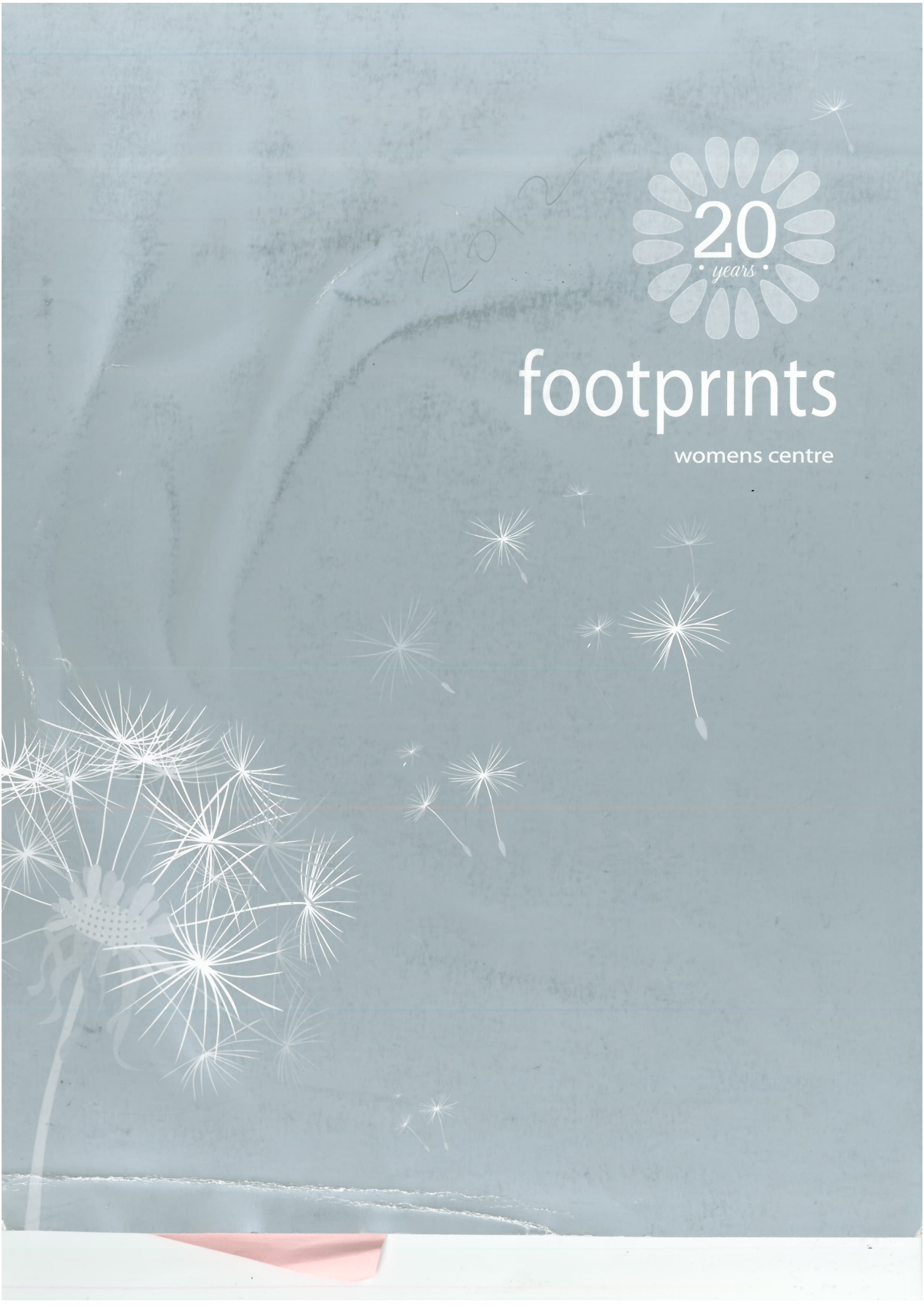

20
years
footprints
womens centre

# Mission Statement

To enable women and children to grow to ensure their voices are heard and that they take their rightful place in a just and equal society.

# *Acknowledgement to*

# AWARDS FOR ALL BIG LOTTERY FUND

LOTTERY FUNDED

This has been a wonderful year of celebration of our 20th anniversary which was enabled by the Big Lottery 'Awards for All' generous grant.

During the year many existing events have taken place including

- Corrymeela Family Holiday
- Members night
- Mural
- 20 year Celebration gala evening at the Balmoral Hotel

This year's Annual Report serves also as a souvenir of 20 years work.

Mary McNeill
Chairwoman 2011 and founder member 1991

# Chairperson's Foreward

## This 2012 AGM brings us to the conclusion of our 20th year celebrations. It has been a year to remember.

During the summer, last year, a group of mothers and their children were invited to an overnight break in Corrymeela. The women and children benefitted so much, that we are planning a 2 night break for another group of mums and kids in the coming year. In November 2011, our members were invited to a 20th anniversary celebration evening. Another great occasion, enjoyed by all who attended.

At the beginning of this year, we commissioned local artist, Danny Devenney, to paint a mural on the outside wall of the building depicting various images of women and children over the last 20 years at Footprints. The women took part in the design of the mural which now takes pride of place and provides a colourful welcome to all visitors and members. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the artist and his team.

The highlight of the celebrations occurred this year, when Footprints invited members and friends, old and new, to a gala evening in the Balmoral Hotel. The evening started with a champagne fountain reception, kindly donated by

the management of the hotel. This was followed by a wonderful meal and a beautiful cake, baked especially for the occasion.

During the evening the backdrop was a slideshow of pictures taken of many women who have come and gone over the years. It was a great talking point as many of the women saw themselves going back over 20 years and remembered where they were and what they had achieved. There were also many occasions to laugh at happy memories.

Our senior citizens who hold an important place in the life of Footprints were led by their oldest member, Maggie Hale who had the honour of cutting the celebration cake. A nice touch, also, was the centre pieces for each table, full of colour and imagination, designed and created by our young girls group. The atmosphere from beginning to end created an evening to remember. Re-uniting women who have been actively involved in the development of Footprints throughout the years, made all the hard work that went into arranging the night worthwhile.

Footprints has always developed their work according to needs of their members and children. When we opened the centre in 1991 our purpose was to provide a drop-in centre for women and children living in Poleglass and Twinbrook. Lagmore was just starting to be built so our target area was a lot smaller. We are now in the Colin Neighbourhood area which encompasses Poleglass, Twinbrook, Kilwee, and Lagmore. Increasing our target area and membership to over 1500 women.

Throughout the years Footprints has responded to change by adapting our services based on the needs of women within the community, and with each passing year, adapted our service to meet the changing demands, be it education/ training, community development, support or childcare.

An important part of our ethos is to promote leadership and give a voice to women within the community. We have been very successful in achieving this with our members, however, in the past few years we have been forced to concentrate on surviving within the current economic crisis.

This year, moving on from our celebrations, and in view of our future plans, the staff and board of directors are recommitting themselves to working towards energising leadership and community development within the centre.

As we move forward into our 21st year we can rest assured that Footprints has put its' stamp on the Colin Community over the years and can be recognised as an organisation that has made positive change to the lives of women and their children and will continue to do so through the excellent programmes and services we provide.

The Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to thank Gillian Gibson for her ongoing direction and management of Footprints and its' staff. Her foresight and integrity have taken us full circle and kept us focused on the heart of our work which is supporting local women and children. Also thanks to the staff and volunteers for their commitment and hard work, that is crucial to the daily running and, ongoing success of the centre.

Mary McNeill
Chairwoman

20 years

# Centre Director's Foreward

I have had the privilege of being Centre Director of Footprints Women's Centre for most of the last 20 years. This Celebration year has given me the opportunity to reconnect with the many women who helped develop Footprints into a vibrant and relevant voice for women and children. Footprints Women's Centre is recognised as a key resource not only within the Colin community but also within the global women's movement.

Over the last two decades Footprints has strategically developed innovative services and programmes that have evolved from a self help model, led by women from the Colin community. Footprints is very successful in engaging women due to the strong understanding within the Centre of the distinct needs of women and children who live in this area.

## Footprints Women's Centre was set up initially to provide a safe space for women to meet and to provide education, learning, personal development and most crucially, support.

These remain the pillars upon which all of our work continues to be built. Our self help model has also developed into a very successful social enterprise that provides valuable services and protects our support work, providing a safe space for women and children.

**Today Footprints can boast a range of high quality services for women and children including:**

- **CHILDREN'S SERVICES** – comprising full daycare, mobile crèche, family support services and Early Intervention services.
- **WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES** – comprising one to one support, advocacy, counselling, referral services, alternative therapies, life coaching and group support programmes.
- **TRAINING AND EDUCATION** – comprising a comprehensive training and education programme ranging from basic skills to access to university and employment.
- **SUSTAINABLE LIVING** – comprising a range of programmes from Food Growing to Energy Efficiency.
- **WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT** – comprising programmes that develop leadership, representation and active citizenship.

This year Footprints hosted Marilyn Waring from the University of Auckland, New Zealand and, Professor Cynthia Cockurn, University of London. Both women are prominent academics.

It reinforced our belief in our work that such prominent women visited Footprints because they valued what the women in Colin had to say about political and economic issues. Also, because they are particularly impressed by how women in Colin have developed a successful social enterprise model in a local neighbourhood creating employment, services and income, on a scale unmatched by private investment.

It is only when we stop and view our achievements through the eyes of others that we truly understand, just how far we have come in the last 20 years. Women and children who have been part of this journey also validate our work through their achievements and these are many and numerous.

In 2011/2012, Footprints Women's Centre has faced many challenges, most particularly in relation to our ethos and value base. There has been a major shift in how government chooses to fund organisations like Footprints, and this, compounded by the economic recession, has made it a year of adjustment and restructuring. I am heartened to know that our Board of Directors, with our Chairperson Mary McNeill at the helm has led the way in making difficult choices that will ensure that Footprints continues to place vulnerable women and children at the heart of our work.

In the coming year, we are well placed to develop a long term plan that will carry our work forward into the next decade. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Chairperson, Isobel Loughran, who served the Centre in this role for 6 years. Isobel has now been elected as the Women and Family's representative on Colin Neighbourhood Partnership Board, the first local woman to have this role since CNP was established. I would also like to thank Mary McNeill our Chairperson, for embracing her role with such enthusiasm, dedication and understanding of what is important to members. Thanks are also due to the staff team and volunteers of Footprints Women's Centre, who are truly incredible and make working at Footprints a pleasure.

**Gillian Gibson**
Centre Director

# Treasurer & Finance Manager's Foreward

In the financial year to March 2012, Footprints has managed an income of £921,522 consolidated across Footprints Women's Centre and Footprints Trading Ltd. This represents significant growth within both companies.

| New Funding Streams secured during the year include: |
|---|
| • **BIG LOTTERY AWARDS FOR ALL** – this funding is helping with the costs to celebrate Footprints 20 year anniversary |
| • **CFNI EAGA** – Funding to assist with development of an outdoor seated area and the garden. |
| • **EARLY INTERVENTION** – Funding for Early Intervention worker in partnership with Scoil Na Fuiseoige and the local Health Trust. |
| • **BIG LOTTERY ENERGY EFFICIENT VENUES** – Funding for Energy Audit to support installation of Solar Panels. |
| • During the year, we have been actively involved with other community groups in negotiations for the new method for managing DSD Neighbourhood Renewal funding. We are moving forward into the new financial year having been successful in securing this funding from April 2012. |

This is Footprints Women's Centre's 20th Annual Report and it is worth highlighting that Footprints Trading Ltd has developed significantly, since its establishment in 1997. The first year's accounts for the trading company showed an income of £23,000. The next milestone worth noting is when income rose steeply to £162,000 following the opening of the private day care facility in 2003. Today, in 2012, Footprints

Noreen Braniff
Treasurer

Elizabeth Livingstone
Finance Manager

Trading Ltd has reported a turnover of £370,000, greatly exceeding the original trading levels of 1997 and certainly an achievement worthy of recognition.

## DURING THE YEAR:

- Some restructuring has taken place within catering in order to maximise profit within that department.
- Management of Finances within the Trading Board has been strengthened with the addition of a new board member possessing vast experience of finances within the women's sector.
- As one of the first steps in helping others to understand that Footprints Women's Centre has a separate Trading Company, we have created a logo for Footprints Trading Ltd.
- During this period the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Trading Company and the Trading Company Manager attended the world's biggest social enterprise event held in Glasgow. We derived great benefit from this conference which will help inform future strategy.
- Lisburn City Council, Department for Economic Development, Innovation Programme allowed us to benefit by working in partnership with the University of Ulster to carry out a feasibility study to explore the market in Training & Education in order to establish an income stream for these services.

We would like to convey our appreciation to Patricia Firth, who has served for many years on the Board of the Women's Centre and, in addition, since its conception has supported Footprints Trading Ltd. Patricia has decided to take things easy and we wish her well for the future.

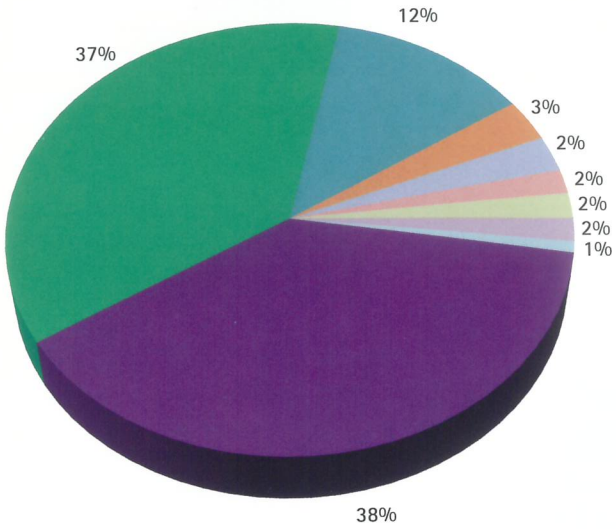
Given the strength of the Board of Directors and the efficiency of the Finance Team we intend to build upon this year's remarkable performance. Moving forward, we will work to improve upon the current year's 10% increase in income generation within the Trading Company and endeavour to outperform trends within the industry.

In this our 20th year, it is with pride that we can show for the first time that the largest funder of Footprints Women's Centre is Footprints Trading Ltd., having contributed 38% of the centre's total income.

As Treasurer, I wish to take this opportunity on behalf of Footprints Women's Centre to thank all our funders for their support, and, on behalf of the Board of Directors of FTL I must commend Gillian Gibson, Centre Director and Elizabeth Livingstone, Trading Manager, the Management Team and Staff for their continued professionalism, innovation and commitment that ensures the success of Footprints.

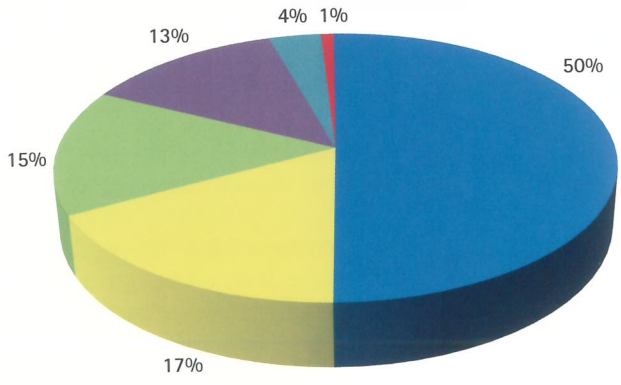
# FINANCE REPORT 2011-2012

## Income




Copy of accounts available on request

## Expenditure




Copy of accounts available on request

# Women's Support Services

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Women's Support Services core focus this year has been raising awareness of the impact of Domestic Violence on both women and children; supporting women experiencing domestic violence and tackling this crime in partnership with Colin Domestic Violence Forum, South Eastern Trust Domestic Violence Partnership, Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid, Lisburn District Policing Partnership, Colin Community Safety Partnership and other key agencies.

Footprints Women's Centre works collaboratively with these key agencies to ensure that high risk is identified and appropriate safety plans are carried out both efficiently and effectively.

**MARAC** {Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference} is a meeting where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse incidents between representatives of local police, probation, health, child protection, housing practitioners, and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors such as Women's Aid and Footprints. After sharing all relevant information the representatives discuss options for increasing the safety of the woman experiencing domestic abuse. A co-ordinated action plan is then agreed and put into place.

The primary focus of MARAC is to safeguard anyone experiencing life threatening domestic abuse. MARAC will also make links with other fora to safeguard children and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator. At the heart of MARAC is the working assumption that no single agency or individual can see the complete picture of the life of a woman experiencing domestic abuse, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety. The woman we represent does not attend the meeting but agrees to us speaking on her behalf.

Representation on MARAC for the Lisburn/Colin area is a priority for Footprints Women's Centre and the Women's Support Co-ordinator is highly trained in all aspects of this process. Meetings take place on a monthly basis and over the past year we have enabled women and children to become more secure within their home by arranging 1-1 expert advice on crime prevention, providing door, window and personal alarms, advice and information on Legal Rights.

We can also request that home addresses are 'red flagged' to ensure immediate response from PSNI and in the event of a report of Domestic Violence provide advice and information on legal rights. In the event that a woman feels she needs to be re housed an application can be fast tracked or a short term stay in one of Women's Aid's Hostels can be arranged.

Footprints will continue to participate with MARAC to effect positive outcomes for women and children.

# SENIOR CITIZENS 50+ GROUP

Footprints has a dedicated and vibrant group of Senior Citizens who join us every Monday for a lunch and activities. Many of our group have been members of the centre throughout the last 20 years. As part of our 20th Celebrations, we sourced and accessed an 8 week programme from WEA (Workers Education Association). This took place in January of this year.

The programme focused upon Reminiscence and used different methods to help the women remember and share stories from their fascinating pasts. Sessions involved asking the group to bring in a piece of jewellery or, a photo from the past that had special meaning for them. This led to rich and colourful story telling sessions where the ladies laughed a lot as they shared experiences and tales of times gone by. Themed memory boxes borrowed from the Ulster Museum's collection were also used to stimulate recall by focusing on objects, items and activities from their youth.

Jewellery making was also incorporated to promote and encourage creativity, dexterity and craft skills. The individual pieces of jewellery that were created were unique and exceptional and are now worn proudly as a memento of their time at Footprints.

Over the last 2 years, Footprints has worked hard at developing increased services for the 50+ age group. We now have a terrific group of dynamic and industrious women who attend the centre on a weekly basis. This group has evolved out of friendships established through attending courses at Footprints. The women self manage their group and are keen to avail of new programmes and experiences. Earlier this year, with support from the WEA, we were fortunate to roll out the Reminiscence programme with the 50+ group. The programme was adapted to meet the needs of this particular group. The women were encouraged to use their 5 senses, to write a poem as a group, with a focus on writing skills, confidence building and creativity.

*"I used to make my own clothes and accessories years ago and I had forgotten how rewarding it is to make something for myself".*

Mary Hennessy (age 83)

*"I am so proud of myself I didn't think I was this creative".*

Peggy Clarke (age 78)

# Time FOR ME

Footprints Women's Centre knows only too well the pressures women face on a daily basis and the many stresses life can throw at women. This in turn can lead to poor mental health such as anxiety, disrupted sleep, isolation, depression and more.

On Mothers' Day this year we held a Pamper Day for Mums in recognition and acknowledgement of their hard work and dedication as well as to encourage Mums to recognise and meet their own emotional needs.

The event was open to all our members and over 50 mothers attended and benefitted from the treatments we had on offer.

In addition, we provided a therapist who facilitated three relaxation workshops focusing on breathing techniques, Tapping techniques and visual reflection. Feedback from the women who attended, showed an interest in receiving more information on future programmes.

Throughout the day we also had on offer Complimentary Therapies including; Reflexology, Indian Head massage, Body Massage, Reiki and Hot Stones from our award winning therapist Rita Anderson.

Footprints has in place on-going programmes of 1-1 complimentary therapies for women who are experiencing any form of stress and anxiety and those women who have encountered this experience have expressed significant improvements in their well being.

Paula Irvine
Women's Support Co-ordinator

# Footprint's CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## Daycare

**Finding reliable, quality child care can be a difficult and stressful task for any parent. For 20 years Footprints Women's Centre has offered an inclusive childcare service currently providing 49 registered daycare places meeting a multiplicity of need.**

Childcare is are currently provided for working parents, South Eastern Trust, women in training and education and women experiencing serious trauma or crisis in their lives.

All children are warmly welcomed and valued equally, and all have individual needs and we work hard to ensure that these are fully met. We welcome children from all backgrounds and embrace the diversity of our users.

Children are unique and each is an individual; some children have very specific needs that relate to their health and/or general development. Footprints Women's Centre prides itself in providing a wholly integrated children's service. Footprints employs and trains childcare staff to the highest level ensuring that our childcare provision delivers quality care and thus maximises the opportunity for all children to reach their fullest potential.

Within the childcare service we have worked with children with many different support needs ranging from developmental delay, Autism, Aspegsers to ADHD. We have observed a rise in speech and language difficulties and children coping with allergies. Our aim is to ensure that each child is cared for according to their specific needs and in partnership with their parent(s).

In some cases children may have additional needs. As parents learn to care for their child's additional needs Footprints Childcare team learns with them.

Over the last year we have made a substantial investment in specialist sensory equipment. This equipment can be seen in our natural outdoor play space and within the daycare rooms. Our sensory equipment can also be used within our 'mobile crèche' and mother and toddler groups. It is amazing to watch children of all ages explore and experience play within a sensory play environment.

The standard and quality of care delivered was led by Brenda O'Neill, Childcare Manager who has left a lasting legacy. Brenda worked with Footprints for 10 years and moved to a new position earlier this year. We wish Brenda all the very best in her new endeavour and thank her for her steadfast commitment to all the women and children who availed of children's services within Footprints during her tenure.

This year's annual inspection carried out by SET found the high standard of care within the setting at a level where there were no improvements to be made.

# FAMILY SUPPORT WORK *at Footprints*

## Footprints Women's Centre has 20 year's experience working with families. This year in our celebration of family support work we focused upon the importance of special time for mums and kids.

The programme included something for all ages. Commencing in July 2011 with a focus on mums and babies, a celebration programme was offered, including baby massage, baby sensory play and dance. A fun packed summer play week followed for school-age children with art therapy, team games and day trips. The children enjoyed playing in Footprints sensory garden which was the centre point of our Family Summer BBQ and where National Play Day was celebrated.

Throughout the rest of the year families engaged in activities through our mums and toddlers group and our family sessions. Activities on offer included: Leaps and Bounds, Pyjama Drama, Aqua Babes, Bambino Movers, Baby sing & sign, Baby art, Funky Monkeys, Halloween cookery, Pumpkin Carving, Sensory Dance, Puppet Show and Baby Valentine.

The baby massage programme remains in high demand with an ongoing waiting list in place. This year we are pleased to announce we will also be offering baby yoga.

Christmas can be a very challenging time for families. Last Christmas there was a marked increase in families experiencing extreme difficulties. The work of the centre ensured that the magic of Christmas was still there for many children. Our Christmas programme included a family carol service, Santa's grotto, Christmas 'meal and a movie' and Christmas cookery.

BBC Children In Need, Bryson House and The Christmas Toy Appeal, distributed through the Salvation Army and St Vincent De Paul, meant that many families experienced a Christmas worth remembering.

Parenting is both rewarding and challenging at times. As part of our family support work we facilitated a number of programmes and consultations for parents including; Mellow babies, Young Mums focus Group, Healthy Relationships, Youth Action programme and Parenting NI consultation. Additionally, we delivered information sessions for families, including sessions by the Dental nurse, Employers for Childcare, Baby Fair, Benefits Advice session, Child Maintenance and Debt Advice.

The Family Support work at Footprints was featured in a DVD showcasing community family and childcare services and was launched in the Long Gallery at Stormont. We were extremely proud when a member of our Young Mums group spoke at this event about her parenting role and the work of the centre.

Family Support is a core part of the Centre's work and we look forward to the future as we continue to deliver new and innovative services for local women and children.

Kyrr Pauley
Children's Services Manager

In 2011, 12 families benefited from the Corrymeela residential comprising of 12 mums, 1 gran and 22 kids.

# CORRYMEELA *Report*

## Corrymeela, nestled in the hills of Ballycastle, looking out over the ocean and the Glens of Antrim,

## Wish you were there? Well we were....

This year, with funding generously donated by BBC Children in Need and the Big Lottery's Awards for All, we were fortunate to provide 12 families with a family holiday experience at the new Davey Village located in Corrymeela.

Local families face financial hardship on a daily basis. The opportunity to escape to a tranquil setting was therefore a welcome break for all.

A fun filled programme ranging from a trip to the beach, mini Olympics, family art, to treasure hunts and karaoke all ensured that the families benefited from special bonding time with their children. Able to unwind and take in the sea air, for some, this was their first experience of a family holiday. Corrymeela volunteers from around the globe were on hand to support Footprints staff and also provided opportunities for both mums and kids to learn about lifestyles in other countries. Lasting friendships were made and stories shared. Teamwork was encouraged with tasks and kitchen duties shared between all. Children referred to Corrymeela as their hotel and mums treated it as their home. Families relaxed and made the most of the six acre grounds and gardens providing them with safe space to walk and to view the fantastic scenery.

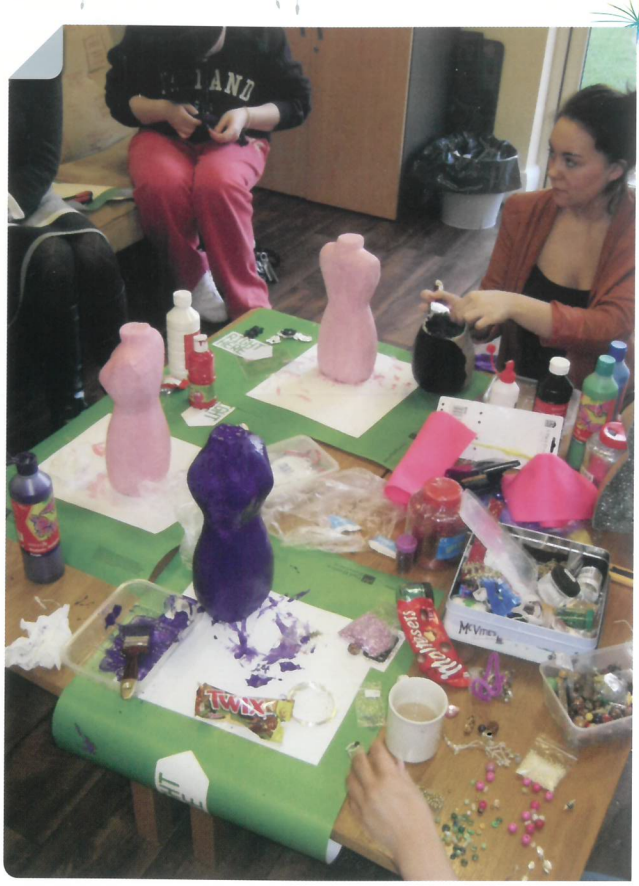
Evenings offered opportunities for more art work, dvds, board games, stories and chats over a mug of hot chocolate. Families benefited from their individual en-suite bedrooms, various living rooms, playgrounds and beautiful gardens.

As with any holiday, all good things must come to an end, but evaluations reflected the enjoyment had by families and the need for such family holidays to hopefully continue, ensuring that in times of recession families are offered the chance to just get away from it all.

*"My family and I have had a wonderful time. It's been a lovely experience and we met all kinds of interesting people, all in all brilliant."*
Nicola Leith & Family

*"Corrymeela is a very special Place"*
Carole Brennan

# *Young Girls*
# OUR FUTURE LEADERS




## It has been an exciting and action packed year for Footprints Young Girls group.

We have a core group of 15 young girls aged 12 – 16 years attending the centre on a Thursday night. The group has evolved with the girls coming from families engaged in the centre or through partnership working with other agencies. The Young Girls programme has offered many opportunities and new experiences.

Footprints staff worked in close partnership with the Young Girls to meet their distinct needs resulting in a very busy and diverse programme. Young girl's safety and risk taking behaviours were a key area that the young girls group initially focused upon. This programme of work began with exploring drug and alcohol use, which is a major concern. Delivered in partnership with the Falls Community Council, the girls attended drug and alcohol training. Awareness was raised of risks associated with drugs and alcohol.

A Healthy Relationships programme was delivered in partnership with Women's Aid. This explored keeping safe and domestic violence, at an age appropriate level. The Healthy Relationships programme proved very challenging with a number of issues arising including self-esteem, body image and cyber bullying.

During the summer the young girls group enjoyed a week long programme which included Zumba, a Come Dine with me cookery session and 'The Life challenge'- an outdoor pursuits day at Castlewellan Forest Park, where the girls participated in team building, making rafts and archery.

In September the girls completed a 5 week cookery programme in the centre with a focus on healthy eating. The Youth Health nurse joined the group at various times throughout the year to answer any questions around sexual health.

With the challenge of changing body shape and peer pressure we welcomed VOYPIC back to the centre to deliver a programme on 'Health, Fitness and Hygiene'. The girls really enjoyed this and we integrated snow tubing and Zumba activities into the programme.

In November, the focus moved towards leadership and the girls had the opportunity to explore the challenges women face in society. They developed their own manifesto for their Young Girls group.

The group were invited by a local MLA to attend an event in Stormont. The girls had the opportunity to sit in the Leader's seat in the Northern Ireland Assembly and meet some local politicians.

After all the hard work it was time to focus on fun!! The next three programmes focused on Art, dance and drama. The girls designed and completed a beautiful piece of Art reflecting their year together. As we came to the end of our 20th year, the group designed the centre pieces for our Anniversary event.

The presence of the girls in the centre brings a vibrancy that is appreciated. We look forward to the year ahead and to the future accomplishments of the group.

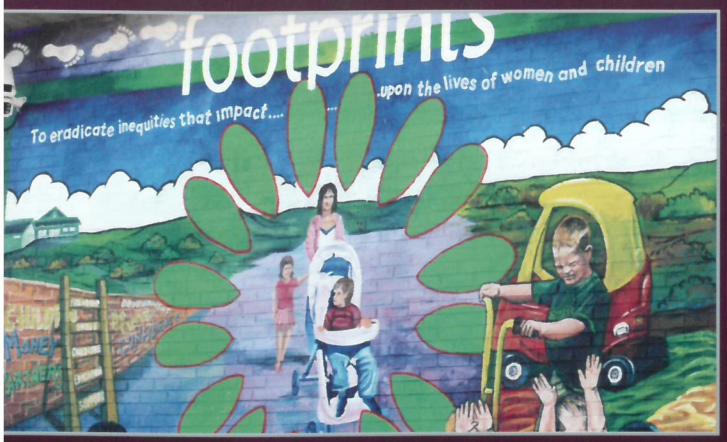
# A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

## SATURDAY 9TH OF JUNE 2012 IN THE BALMORAL HOTEL

**THESE PAGES GIVE A FLAVOUR OF THE ACTIVITY THAT TOOK PLACE DURING FOOTPRINTS ANNIVERSARY YEAR**

# Looking Forward

## TO FOOTPRINTS THE NEXT 20 YEARS


footprints
To eradicate inequities that impact.... upon the lives of women and children

DOONE

# TRAINING AND EDUCATION *Report*

Footprints first established training and education services for women almost 20 years ago. The hunger for learning has not reduced in this time and yet there is less access to community based learning.

For this reason Footprints Women's Centre has worked tirelessly to ensure that women in Colin continue to have access to free and affordable training and education courses. The need has been underscored by government funding providing through Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) for Footprints Training and Education Programme "Routes to Skills and Employability for Women"

Women from Colin have always set the pace in requesting courses and programmes that will enable them to develop their knowledge, skills and improve their access to job opportunities.

In order to keep up with the ongoing advancement of the training and education sector, Footprints secured funding through Lisburn City Council's Innovation programme to work with an academic from the University of Ulster to develop a feasibility study that would future proof the training and education department within Footprints.

We have now in place a blueprint that will influence the future direction of training and education department and ensure its development, in line with our social economy objectives.

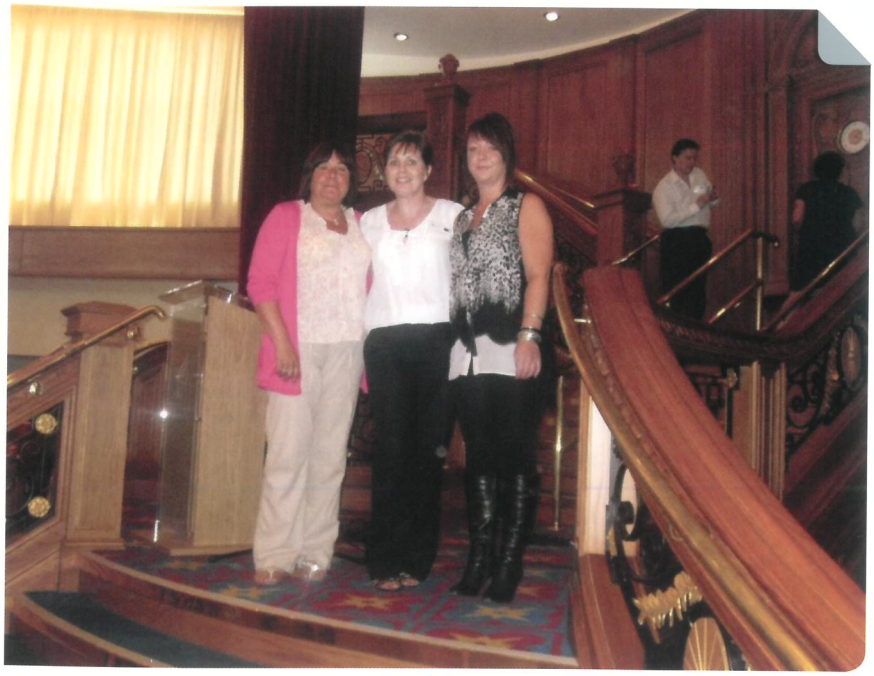
This year has also been a tremendous success in terms of the substantial number of women able to access training and education programmes within Footprints, alongside supportive services.

There are many barriers that limit a woman's full participation in training and education programmes. Footprints works to remove these barriers and to enable women to reach their full potential. We have worked hard to create a professional learning environment where learners can access a diverse range of courses with on-site childcare and learner support available.

This year marked the start of our 'Routes to Skills and Employability' Programme (2011 – 2013) funded through ESF/DEL and match funded by BRO and Footprints Women's Centre. This programme was complemented by a Social and Leisure Programme, funded by the Big Lottery Fund and delivered through the Women's Centres Regional Partnership.

One of the many outcomes for the 'Routes to Skills and Employability' programme was that 14 women gained employment. Footprints are very determined to ensure that women are trained to access employment where they are well paid and have career progression opportunities. In particular, Footprints has promoted women's access to finance posts.

With two thirds of the women who gained employment now working in the field of accounts/finance, we are very keen to continue this trend with more investment in accounts based learning programmes.



Not all women are able to work due to poor health, caring responsibilities or low level skills. The Social and Leisure Programme provides women with an opportunity to take their first step back into a learning environment. Within this programme women can be creative, acquire new skills, develop confidence and self-esteem, and progress onto further learning.

Within the last year, with the support of our funders, over 250 women participated in our training and education programmes. With the support of our funders we will be able to maintain the quality and level of training and education over the coming year and remain the only community based training and education provision for adult returners within the Colin Neighbourhood area.

Earlier in the year we were very happy to host a number of the tutors at our 20 year celebration evening enabling us to recognise their ongoing commitment to Footprints Women's Centre. We applaud the contribution they make to the lives of our students and look forward to their continued involvement with Footprints.

I would like to conclude by thanking Yvonne Connolly for her significant contribution to the Training and Education department, particularly in relation to the integration of ICT within the organisation. Yvonne left Footprints this year to work in our sister project, Windsor Women's Centre.

Gillian Gibson
Centre Director

# Sustainable Living

## Colin Empowerment Project – Nutrition and Physical Activity Programme

The Big Lottery, as part of the Colin Empowerment Project's Nutrition and Physical Activity programme, funds a range of activities that are designed to meet the distinct needs of a wide range of groups including older people, young mums and young girls.

Aqua Babes is the physical activity element of Balanced Beginnings, a programme aimed at improving the diet and nutrition of new mums and their babies and improving well being through increasing physical activity levels.

Lee-Anne Daly, Aquatic Teacher for Baby and Preschool and Associate Member of The Swimming Teachers' Association. explains 'The sessions are aimed at enabling mums and babies to gain confidence together and bond in a safe environment. True bonding can take place in a structured programme of play without the mum or baby feeling unnecessarily vulnerable'

This funding has enabled twenty one mums and twenty one babies to enjoy this wonderful experience as part of the Colin Empowerment Project's Nutrition & Physical Activity Programme.

Paula Dyer commented 'We loved it and still go for a swim every week. Cullinan has no fear of the water going over his head'

The Balanced Beginnings programme which includes 6 weeks of cookery skills with an emphasis on cooking on a budget, healthy foods and weaning.

A nutritionist provides dietetic support and the practical cookery sessions are complemented with a food growing programme ensuring access to the freshest ingredients. This programme develops food growing skills and provides the materials e.g., window boxes and hanging baskets for mums to grow their own at home.

# EAGA Award

In May 2011, Footprints Women's Centre was one of three organisations in Northern Ireland to receive an EAGA Award. The EAGA Community Fund was created to support community projects that educate, raise awareness and demonstrate community involvement in addressing environmental issues at grass roots level.

With the EAGA award two compost areas were built and a series of workshops were held which developed the skills for the garden group to manage the composting areas. Within our garden these compost areas brought us another step closer to achieving sustainable living. We now grow our own produce and use it within the catering service and the cookery skills classes. We also recycle waste to make our compost for the raised beds.

A natural wood seating area was built which enables the garden group to meet and rest when working in 'The Kitchen Garden' Our thanks to Robert Cooney for building the seating around one of our existing trees creating a lovely space to blend in with the grounds as they are developed and added to each year.

The EAGA award has also enabled us to enhance our learning around environmental issues. An Eco Adventure Club was formed with opportunities for families to explore ecosystems at Colin Glen Forest Park. This included a memorable fossil trail and with great excitement and wonder several of the children found fossils.

The transformation of the grounds within a few years is incredible and a tribute to the women and children of the Colin Neighbourhood. Colin Glen Trust's gardening team has provided practical guidance.

The garden has flourished with careful tending and nurturing and this year produced super sized vegetables.

# CATERING *Services*

## Delivery and Function Service

In 2011-2012, Footprints Catering Services marketing strategy focused on expanding the Delivery and Function Service in order to maximise potential income. In this trading year we continued to meet with potential new customers and showcase our product by making presentations and providing samples.

With this approach we were pleased to secure new business which included Bryson Charitable Group, Trinity Housing and the PPR project. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all customers for their business.

A restructure of catering services took place which included reducing the Cafe opening hours to a period of time when the majority of customers use the service. It is with confidence that we look to the future believing we have put in place the necessary measures to ensure the viability and sustainability of the Cafe service to our valued customers.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge Kate Garland who moved to a new job earlier in the year. Kate gave 10 years sterling service to Footprints Women's Centre and we wish her every success for the future.

Eileen Wilson
Sustainable Living Manager

The quality of the service that is provided is underlined by customer comments.

*'Just to say a big thank you for the wonderful catering from Footprints.*

**Mary Sherry,**
**Belfast Metropolitan College**

*'The sandwiches are absolutely fantastic and very well filled!!! I find all of the staff very friendly and helpful.'*

**Stephen Kelly,**
**Bryson Charitable Group**

# SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice issues are always a major concern to the women of Colin.
In the last year, women from Footprints have lobbied on 2 key issues:

- Domestic Violence
- Social Welfare Reforms

Early in 2012, Footprints embarked upon a sustained campaign to reverse plans by the PSNI to change the method by which Non Molestation Orders were being distributed to perpetrators of domestic violence. It was proposed by the PSNI that private companies could carry out this task with orders being delivered by civilians.

It was with great satisfaction that Footprints along with their partners, Colin Domestic Violence Forum and Colin Community Safety Partnership were able to reverse this decision ensuring that women's safety remained a high priority across the north.

The onset of Social Welfare Reforms which inequitably penalised women, prompted a significant response from Women's Centres and agencies, resulting in the organisation of a series of 'Empty Purse' protests.

Footprints Women's Centre and Windsor Women's Centre led the first protest through the Reclaim the Agenda network and these protests are continuing until government recognise the hardship that the Welfare Reforms place upon vulnerable families.

In addition to this, Footprints has engaged with PPR, (Policy, Participation and Rights project) with a view to further developing their lobbying around the issue of domestic violence. Up to 10 local women are participating in this ground-breaking, rights based programme, examining domestic violence within the context of a human rights framework.

**Gillian Gibson**
Centre Director

# Acknowledgements

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The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (EAGA Award)
Colin Neighbourhood Partnership Board
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BT Community Connections Award
Safe Food
Big Lottery
Public Health Agency
Health and Social Care Board
Eastern Childcare Partnership

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LISBURN CITY COUNCIL

LOTTERY FUNDED

colinneighbourhood

Department for Employment and Learning www.delni.gov.uk

European Union European Social Fund Northern Ireland people: skills: jobs

The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland

Department for Social Development www.dsdni.gov.uk

HSC South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

HSC Public Health Agency

HSC Health and Social Care

safefood

Footprints Women's Centre would like to acknowledge the Board of Directors, the staff and volunteers for their dedication and commitment over the last twenty years.

Footprints Women's Centre and Footprints Trading Ltd.

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INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Food Hygiene Rating 5