to Clergy;
- Raising Awareness on Social Issues;
- Disability Access;
- Commenting on Legislation/Social Issues.

In 2002 the main developments for the Board were:

- The appointment of the Rt Rev AET Harper as Chairman;
- Strategic Planning – building on this process for 2003 to 2006 Business Plan;
- Placement of older children for Adoption;
- Strengthening of links within the Diocesan Adoption Agencies Group and with Family Care Society;
- Negotiating with the Regional Fertility Centre with regard to a contract;
- Obtaining additional funding from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety with regard to extending the Fertility Counselling Service;
- Promoting Child Contact Centres in Armagh and Londonderry;
- Promoting Training Courses for Clergy but with a poor uptake from Dioceses;
- Raising awareness on Disability Access linked to the Disability Discrimination Act 1996.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The Board is dependent upon volunteers, Board and Adoption Panel members and staff to ensure effective delivery of the above.

In July 2002 the Rt Rev AET Harper, Bishop of Connor was appointed Chairman of the Board.

In June 2002 Mrs Rosemary Mullan resigned as Church of Ireland Youth Department Representative to the Board. In September 2002 Mr David Brown, Youth Ministry Co-ordinator was appointed in her place.

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In January 2002 The Rev Grace Clunie resigned. Grace had served as a nominee of the Church of Ireland Youth Council and as a co-opted member. Her enthusiasm and interest was much appreciated by Board members and staff.

Lt Col CGH Filor resigned from the Board in September 2002 as a result of ill health. Barney represented the Church of Ireland Housing Association. He was an active Board member, served on the General Purpose and Finance Committee and had been Convenor of the Legislation and Research Advisory Committee. Barney's high level of knowledge from his involvement in a number of voluntary projects is much missed by the Board and staff.

Mrs Pauline Scott, a Mothers' Union Representative to the Board resigned in July 2002. Mrs Scott had chaired the Development Advisory Committee of the Board. Mrs J Bunting was appointed as her replacement in November 2002.

Mrs Anne Milligan, Social Worker, resigned from her part-time post with the Board in September 2002, following appointment to a full-time specialist post in a Health and Social Services Trust. As an interim measure Mrs Margaret Giff, Sessional Social Worker, increased her hours working for the Board. This assisted the Board in maintaining the Adoption Services and allowed time to plan for the appointment of a permanent full-time social worker.

PLANNING A STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE

The Board has recognised for some time the need to build on its existing planning process as a basis for service development. As a means of progressing this, the Board invited Mrs Maire Young, Independent Consultant, to facilitate a 'Strategy Day' for members of the General Purpose and Finance Committee and members of staff.

The 'Strategy Day' was held in October 2002. From this a draft Strategic Framework document 2003 to 2006 has been produced focusing on a range of issues including – Service Delivery, Communications, Financial Strategy and Human Resource Strategy.

The next stage in the process is to involve all Board members and staff in reviewing the Strategic Framework. Out of this a 2003 to 2006 Business Plan will be produced.

SOCIAL WORK/SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

The Church of Ireland Adoption Society

The Adoption Society is the original core social work activity of the Board. The nature of the work has changed over recent years with a greater emphasis on:

- The placement of older children for adoption such as children aged 3 years + from the care system;
- The recruitment and preparation of couples to adopt the older children;

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- Provision of post adoption counselling to adult adoptees, adoptive parents, birth parents and birth relatives.

The Adoption Society receives a Core Grant from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety towards this service. The Board welcomes this financial support.

In 2002 Adoption Orders were granted in respect of three children with whom the Society was involved. In addition the Society supported two families with whom children were placed prior to applications to adopt. In late 2002 a couple approved by the Society as suitable to adopt had an introductory visit to two children and a placement with this couple in 2003 is planned.

In 2002 the Society received four referrals from women with an unplanned pregnancy (six in 2001). None of the women concerned decided upon adoption.

The number of couples seeking to adopt remains high – 83 enquiries received in 2002. All couples are offered an initial interview prior to completing an Application Form. This allows Social Work staff an opportunity to raise awareness on the children available for adoption, which means not a baby, which is the hope/aspiration of most couples seeking to adopt.

The Society's staff also noted that a significant number of the couples enquiring about adoption were still having infertility investigations. As a result 25 couples were cross-referred to the Fertility Counselling Service.

In September 2002 the Society ran a two-day training course for seven couples on our Adoption Waiting List. The course was an opportunity to raise awareness on a range of adoption issues including children available, abuse, attachment, telling, and the legal process. Also, presentations were made by an adult adoptee and an adoptive parent. Mrs Milligan co-ordinated the course and put much time and effort into its production. The feedback from the attendees, couples and indeed staff, was most positive.

The Post Adoption Service remains a significant part of the work of the Adoption Society. In 2002 a total of 119 such enquiries were received (137 in 2001). Most enquiries (58) were from adult adoptees. Some of the contacts involved time-limited advice and guidance while others maintained in-depth and ongoing social work involvement.

The Society is actively involved with Health and Social Services Trusts in providing adoption services. This includes assistance in the placement of older children, membership of Adoption Panels – Mr Slaine is on two and Mr George Glenn, Board Member and Chair of the Adoption Panel, is on one Statutory Adoption Panel. In addition the Society is represented on the Northern Ireland Regional Adoption Forum.

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In December 2002 the Diocesan Adoption Agencies Group reviewed opportunities for joint working and the sharing of resources. This meeting was deemed a success. The Church of Ireland Adoption Society is taking the lead in progressing this potential development – in part due to the appointment of Mr Slaine as Chairperson of the Diocesan Adoption Agencies Group in September 2002.

The Society hosted a meeting in December 2002 at the request of Family Care Society to review opportunities for improved co-operation and co-ordination between the two registered adoption agencies. The meeting proved of value and active steps are to be taken in 2003 to take the proposals forward.

THE FERTILITY COUNSELLING SERVICE

This Service developed out of the work of the Adoption Society. The focus remains on providing counselling to couples attending the Regional Fertility Centre, the Royal Maternity Hospital, Belfast.

In 2002 a total of 159 new referrals were received (156 in 2001). For some patients a one-off counselling session might be adequate; for others a number of sessions might be required.

In addition to providing direct counselling the Service is also involved in training e.g. to doctors, medical students, nurses and social workers. In October 2002 training was provided to 25 specialist adoption social workers in the Eastern Board area. It is anticipated the training will be rolled out to other Trusts and Boards in future years.

The Board has continued to provide the Fertility Counselling Service to the Regional Fertility Centre in 2002 in the absence of a formal contract. Negotiations have proved most slow and protracted. It is anticipated this matter will be resolved in early 2003.

In mid-2002 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety offered additional funding to the Board to provide the Fertility Counselling Service to non-Regional Fertility Centre patients. As a first step in this process the Board has negotiated additional office space in Cookstown as a means of improving accessibility on a regional basis.

The Board intends with the contract with the Regional Fertility Centre resolved and with Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety funding to increase the level of counselling to couples attending from throughout Northern Ireland for infertility investigations.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS IN NEED

This service is provided on a Northern Ireland wide basis with an emphasis on assisting persons referred by clergy. This direct financial assistance is primarily aimed at families with children. In addition financial support is available to the elderly, the physically disabled and people with learning difficulties.

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In the Financial Year 2001/2002 £15,893 (based on 2001/2002 Annual Accounts) was paid out in charitable disbursements. The Board would encourage clergy throughout Northern Ireland to avail of this service to benefit parishioners in need.

The charitable disbursements of the Board are largely from funds obtained from other organisations/charitable sources – BBC Children in Need Appeal, The Dean of Belfast's Christmas Sit Out, The Protestant Orphan Society (Counties Antrim and Down) the Lord Mayor of Belfast's Welfare Fund, Parishes and Dioceses.

Through the generosity of a number of Parishes throughout Northern Ireland the Board is able to run a Christmas Toy Appeal. In 2002 the most successful Appeal ever occurred, in terms of the number and quality of toys received, plus, in terms of the number of families provided with assistance. Over 250 families and 750 children received toys in December 2002.

CHURCH OF IRELAND MINISTRY TO THE DEAF

The Board provides management support and supervision to the Revd Will Murphy as he carries out his duties with the deaf. The Board encourages Parishes throughout Northern Ireland to make use of the specialist skills of Mr Murphy e.g. interpreting, advice and guidance on the needs of deaf parishioners including using loop systems.

CENTRAL BELFAST CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

The Board maintains an involvement in this Centre via its Chief Executive. Mr Slaine is on the Centre's Management Committee. In addition Mr Slaine provides professional social work supervision to the Centre Co-Ordinator.

The Central Belfast Child Contact Centre is open on a Saturday for three sessions. The number of users on a Saturday averages out at 20 children and 14 parents.

In 2002 the Board's Chief Executive made presentations in Armagh and Londonderry to encourage the opening up of similar centres.

SOCIAL CONCERN

i) Training Courses on Social Issues

In 2002 the Board produced and distributed a questionnaire to Clergy on social issues relevant to their Parish work. Based on this the Board offered two courses to each Diocese in Northern Ireland:

- On marriage issues – in conjunction with the Church of Ireland Marriage Council;
- An Introduction to Counselling.

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With regard to the Marriage Issues course, three Dioceses, Clogher, Connor and the United Dioceses of Derry and Raphoe have accepted the offer of the training course.

ii) Raising Awareness – Disability Access

In 2002 the Board carried out an Audit of Parishes on Disability Access. The Board recognised a need to prepare Parishes for the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act 1996. The Audit has provoked much debate in Parishes on meeting the needs of disabled Parishioners.

iii) Commenting on Legislation/Social Issues

In 2002 the Board has commented on:

“Developing Better Services Modernising Hospitals and Reforming Structures”
“Physical Punishment in the Home”

FUNDING

The Board provides a variety of services and is involved in a range of activities related to areas of social concern. Funding is from a multiplicity of sources. These include:

- Dioceses/Parishes;
- The Church of Ireland Priorities Fund;
- The Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety;
- The Regional Fertility Centre;
- Social Services Trusts for fee-paid work;
- Trust Funds;
- Voluntary Donations – Service Users.

The Board acknowledges the high level of financial support received from Parishes and Dioceses in Northern Ireland and in particular from the Church of Ireland Priorities Fund. At central government level the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety remains a significant core funder and the ongoing support of the Department is much appreciated.

The Board requires security of funding in order to allow for maintenance of existing services and to allow for service developments. Funding from church sources is deemed important as a means of showing our core statutory funders that the church has an active role to play in social work/concern. Increased church funding is also a way of ensuring that the Board's wider social responsibility role – through training and social awareness raising – is developed, as these cannot be funded through government grants.

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STATISTICAL INFORMATION

THE CHURCH OF IRELAND ADOPTION SOCIETY

Unplanned Pregnancy Enquires	4
Adoption Enquiries:	83
This included:	
Family Adoption Enquiries	4
Enquiries on Adopting from Abroad	8
Enquires from people resident outside Northern Ireland	14
Enquiries cross-referenced to the Fertility Counselling Service	25
Post Adoption Enquiries:	119
The enquiries came in a variety of Categories:	
Adoptees	58
Birth Parent	9
Relative/Spouse of Adoptee	17
Adoptive Parent	4
Social Work Agency	31
Adoption Orders Granted:	3
Children in Foster Care – placement provided with Social work support:	2
Fertility Counselling Service:	
Referrals Received:	117
Financial Assistance to Families and Individuals in Need:	
Family Cases:	£11,498
Non-Family Cases:	£4,395

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**FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2002
(BEING AN EXTRACT FROM THE LATEST AUDITED ACCOUNTS)**

Revenue Statement	2002		2001	
	£	%	£	%
INCOME				
Donations & Subscriptions				
Dioceses				
Armagh	2,690		1,240	
Clogher	1,200		780	
Connor	4,574		5,108	
Derry and Raphoe	2,350		1,608	
Down and Dromore	5,473		3,456	
	16,287		12,192	
Church of Ireland Priorities Fund	17,000		15,000	
Dean of Belfast's Christmas Sit Out (for Fertility Counselling Work)	1,000		3,000	
Enkalon Foundation	500		800	
Anonymous	359		1,050	
Lloyd's TSB Charitable Trust (for publicity campaign)	-		1,500	
	35,146	24.4%	33,542	25.4%
For Services Provided				
Royal Maternity Hospital – Fertility Counselling	21,520		21,159	
Adoption Service Delivery	17,738		6,414	
Church of Ireland Mission to the Deaf	9,374		-	
Income from Courses for clergy	40		5,457	
	48,672	33.7%	33,030	25%
	83,818		66,672	
From Investments and Funds on Deposit	9,717	6.7%	9,430	7.1%
Grants From				
Department of Health, Social Services And Public Safety:				
Core	33,477		33,150	
Specific	8,439		6,421	
	41,916	29.1%	39,571	29.9%

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INCOME CONTINUED

	2002		2001	
	£	%	£	%
For Charitable Disbursement				
Protestant Orphan Society for The Counties of Antrim and Down	4,000		3,000	
Lord Mayor of Belfast's Welfare Fund	2,800		2,250	
Dean of Belfast's Christmas Sit Out (for persons in need)	2,000		5,000	
BBC Children in Need	-		6,500	
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	8,800	6.1%	16,750	12.6%
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Total Income	£144,251	100%	£132,323	100%
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	2002		2001	
	£	%	£	%
EXPENDITURE				
General				
Staff Costs	87,084	60.4%	67,377	50.9%
Other Operating Charges	37,905	26.3%	26,699	20.2%
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	124,989	86.7%	94,076	71.1%
Charitable Disbursements	15,893	11.0%	20,627	15.6%
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Total Expenditure	£140,882	97.7%	£114,703	86.7%
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SURPLUS for year ended 31 March 2002	£3,369	2.3%	£17,620	13.3%

Copies of the statutory accounts along with supporting schedules are available on request at the Board's office.