



2006/07  
Annual Report

gingerbreadni  
supporting one parent families

# Mission Statement

Gingerbread is Northern Ireland's only lone parent-led organisation working to secure and protect equality and social inclusion for one parent families

## Values and Principles

Gingerbread is an independent, not-for-profit membership organisation

Gingerbread is an organisation promoting individual and collective empowerment

Gingerbread operates on a Northern Ireland wide basis to represent and be accessible to all lone parents

Gingerbread respects and reflects the diversity of one parent families and recognises the need for their equality of treatment

## Aims

To represent one parent families in Northern Ireland and enhance understanding of their needs and aspirations

To ensure the development and delivery of appropriate and effective responses to the needs of one parent families

To create opportunities to proactively influence and interact with policy makers, service deliverers, decision makers and the public

To create a culture of investment in staff and volunteers in recognition of their commitment and dedication to Gingerbread

To ensure the development and evolution of Gingerbread is responsive to the needs of one parent families and to the influences of the external environment

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# Chairperson & Director's Introduction

Welcome to Gingerbread's 29th Annual Report. As Gingerbread approaches its thirtieth birthday it's a good time to take stock of just how much life has changed for lone parents and indeed for Gingerbread. From early beginnings Gingerbread has grown and developed in line with lone parents changing needs and everyone in the organisation continues to strive to effect positive change for all lone parent families even in an increasingly constricted funding climate. We would like to thank all of our staff and volunteers for their hard work and determination throughout the year and indeed the many organisations and funding bodies who have continued to support Gingerbread's vital services.

The Advice service is, as always, inundated with calls and the advice staff have done an amazing job getting through an astounding amount of enquiries. However, we would like to thank our members and our many lone parent callers for your patience while we have been sourcing funding to increase capacity.

Unfortunately we have had to close our crèche in Ballymena. As an organisation we worked hard to secure the necessary funds to make it viable. Unfortunately this funding was not available and after careful consideration we decided to close the creche. Our creches in Derry and Belfast continue to operate and the Belfast crèche has had a bit of a facelift after vital work had to be done due to flood damage earlier in the year - we hope all our members homes had a drier time of it!

Training continues apace, with the Choices programme full to capacity and a waiting list to boot and the CTP class has attracted so much interest that an extra class has had to be set up. 'Possibilities' is running again in a slightly different form as the Work Preparation Programme for Lone Parents, a programme which the Department for Employment and Learning are currently piloting in four areas throughout Northern Ireland. Gingerbread was successful in securing contracts from DEL to run two of the pilots for those lone parents living in the Shaftsbury and Knockbreda Jobs and Benefits areas. Information Technology training is continuing with the support of New Deal for Lone Parents and the Marks and Starts programme is still popular with lone parents who are interested in a career in the retail industry.

Our membership and communications team are keeping the website updated with news, will be sending out a bumper Christmas edition of the newsletter and are encouraging as many members as possible to send us e-mail details so that information can be circulated as quickly as possible and in an environmentally friendly way. The team welcomes contributions from members.

We want to acknowledge our administrative and finance team for the sterling work they do in maintaining the extremely high standards of accountability required in dealing with the financial systems within Gingerbread. They manage a great deal of complicated information and records and are audited throughout the year making sure that our finances are totally transparent. We would also like to thank our auditors McKeague and Morgan.

Partnership continues to be a key word in Gingerbread's work and we have maintained our partnerships here in Ireland, North and South, in Britain and in Europe. The networks, partnerships and advisory groups we are involved in enable us to bring Gingerbread's expertise on lone parent issues to other organisations and Government bodies so that together we can affect positive change for lone parents and their children.

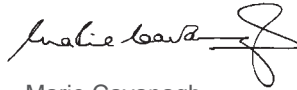
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And speaking of changes, you will notice in the list of Board Members that I, Clare Broome, have had to step down from the role of Chairperson after many happy and I hope successful years in the post. It was a hard decision, but as I was leaving to take up a new role as a trainer that made it easier - especially as the post is with Gingerbread. I would like to thank all of the Board and the Senior Management Team for the work they have done and continue to do; it was a real pleasure working with everyone.

As we have already mentioned, this year will be Gingerbread's thirtieth and we hope to be able to celebrate all the successes and challenges of the past thirty years and look forward to the coming years and all that they have to bring. The following pages highlight the extensive nature of the work undertaken this year and we hope you find it informative. We commend the report to you.



Clare Broome  
Chairperson



Marie Cavanagh  
Director



# Poverty and Well-being

## Work as a route out of poverty

Although lone parent employment has gone up by 10% in the past 10 years (One Parent Families), due to a number of factors including tax credits, specialist support programmes such as New Deal for Lone Parents and the increase in employment rates in general, lone parents still face:

- the worst financial incentives to work of any group (IFS)
- higher drop out rates than other mothers in employment
- higher childcare costs than in most other European Union countries
- a lack of flexible work hours

It is clear that increased lone parent employment is likely to remain a policy priority for government for the foreseeable future but Gingerbread firmly believes that putting more pressure on lone parents does not work. Instead we need more outreach to those who need the most support and more focus on helping lone parents to get good jobs – not just any job – and ensuring that they get the training and access to affordable and accessible childcare to help them to do this.

There also needs to be more help available once lone parents have moved into work to help them to stay there, more availability and help with paying for childcare and more widely available flexible working arrangements. Work alone, however, is not enough:

- 23% of children living with a working lone parent are poor due to low wages
- lone parents are less likely to have academic qualifications than mothers in couple families and to find well-paid jobs - lone parents need good jobs that are sustainable not just any job
- only half of families where there is a non-resident parent have an order/agreement to pay maintenance – lone parents on benefits should be able to keep all of the money they receive in maintenance, bringing the system in line with tax credits
- the Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates that government needs to invest £3.8 billion on benefits and tax credits to meet their 2010 target to halve child poverty
- investing in children in separated families means recognising their needs and joining up services to help parents and children deal with post-separation family life (Source: One Parent Families)

## Child Poverty

The Department of Social Development's Households Below Average Income 2005-06 report states that more than half of children in Northern Ireland are living in families with a low income. In fact the proportion of children living in poor homes has risen from 51% to 56% in the last 2 years, despite government plans to eradicate child poverty. The local figure of 56% compares poorly with the child poverty figure of 49% in Britain. The Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive must now take urgent action if it is to stop vulnerable families from falling further behind. The anti-poverty strategy 'Lifetime Opportunities' which was launched by Secretary of State, Peter Hain MP, in November last year, must be implemented if the target to end child poverty is to be seriously addressed.



## Advice

### Challenging Times, Diverse Needs

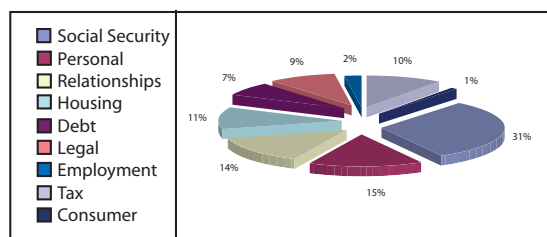
The last year has been challenging for Gingerbread's Advice Service. The delay in the launch of the DSD Advice and Information Strategy has caused continued uncertainty for advice services. The strategy is intended to outline future funding of advice services and help provide more advice services for those in need but its absence has exacerbated the general lack of funding making it increasingly difficult to meet the high demand for services. Gingerbread has had to work hard to get the resources needed to meet the demand for Advice – we have been building relationships with potential funders and continue to work to extend our advice provision and ensure lone parents in need get a fair share of available resources.

### Acting on the issues that lone parents face

As well as delivering advice to lone parents, Gingerbread has been speaking up for lone parents to ensure that one parent families are heard by policy makers and treated fairly in changes that will affect them.

The type of issues that we deal with continues to change – more lone parents are enquiring about going back to work or to study and how this will affect their family. An increasing number of lone parents are seeking advice on relationship issues. These issues can be protracted, requiring ongoing support and advice particularly where there are difficult disputes over children, property and divorce procedures. The level of benefit enquiries has declined and enquiries on relationship issues, legal issues, tax credits and child support have continued to rise.

### Breakdown of enquiries



**NIE** – Gingerbread has worked successfully with NIE over the last year to provide benefit checks to lone parents to increase income and to tackle fuel poverty. Research shows that lone parents are more likely to suffer from fuel poverty and this project aimed to alleviate some of that by checking for new income, promoting grants for energy efficiency, advising on energy efficiency measures and distributing energy efficient light bulbs.

### CHAP (Community Housing Advice Project)

Gingerbread has been participating in this project to provide additional training to Advice staff and enhance and develop our skills in the advice of housing issues such as housing debt and court action around repossession. We have collaborated with Housing Rights Service staff on a number of cases.

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**Child Trust Fund** – we have worked with Revenue and Customs over the last year to promote the Child Trust Fund – the government sponsored savings scheme for children. We have been providing advice to lone parents on a range of issues including the basics of the Child Trust Fund and the types of accounts that are available, as well as providing practical assistance to help parents open accounts.



### 10,000 enquiries dealt with and £ 710,671 in new income for Lone Parents

The advice service dealt with 10,000 enquiries and generated £710,671 of new income for lone parents and their children over the last year. This extra income for lone parents was generated by identifying unclaimed and under claimed benefits, tax credits, representing clients at appeal hearings, identifying grants and bursaries and helping clients move into work. This figure demonstrates one of the practical changes that the Advice Service can bring about for those who use it.

# Training & Employment

## Gingerbread's Training Provision

Training continues to be extremely popular with lone parents who are both returning to work and in employment. This year we have continued to offer access to a wide range of free, high quality accredited training. We have also offered support with childcare, travel costs and course fees. This has allowed 250 lone parents to achieve over 500 accredited qualifications with many of them moving on to further training and employment.

## Choices

This, our longest running project, is a bursary support programme which is available to lone parents throughout Northern Ireland. Participants choose a course and receive help towards course fees, travel, childcare, and meals. Participants also undertake a work experience placement which mirrors their area of interest.

## Certificate in Training Practice (CTP)

Gingerbread continues to offer lone parents a unique opportunity to gain a recognised training qualification and membership of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (C.I.P.D.). Delivered by Gingerbread and accredited through the C.I.P.D. this course is available free of charge and help is available towards childcare and travel.

new deal 



## Computer Training

We have continued to provide training from our centres in Belfast, Derry and Ballymena through the New Deal for Lone Parents Initiative supported by the Department of Employment and Learning. Lone parents taking part are offered a variety of courses including New Clait, Clait Plus, European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and Text Processing. Participants can also benefit from on site crèche provision.



## Mainstreaming - Work Preparation Programme for Lone Parents

During 2006 the 'Possibilities' Development Partnership, which comprises Gingerbread, Department of Employment and Learning, University of Ulster and GEMS NI designed and piloted the 'Possibilities' training programme which combined personal development coaching, benefits advice, return to work training, work experience placement and one to one support. This proved to be a highly effective model and key elements of 'Possibilities' have now been incorporated into the government's new Work Preparation Programme for Lone Parents (WPPLP) introduced by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) as part of the 'Pathways for Lone Parents' initiative aimed at helping lone parents who want to return to work.

Throughout the year Gingerbread also won the contract to deliver WPPLP in two of the Belfast Jobs and Benefits pilot areas, Shaftesbury Square and Knockbreda. Furthermore, two members of staff from Gingerbread have been seconded to the Department of Employment and Learning for one year to work as Local Development Officers to assist with the development of the new 'Pathways' initiative for lone parents. Using their experience of training and working with lone parents they hope to positively influence the delivery of 'Pathways' and ensure the overall success of the programme.



# Children & Childcare

## Childcare services

Over the past year Gingerbread has provided over 3,000 developmental play/care sessions for children in areas of high social and economic need, and activities adapted to children with special needs. These activities have taken place within our facilities at our Centre in Belfast, and in the Northern Area and Western Area Lone Parent Centre's.



The crèche facilities offered by Gingerbread are designed to address the needs of lone parents and their children at local level. The play/care sessions are provided in a safe and secure environment for children in a cross community, multi-cultural environment by fully qualified staff.

Each of the play/care locations offers a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment to the children in our care. We believe that play is an important part of a child's development enabling them to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually, physically and aesthetically. To promote this development we offer activities such as painting, water play, imaginative play, sand play, cutting and sticking, physical activities, play dough and stories and rhymes. Staff work closely with parents, monitoring child development and encouraging play activities designed to increase children's ability to communicate effectively with other children and adults. Play/care staff provide vital support for parents giving them the opportunity to discuss their child's development in relation to feeding, potty training, child illness, discipline and behavior issues. These are essential services in light of the government's recent initiative around the development of a Family and Parenting Strategy.

Gingerbread's investment in childcare enables lone parents to undertake training, which provides them with the skills necessary to promote long-term sustainable employment allowing them to become economically independent and promoting their social inclusion. It also allows parents to avail of some respite from the pressures of parenting alone enabling them to get a break from their sole caring responsibilities, confident that their children are being cared for by professional, qualified staff.

## Early Years Strategy

Gingerbread has been involved with an alliance of groups working with and for children and their families, to urge the Education Minister, Caitríona Ruane MLA, to champion the care and education of our youngest children within the new Assembly in Northern Ireland.

The Early Years Strategic Alliance, which represents organisations from across the child care and women's sectors, including Gingerbread met recently with Caitríona Ruane at Lower Ormeau Sure Start to encourage her colleagues in government to give priority to the development of a new Early Years Strategy. In particular it urged politicians to ensure that money would be available to enable the strategy to be fully and effectively implemented.



The Early Years Strategic Alliance has developed a manifesto outlining key areas for the Minister to focus on when developing the new Early Years Strategy. These include providing equal access to early years, childcare and family support services to all children; involving and engaging children in public decision making; mainstreaming early intervention and prevention initiatives in early years services; allowing access to quality, affordable childcare to meet demand across Northern Ireland; provide a transformation fund for the childcare workforce in Northern Ireland; and promote and safeguard children's right to play.

# Partnerships - Local & Transnational

## 'Possibilities' Development Partnership

Funding from the European Union's EQUAL initiative enabled Gingerbread to form a Development Partnership bringing together the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL), the University of Ulster and Gems NI to address the equality of opportunity issues surrounding lone parents and employment in Northern Ireland.



The challenge for the partnership was to work together to develop an innovative solution to overcome the obstacles faced by lone parents entering the labour market which could subsequently be mainstreamed by Government.

The Development Partnership has two main objectives: to carry out research relating to lone parents and employment and to develop a pre-employment training model specific to the needs of lone parents.

During 2006 the Development Partnership designed, piloted and evaluated 'Possibilities', a highly successful programme for lone parents which combines personal development coaching, skills training, childcare, careers guidance, speakers, input from DEL staff on training and employment opportunities, health promotion, social welfare advice and work placement opportunities with local employers. Elements of this training model were incorporated into the Work Preparation Programme for Lone Parents (WPPLP) introduced by DEL as part of the 'Pathways for Lone Parents' - a new government initiative aimed at helping lone parents who want to return to work.

'Possibilities' incorporates a research exercise being completed by the University of Ulster which has generated a number of occasional papers dealing with issues impacting on lone parent access to equal opportunities. These papers present the views and experiences of lone parents in relation to childcare, poverty, health and training and employment in Northern Ireland. The findings have been well received and earlier this year were fed directly into Office of the First and Deputy First Ministers, Promoting Social Inclusion Working Group, which is commissioned to investigate issues surrounding lone parent poverty and social exclusion.

## Marks and Starts

Gingerbread has continued to work with One Parent Families|Gingerbread and Marks and Spencer to deliver 'Marks and Start: Lone Parents Returning to Work' which is the Flagship Corporate Social Responsibility Programme for Marks and Spencer.

This is a highly innovative project that pools the resources of Gingerbread and Marks and Spencer to provide a much-needed opportunity for lone parents to gain the skills and confidence that they need in order to return to work. It aims to ease the transition into work by combining three days employability training with two weeks work experience within a Marks & Spencer store.

In September 2006 Gingerbread successfully nominated Marks & Spencer for the NICVA Link award for Innovation. The NICVA Link Awards are known as the Charity Oscars and are an opportunity to celebrate partnerships between the charity and businesses.

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Given the continuing success of the partnership, we are confident that there will be ongoing support for the project from both Gingerbread and Marks and Spencer for as long as the 'Marks and Starts' programme continues.

## Representing Parents

In 2006, The Minister for Children and Young People, Maria Eagle, launched the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister's Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People. This is designed to improve the lives of all children and young people living in Northern Ireland.

One of the monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategy is a Parents' Advisory Group, which provides feedback on plans and actions that government departments intend to undertake.

Gingerbread's representative on this group and the Parenting Forum's Strategic Advisory Group is Anne Sweeney (Assistant Director) who provides feedback on strategic matters such as the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's Family and Parenting Strategy and priorities for the work of the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People.



## 'Empower'

Central to the work of the 'Possibilities' Development Partnership is its link with partnerships in other countries. The 'Possibilities' Development Partnership formed a European wide partnership called 'Empower' which is made up of organisations from Spain, Italy, Malta and Lithuania all of whom are working to create equality of opportunity for different disadvantaged groups in each of their own countries.

Between March 2006 and June 2007 the 'Empower' partners met to learn from each other, exchange information and expertise, carry out research interviews with lone parents and develop information and training products to be used by all the partners as a resource both locally and at trans-national level.

From the outset there was a high level of commitment from each of the partners who worked closely with us to develop a high quality website [www.empowereurope.com](http://www.empowereurope.com) which is available in each of the five languages. A resource pack (which is also available in five languages) for use by professionals working to promote gender equality awareness has also been developed and it can be downloaded free of charge from the website.

The 'Empower' partners have agreed to extend their work beyond the life of Equal and to invite other countries to join the network. This represents an important outcome for the work of the partnership and an opportunity to continue to influence policy relating to OPF's and other groups throughout Europe. This initiative has attracted a Grundvig Award for Gingerbread.

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## Western Area Regional Centre



The Western Area Lone Parent Centre has seen another year of growth and development with over 550 lone parents visiting the centre and 1,836 making telephone contact this year. Unfortunately, the year has been overshadowed by ongoing funding uncertainty surrounding the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy funding locally, although this has not detracted from the efforts of staff and volunteers who have continued to provide a high quality service for one parent families using the Centre.

In fact, a recently completed external evaluation reveals our work to be highly successful, well regarded and cost effective and notes that the Centre has given full return for the investment made under the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy to date and that we have met or, in many instances, surpassed our agreed targets.

# Raising Awareness & Achieving Equality

## Membership

Throughout the past year there has been a continued effort to increase awareness of Gingerbread and our services amongs, lone-parents, key stakeholders and other organisations. 2007 brings Gingerbread's total membership to 1,197 members. The continued growth and success of Gingerbread's membership reflects the organisation's commitment to providing support, to lone parents throughout Northern Ireland.

## Networking

A range of voluntary, community, public and private organisations have contacted Gingerbread asking for information about the organisation and to request presentations. Over 30 workshops and information days have been undertaken by Gingerbread highlighting the work we do and the issues that are relevant to lone parents. This is a vital link to the broader voluntary, community and statutory sector, raising awareness of Gingerbread and encouraging referrals.

Over the past year, Gingerbread received over 450 enquiries for information on the services provided to lone parents. These enquires came from lone parents, students, teachers, health professionals and others such as voluntary organisations, social security offices, health visitors, social workers and other care professions.

## [www.gingerbreadni.org](http://www.gingerbreadni.org)

Gingerbread's website has grown and developed significantly in the past year, acting as an important point of contact for lone parents and organisations and individuals working with lone parents. It contains full details of the diverse range of services offered by Gingerbread to lone parents across Northern Ireland and it helps to keep readers up-to-date and well informed of developments affecting lone parents and Gingerbread's response.

## Gingerbread Times

'Gingerbread Times' continues to be a great success. Feedback has been extremely positive with one member commenting recently "I look forward to getting each Newsletter and always manage to find really useful hints in each one – keep them coming!"

'Gingerbread Times' keeps members up-to-date with what is happening at Gingerbread and also provides an opportunity for Associate members to submit articles highlighting their activities of interest to one parent families.

## Media

2007 has seen a number of topical issues relating to lone parents covered in the media. Throughout the year, spokespersons from Gingerbread, both lone parent members and staff, have participated in interviews for both broadcast and print media including BBC Newsline, Good Morning Ulster, Sunday Sequence, Belfast News and the Belfast Telegraph.

Gingerbread welcomes such opportunities as it enables us to raise awareness of our work as well as offering an opportunity to comment on and promote positive policies for lone parents and their children

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## Raising Awareness & Achieving Equality

### **Influencing Policy**

Over the last year Gingerbread has used its direct experience of lone parent's lives to speak up for one parent families – we have challenged decisions by statutory agencies that we felt were detrimental to lone parents and have represented lone parents in the media.

The Welfare Reform agenda which includes Tax Credits, Child Support, Disability and Carers Benefits has continued to have a disproportionate effect on lone parents:

Child Support - Reforms to the Child Support system promise much for lone parents but it is the efficient processing and delivery of maintenance to lone parents that will make a difference to families. Gingerbread has campaigned extensively on this issue and will continue to work for the effective change. We have worked closely with staff from the Child Support Agency's Outreach Service to bring resolution to maintenance cases and to ensure that lone parents get the best possible service from the Agency. We will continue to support Agency initiatives that help one parent families.

Tax Credits – payments of Tax Credits make a difference to one parent families and have helped make work pay for lone parents. Gingerbread has been providing detailed information on Tax Credits to lone parents as well as providing 'better off' calculations showing detailed breakdowns of income in work compared to staying on benefits. Many lone parents have come to Gingerbread with difficulties around overpayments of Tax Credits as well difficulty in coping with the general complexity of the Tax Credits system – these issues can act as a disincentive to work for some lone parents and many require intensive advice and support to deal with these issues.

Housing – Gingerbread deals with many lone parents in housing need. The most common problem is accessing suitable housing, which applies across all housing sectors. The lack of investment in public housing continues to mean that several years on a waiting list is common. High rents in the private rented sector means that this has become a new poverty trap for many. Rising prices have made it difficult for many lone parents to buy a house. During the year we provided evidence on these problems to the government Review on Housing Affordability which is intended to shape future housing policy.

### **Influencing OFMDFM Anti-poverty Strategy**

Gingerbread and the University of Ulster have been involved in the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister's Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI) Working Group which is commissioned to investigate issues surrounding lone parent poverty and social exclusion. The PSI is made up of representatives from the Department for Employment and Learning, the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety, the Department of Education, Gingerbread and other agencies working with one parent families. The findings from the 'Possibilities' research carried out by UU has fed directly into the PSI working group. Gingerbread and UU also assisted in the organisation and facilitation of focus groups of lone parents to input to the PSI working group. We were also actively involved in the Conference on Lone Parents and Social Inclusion held in March 2007 when we facilitated workshops to enable a broad range of both statutory and voluntary agencies and government departments to consult on issues impacting on one parent families. A series of recommendations are currently being produced and will be forwarded for ministerial consideration.

## 'Possibilities' Achieving Equality



One of the key aims of the 'Possibilities' Development Partnership is to use the skills and expertise of all the partners to develop best practice and research that can be used to positively influence government's policies in relation to lone parents. Over the past year the Development Partnership has been successful in bringing about the following positive changes for lone parents considering going back to work.

The Development Partnership's research findings identified a need for lone parents

- to access qualifications at NVQ level 3; and
- benefit from work experience placements

the government's New Deal for Lone Parent (NDLP) initiative has been enhanced to provide access to both.

The 'Possibilities' training pilot

- highlighted the need for lone parents to have more information about return to work options; and
- led to the Development Partnership developing a signposting leaflet which will form part of the NDLP Work Focused interviews with Personal Advisers (WFIPA).

This was mainstreamed on a pilot basis in April 07.



## Careers Advice and Guidance

Gingerbread's Careers, Education & Guidance Service @ Gingerbread NI has been developed to enable lone parents to make informed choices about their future career and to provide support to help them achieve their goals. We offer an impartial, high quality, professional & confidential service which is available throughout Northern Ireland. Throughout the year Gingerbread has assisted over 390 lone parents to:-

- explore career options
- identify appropriate courses
- find a job that is right
- complete application forms
- improve job interview skills
- identify sources of financial support while studying
- plan ongoing career development
- achieve their goals

## 'Not Alone' Project

The launch of 'Not Alone' last year supported by Derry City enabled Gingerbread to highlight the needs of some of the most vulnerable lone parents in the City and to develop partnerships with a range of local agencies supporting them: Surestart, Disability Action, Family Information Group, Sai Pak Chinese Welfare Association and the Men's Project run by the Parents Advice Service.

This years activities have continued to highlight the challenges and barriers that are faced by lone parents caring for a disabled child, those who are themselves disabled, lone fathers, young lone parents, as well as those from an ethnic background. Our work in this area has enabled us to develop closer working relationships with other city-wide organisations working with vulnerable groups.

The research found that lone parents were often distressed and frustrated by what they viewed as a lack of acknowledgement of their specific circumstances, compounded for many by severe financial hardship. The report is available from Gingerbread's website [www.gingerbreadni.org](http://www.gingerbreadni.org)

## Multi-lingual Information

Gingerbread chose Intercultural and Anti-Racism Week (19 – 25 March 2007) to launch new information materials in five European languages. This project was supported by the Northern Health and Social Services Board. The leaflets and posters, aimed at vulnerable lone parents from minority ethnic backgrounds, are available in Russian, Romanian, Slovakian, Polish and Portuguese.

Gingerbread took this step because we had become aware of the growing numbers of lone parents from other European countries who are settling in the area and do not have English as their first language. We recognise that some may still be learning English so we have decided to make our materials available in the most common languages to ensure that they have access to support.



Michael Wood, Chair of the Northern Health and Social Services Board, welcomed the development. He said, 'The Board is very pleased to be able to support the production of these new materials which will enable Gingerbread to make its services more accessible to lone parents from overseas who come to live in the area.'

## NICVA Scope Award

The multi-lingual leaflets and posters won a NICVA Scope Award 2007. for the production of material in a 'format for people with special needs'.

# Treasurer's Report

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The work that Gingerbread has carried out throughout this year would not be possible without the support of our funders from both the statutory and voluntary sector. We would like to thank them for their continued support.

## **Statutory Funders**

Department of Education – Childhood fund; Department of Employment and Learning – European Unit – Building Sustainable Prosperity and EQUAL; Department of Employment and Learning – New Deal for Lone Parents; Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety – Family Policy Unit; Department of Social Development – Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy; Northern Health & Social Services Board; Office of the First and Deputy First Minister; Western Health & Social Services Board

## **Charitable Trusts and Others**

Adviceni; Blackie Community Centre; Her Majesties Revenue and Customs; Lloyds TSB; Marks & Spencer; NICVA CFC Vouchers; Northern Ireland Electricity

## **Corporate Sponsors**

Adrian Interiors; All Fired up Ceramics; An Creggan Restaurant, Omagh; Armagh Planetarium; Beauty and Beyond, Lurgan; Brambles Coffee Shop, Bangor; Brookhall Historical Farm, Brunswick Sportsbowl, Derry; Charm Inn, Carrickmore; Cineplex, Antrim; Clarins; Cocos Indoor Adventure Playground, Newcastle; Co-op Group; Euro camp; Foyle Cruiseline; Framar Health; Fruit of the Loom; Fusco's Café; Hilton Hotel; Hostelling International NI; Indulge Holistic Health & Beauty; Iveagh Movie Studios, Banbridge; Kelly's Inn, Ballygawley; Lough Neagh Discovery Centre; Moscow State Circus; Movie House Cinema; National Museums – Ulster American Folk Park, Omagh; The National Trust; No Alibis Bookstore; Roast Coffee Co; The Sandwich Co, Derry; Sangers; Sportsbowl, Ballymena; Spires Restaurant; Sportsbowl Ltd; The Strand Cinema; Swallows & Amazons; Upper Room Beauty & Image Studio, Bangor; Video City; Vi Sport Ltd; W5; Waterfront Hall; and Waterworld, Portrush

## **Donations**

We would like to thank the donating public who contributed to the fundraising events we undertook throughout the year, those who made anonymous donations and those who contributed through Give as You Earn and covenant donations. We also take this opportunity to thank the many individuals and groups who have supported and encouraged us throughout the year and are too numerous to mention.

We have maintained a high standard of financial accountability and we would commend our auditors McKeague Morgan Chartered Accountants for their handling of the annual audit.

The statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2007 is included in this report.

**Karen Sweeney**

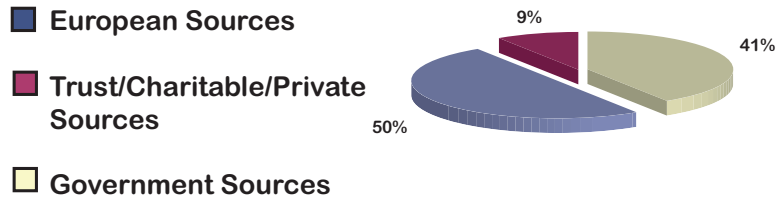
**Treasurer**

# Breakdown of Income and Expenditure

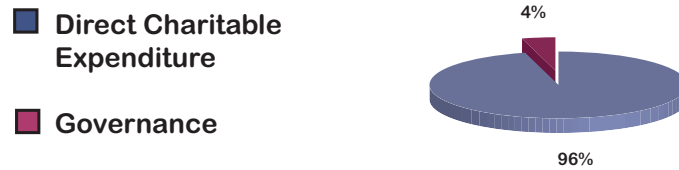
Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2007

	<b>Total Funds 2007 £</b>
<b>Income &amp; Expenditure</b>	
<b>Incoming Resources</b>	
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	126,544
BSP (DEL) – ESF	206,192
EQUAL (DEL)	191,912
Steps to Work (DEL)	100,159
Neighbourhood Regeneration Strategy (DSD)	58,378
Advice Service	48,809
Northern Health and Social Services Board	17,955
Marks & Starts	10,376
DHSSPS – Childhood Fund	9,882
Lloyds TSB	7,000
Voluntary Income	5,210
WHSSB	5,000
NCLB	3,000
OFMDFM	1,960
DEL – Secondment	1,189
BLSP	(402)
CFNI	(229)
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>792,935</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>	
Direct Charitable Expenditure	813,462
Governance	36,508
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>849,970</b>
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit) for year end 31 March 2007</b>	<b>(57,035)</b>

### Breakdown of Income by Source 2006 - 2007



### Breakdown of Income by Source 2006 - 2007



# List of Board Members

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## Board Members 2006/07

Chairperson	Clare Broome (Belfast) (resigned June 2007)
Deputy Chairperson	Colette Loughran (Co-optee) (Chair – Jun - Oct 2007)
Honourary Treasurer	Karen Sweeney (Co-optee)
Deputy Honourary Treasurer	Martina McCausland (Bangor)
Committee Member	Mary Boyce (Derry)
Committee Member	Áine McCabe (Belfast)
Committee Member	Victoria Lusty (Ballymena)
Committee Member	Betty McCarthy (Belfast)
Committee Member	Anne Downs (Belfast)
Committee Member	Juno Clarke (Belfast)
Committee Member	Anne McCartney (Belfast)
Committee Member	Seán Hayes (Belfast)
Committee Member	Jennifer McQuillan (Belfast)
Committee Member	Michelle Byrom (Derry)

# List of Staff, Volunteers and Placement Students

## Staff List 2006/07

### Senior Management Team

Director	Marie Cavanagh
Assistant Director	Anne Sweeney
Assistant Director	Rachel McAree

### Advice Section

Advice Manager	Seán O'Neill
Advice/Information Co-ordinator	Eileen Curran
Advice Volunteer	Michelle Byrom

### Training Section

Training Manager	Karen McCann
Assistant Training Manager	Shellie Quinn
Choices Project Officer	Avril McLoughlin
Possibilities Administrator	Catherine White
CTP Co-ordinator	Pat Kernaghan
IT Project Officers	Reggie Temple/Clare Seeley
Pathways Tutor	Clare Broome

### Regional Development Section

Western Regional Manager	Maria Fox
Northern Board Regional Co-ordinator	Gladys Wilson

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### **Finance Section**

Finance Manager	Stephen Coogan
Assistant Finance Manager	Kenny Clarke
Finance Officer	Anita Robinson

### **Central Resources Section**

Administrative Officer	Paula McCullough
Membership Co-ordinator	Maria Curry

### **Childcare Section**

Playgroup Leader	Mary Burke
Playgroup Assistant	Mary Doherty
Playgroup Assistant	Caroline Breen
Playgroup Assistant	Clare Thomas
Playgroup Placements	Amanda Lavery
	Debora Horner
	Clare Rice

Secondment	Janice Montgomery
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The following staff, volunteers and placement students have left Gingerbread during the past year.

### **Staff**

Gloria Carson, Lesley Hanley, Maeve Kelly, James Maguire, Rhona McCarrison, Donna McKeown, Nikki Smith

### **Volunteers**

Mary Boyce, Denise Callaghan, Cara Cash, Juno Clarke, Martina Croddy, Maria Doherty, Fiona McConville, Michelle McLaughlin, Suzanne O'Shea, Louise Pedlow, Karen Power, Stephanie Rushe

### **Trainee Placements**

Clare McBride, Deborah Mooney

**gingerbreadni**  
supporting one parent families

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f | 028 9024 0740  
e | [enquiries@gingerbreadni.org](mailto:enquiries@gingerbreadni.org)  
w | [gingerbreadni.org](http://gingerbreadni.org)

Charity No. XN/46248  
Company No. NI24947