



The Social and Health Education Project

Annual Report 2013

Mission Statement

SHEP is a values-led organisation that works together with individuals and communities to develop capacities for positive change, to enhance health and well-being and to promote social justice. We do this through a range of integrated personal, community, environmental and international development initiatives.



Some of the participants at the Presentation of Certificates Ceremony in Tralee on June 26th with special guest, Mayor of Kerry, Terry O'Brien. Over 60 participants received certificates at a very enjoyable event at the Meadowlands Hotel.

Chairperson's Foreword

The Social and Health Education Project (SHEP) is a unique, community-based, regional, training and development organisation. The 40th anniversary of the commencement of the Social and Health Education Programme will be celebrated in 2014 and we are all very proud of what has been achieved over four decades. 2013 was another very successful, though challenging, year for SHEP with over two thousand persons and a significant number of groups directly involved with the project through training, counselling, advocacy or other supports. The financial support of the HSE continues to be hugely important and we appreciate the additional, mainstream funding provided by the HSE to support our Coiscéim Low-cost Counselling Programme. However, like all community and voluntary groups the economic recession has continued to impact on the Project.

There have been a number of important developments during the year. We are particularly pleased that our discussions with Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) were completed resulting in a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Programme for those SHEP participants interested in the WIT Level 8 award of Higher Diploma in Arts (Social, Personal & Health Education). Two groups of SHEP graduates commenced the WIT RPL programme in September 2013 (one doing Level 7 and one doing Level 8). Another key development during 2013 was SHEP's successful application to Irish Aid for a third, three-year phase of grant support for our Learning Partnership with Sahakarmi Samaj in South West Nepal. This will provide significant financial support for Sahakarmi Samaj's work with very vulnerable and marginalised communities until 2016. We are also very pleased that, following our registration with FETAC/QQI in 2012, a group of 17 participants completed SHEP's first FETAC/QQI-accredited course (in Advocacy) in early 2013.

As SHEP prepares to celebrate 40 years the Project continues to grow and adapt, to be responsive to the needs in the community, and to demonstrate that it is contributing significantly to individual and community health and well-being. As Chairperson I wish to extend my thanks to the large body of Trainers, Tutors, Counsellors, and Volunteer Advocates in SHEP, our small staff team, and my colleagues on the SHEP Management Committee for all that they have done during 2013.

Carmel Brosnan, Chairperson.



Carmel Brosnan (Chairperson), Lord Mayor John Buttimer, and Jim Sheehan (SHEP Director) at the SHEP Annual Gathering on January 25th.



Eithne, Aoife and Rosaleen at the mindfulness weekend retreat on Oileán Cléire in September 2013, the first Residential Weekend organised in some years.

141 people
received a Certificate of Completion for
SHEP Personal Development
in 2013

1520 people
have participated in
SHEP Foundation Training
since 2000.

Director's Report

SHEP has made very good progress in 2013 with implementing the objectives set out in our work-plan across all of the SHEP's eleven key areas of work. The level of work completed in 2013 was similar to 2012 levels despite some reductions in core funding to SHEP. New funding from the HSE for the Coiscéim Low-cost Counselling Programme, and the use of a significant portion of SHEP's remaining reserve, allowed the Project to implement the 2013 programme in full. The numbers participating in SHEP's core training programme were broadly similar to the previous year, despite the downturn in the economy, with 17 courses commencing in September 2013. The training programme in Kerry continued to gain momentum, particularly with regard to the take-up short courses in the community. The work in Limerick also continued to grow (as part of the collaboration with a number of Limerick-city groups) and an independent evaluation of the programme was completed. The evaluation concluded that 'there is very strong agreement that SHEP in Limerick is delivering a training programme that was at once unique and greatly valued' and that 'the SHEP Programme portfolio is achieving real and meaningful change in the lives of many participants'.

A key trend in 2013 was the increase in the numbers seeking concessionary rates for training courses – reflecting the large percentage of trainees in the Programme on social welfare or with limited financial means. The Coiscéim Low-Cost Counselling Programme once again supported an increased number of clients during 2013 with over 660 clients supported with counselling. The complexity of cases presenting also continued to increase, reflecting the difficult circumstances in which many people find themselves. The service had to close a number of times during 2013 because of the increased demand for the service. It would not have been possible for SHEP to sustain this level of support without the additional, significant, new funding provided by the HSE for the service.

During 2013, SHEP's work in advocacy continued to develop with new volunteers joining the service and new initiatives commencing in the area of facilitating independent group-advocacy. Throughout the year we continued to provide customised training, facilitation and technical support to a range groups and organisations in Cork and Kerry though pressures on staff resources meant that less time could be devoted to this. Showing that the Project continues to innovate, two new courses were designed and offered in 2013: A new course on 'Reflective Practice for Social Justice' which ten participants completed and a new community education course 'New Beginnings: Caring for Our Well-being' was piloted particularly for people experiencing mental ill-health. Other important developments during 2013 were: the use of SHEP reserve funding to increase staff hours to support the delivery of the core training programme; securing funding from Irish Aid to commence a Development Education Initiative; securing a small EU grant to support SHEP's participation, for the first time, in a Grundtvig Learning Partnership (on the theme of 'Empowering approaches to working with Older People); and the commencement of fundraising drive to establish a new SHEP Bursary Scheme to help provide concessions to those facing financial hardship

On behalf of the staff of SHEP I'd like to express my appreciation to everyone who has contributed to the work during 2013 and look forward to joining with you in celebrating SHEP's 40th anniversary in 2014.

Jim Sheehan

'It is clear that the SHEP programme portfolio is achieving real and meaningful change in the lives of many of the training participants.'
Exodea Consultants – SHEP Limerick Evaluation (2013)

Personal Development Training

The aim of this work is to support individuals to develop capacities for positive change and to enhance health and well-being. SHEP's Certificate in Personal Development is a unique programme which has been refined by the project over many years. The course consists of weekly evening or day time sessions of two and a half hours between September and the end of May as well as seven weekend day-long sessions. The principal methodology used is that of experiential group-work.

Eleven groups, completed the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development in 2013. Five of these groups were in Cork City, one in Skibbereen, one in Tralee, one in Killarney and the remaining three were in Limerick. The Limerick groups were offered in association with a consortium of locally-based groups working with disadvantaged communities. 181 people (including 33 men) had commenced these courses the previous September and 142 of these participants received their certificate of completion in June 2013. (Certificate of completion is awarded when a participant has attended for a minimum of 80% of the course)

In September 2013, ten groups, comprising 163 people, 45 of whom are men, commenced the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development. Five of these groups were in Cork City, one in Youghal, one in Tralee, one in Killarney and two in Limerick. As in previous years, the two Limerick groups were offered in association with a consortium of locally-based groups working with disadvantaged communities. The availability of a concessionary rate for those facing financial difficulty was a very important factor in 2013, with 60% of applicants being awarded the reduction. We were also pleased to see an increase in 2013 in the number of men participating in SHEP's Personal Development Foundation course: 45 men started in 2013 compared to 33 in 2012. A total of 1520 persons have completed this training since 2000.

Two groups, comprising 30 people, participated in SHEP's Continuing Personal Development Course in 2013 - one in Cork City and one in Limerick. A further two groups, both in Limerick, started this course in autumn 2013. A total of 21 people were involved. A total of 211 people have completed this training since 2000.

During 2013, 201 people participated in SHEP' On-Going Development Programme. This programme, comprising a range of short courses and workshops, offers graduates of core training courses a way of continuing their personal development work and offers Community Tutors opportunities to develop their skills. Along with the events organised by SHEP's Association of Friends, these short courses and workshops contribute to the life and maintenance of the broad SHEP community.

Training in Social Awareness & Community Empowerment

SHEP's second Foundation Course is a 78-hour course entitled the 'SHEP Certificate in Community Empowerment and Social Awareness'. Its aim is to enhance individuals' capacity to participate more fully in the wider community and to promote social justice. Previously, entry to this course was confined to those who had completed the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development, but in 2011 and 2012 in Cork and Kerry the course was also opened up to interested applicants with no prior training with SHEP. The course normally runs from September to December and consists of an evening introductory session and five week-end workshops. There can be up to 25 participants in each group. The principal methodology used is that of experiential group work. Some elements of the course are drawn from the 'Training for Transformation' programme. Participants are not required to undertake any written work and there is no formal assessment or examinations.

In 2013, three groups completed this training (two groups in Cork City, one group in Kerry). 65 people started the training (of which thirteen of the participants were men) and 54 successfully completed this training. (As with the Personal Development Course, a Certificate of completion is awarded when a participant has attended for a minimum of 80% of the course). The majority of participants had completed the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development in May 2013. For thirteen participants, this was their first experience of training with SHEP. Of those receiving certificates 61% received concessions.

Since 2000, of the 1,520 people who commenced and completed a core training course (usual starting point is the Personal Development Year), 743 (49%) have progressed to and completed the Social Awareness & Community Empowerment training. 78% of those who have completed this course (i.e. 582 persons) have progressed to at least the next training option within SHEP

54 people
awarded a Certificate of Completion for
**SHEP Social Awareness &
Community Empowerment**
in 2013

743 people
have participated in
**SHEP Social Awareness &
Community Empowerment**
Since 2000.

Training facilitators to work in the community

SHEP is committed to enabling people in their own communities, work settings, or elsewhere, to better support reflection, learning and transformation at the personal and community levels. A key aspect of the SHEP model is the systematic training and supervised deployment of community members in response to community needs. The Project offers a range of specialised practitioner training courses to enable people to train as tutors or advocates.

The year-long SHEP Certificate in Facilitation is a key, intermediate level course which is offered every year by SHEP, in at least one location. In 2013, 18 people participated in a group in Cork - 15 of whom achieved a certificate of completion, having attended at least 80% of the course. 17 people commenced SHEP's 18-month Integrated Specialised Tutor Training programme in Cork. A further 17 participants completed a Specialised Tutor Training Course called 'Growing Still: facilitation Well-being and Empowerment in Older Adults'. There were insufficient applicants for a Kerry-based Specialised Tutor Training course in 2013, and this course did not proceed. 183 people have participated in SHEP Tutor Training since 2000.

Working alongside experienced community tutors, six people (in addition to those who were involved in the 'Growing Still' tutor training) completed post-training course apprenticeships in 2013, enabling them to register as a SHEP Community Tutor for various Community Education for Health & Well-being courses.

As a way of supporting good practice and the maintenance of high standards SHEP offers supervision and Continuing Practitioner Development opportunities to all practitioners working through the Project, including Trainers and Community Tutors. Among the opportunities offered to trainers and others in 2013 were two further weekend-workshops in the series on Mindfulness-based Somatic Experiencing. 27 people took part in these workshops.

'It is evident that ... the SHEP programme increases participant's well-being when measured across a range of factors, including: resilience and self-esteem; positive functioning; supportive relationships; and trust and belonging. The sense of well-being is reported to increase over time, and appears to be entirely self-supported.'
Exodea Consultants - SHEP Limerick Evaluation (2013)

2013 Case Study

Facilitating Well-being and Empowerment in Older Adults (Growing Still)

In May 2013 seventeen participants, three of whom were men, completed a year-long specialised tutor training course to qualify as tutors in the above programme. The course they participated in was one which had been re-designed by a team of SHEP trainers (some on a volunteer basis) and replaced an earlier training course which had run successfully until 2002. The new design took into account social, economic and other changes affecting the lives of older adults in those intervening years.

Twelve of these newly-qualified tutors, working in pairs, then delivered this new 'Growing Still' course to six different groups in a variety of locations. Four of the groups were comprised of 'actively retired' people within community settings (Whitechurch, Ballinspittle, Skibbereen and Carrignavar). One group setting was within an Active Age Organisation in Bandon and the final one was in a Day Care Centre in Cork City. In total, 76 people ranging in age from 55 to 101(!) participated in this first round of this new SHEP Community Education Course. Each course was of eight weeks' duration - involving a two and a half hour session per week. The courses were tailored to meet the needs of each particular group.

As with all SHEP courses the new 'Growing Still' course is experiential: the focus is on the participants' own lives and on empowering themselves to lead happy, healthy lives no matter what their age or circumstances. It aims to be fun and it encourages social contact. Depending on the needs of the group, various topics are explored with an emphasis on age, the ageing process and age-related issues in general. The feedback from these groups has been very positive with many commenting on the opportunity it gave them to meet people in a 'different' way.

'I got to know my neighbour in a way I had never known her before even though we have lived near each other for years.'

Complementary Accredited Training



In 2013, 14 students completed the second year of the Level 7 UCC Diploma in Social and Psychological Health Studies. This was the sixth group to complete the two year Diploma Course which is offered by SHEP in partnership with UCC's Adult and Continuing Education. A new group of 24 students commenced the programme in September 2013. Also in 2013, SHEP's first Level 6 FETAC/QQI-accredited course (Introduction to Advocacy-Level 6) was completed, with 17 participants receiving certificates. Also during 2013 discussions were completed with Waterford Institute of Education (WIT) regarding the commencement of Level 7 and Level 8 recognition of prior learning programmes (in Social, Personal and Health Education) for SHEP graduates. Two groups commenced in September 2013 – one Level 7 group and one Level 8 group. The Level 8 group will complete their programme in May 2014 for the award of Higher Diploma (Level 8) in Social, Personal and Health Education.

Community Education for Health & Well-being

SHEP's Community Education for Health and Well-being offers a range of short courses in the community. The emphasis is on responding to the needs of individuals and groups, in their own communities, to explore and consider ways of making positive changes and enhancing health and well-being. Courses are typically 20 hours' duration and run over eight or ten weeks.

892 people successfully completed one of SHEP's short courses – 87 courses in total were organised. This level of activity is considerably less than in previous years – and is only 73% of the 2007 level of output. This reflects a continuing strength and resilience in the programme through the period of the economic downturn but also the impact of reduced resources to community groups to organised courses. An increase in the number of community courses organised and offered directly by SHEP, and joint initiatives, was an important factor in keeping the numbers supported through this important programme higher than they would otherwise have been.

In Kerry in 2013, the community education programme had a particularly strong year, with 12 community-based courses being organised – the largest number ever. Of the 97 participants who completed courses 76 were female and 21 were male. Five of the 12 courses run were funded by Kerry Education and Training Board as part of the Memorandum of Understanding they have with SHEP. A 10-hour course called 'Empowerment and Stress Management for people with Epilepsy' was fully funded by Epilepsy Ireland for 8 participants. Four of the other 6 courses were funded by SHEP's own funds with contributions from participants. Reflecting the Project's emphasis on working in partnership, a number of the courses were offered in conjunction with Family Resource Centres - in Tralee, Cahersiveen, Castlemaine, and Castleisland. The courses included Men's Health and Wellbeing, Women's Health and Well-being, Introduction to Personal Development, Effective Communication for Better Relationships, and Stress Management. Two 'Seasons for Growth: Living with Grief, Loss and Change' courses were co-funded by a grant from Janssen. Seven people who participated in Community courses went on to participate in the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development in Tralee and Killarney in 2013-2014.

'I really enjoyed this learning process even though I was sceptical at the start. I learned a lot about myself and feel more positive about myself and accept my feelings and be ok with them.'

Community Course Participant (Kerry, 2013)

Coiscéim Low-Cost Counselling Programme

The Coiscéim Low-Cost Counselling Programme once again supported an increased number of clients during 2013 – with over 668 clients supported with counselling with an additional 20 clients adults and children pending placement. The number and complexity of cases presenting also continued to increase, with over 914 calls to the service, reflecting the continuing difficult circumstances in which many people find themselves. 121 clients were referred by GPs (in both Cork City and County). Approximately 75% of clients assessed in 2013 were medical card holders. The service closed on three occasions during the year, each for a period of 4 to 6 weeks to deal with the increasing waiting list which developed due to demand for the service. It would not have been possible for SHEP to sustain this level of support without the additional, new, mainstreamed funding provided by the HSE in 2013. However if the increasing trend of the last three years continues, the numbers of vulnerable people seeking counselling will prove to be a major challenge for the service in 2014.

Advocacy

The work undertaken through Cork Advocacy Service (CAS) would not be possible without the dedicated commitment of a core group of volunteer advocates who continue to offer their time to what can be very difficult and challenging work. They continue to be an inspiration. CAS continued to develop innovative ways of supporting access to independent advocacy in 2013 whilst maintaining the core advocacy work in residential units for older people already established. Approximately 85 people living in two residential units (one in Cork City and one in County Cork) were provided with access to one-to-one and group advocacy support. One-to-one community advocacy support, provision of information and signposting was also provided to 39 individuals who through experiences of ill health, disability or difficulties related to ageing found themselves marginalised and struggling to get their voice heard. Further funding was secured from the Citizens Information Board to continue providing independent advocacy group facilitation to two services (a HSE service for adults with intellectual disabilities and a voluntary sector day service for adults with physical disabilities). The first QQI-accredited 'Introduction to Advocacy' course was completed in early 2013 with seventeen participants receiving their Level 6 certificates. Agreement was also reached to deliver the 'Introduction to Self- Advocacy' course to a group of carers in 2014 (with funding from Genio). CAS continued to support the emerging Advocacy Network which is proving to be a useful means of sharing information and learning about current policy and legislation that impacts on providing independent advocacy.

Supporting Communities, Groups & Organisations

Given SHEP's expertise and experience, the Project is regularly requested to provide facilitation and/or specialist technical support to communities, organisations and groups. Over 20 groups/organisations were supported in 2013 with facilitation, supervision and training - including Headway; Heather house; Cobh Community Hospital; Marymount Hospice; Enable Ireland, We Made This Community Initiative, and KES Adult Education Tutors. Given the pressure on Project Resources in 2013 not as much time was devoted to this area as in previous years.

International Learning Partnership

During 2013, our learning partners in Nepal, Sahakarmi Samaj successfully completed the final year of the second phase of their community development program. At the end of this phase of three years, 142 new community groups, with 3751 members had been established in 10 districts. These community groups are making a significant difference to the lives of their members, through community co-operation, income generation and livelihood activities, facilitating improvements in education, fund generation and improved family health and harmony. In addition, 10 mid-level and 3 high-level networking organisations have been established. This means that community groups are now effectively accessing resources – both local and external – to improve their quality of life, helped by the support provided by the networking organizations. Local and district governments are listening to communities and in some cases are involving them in budget planning or acting to help them, as a result of the networking organizations advocacy. In December 2013, we were successful in securing funding from both Irish Aid and ICCO to support Sahakarmi Samaj with a third phase of the programme. This means that Sahakarmi Samaj will be able to replicate their programme in other marginalised communities in Nepal and that SHEP will continue to provide capacity building support to them until the end of 2016.

Influencing Policy and Participation

One of SHEP's strategic aims is to contribute to good practice at regional and national levels. SHEP continued to work collaboratively with a wide range of organisations and agencies in 2013. A key collaborative venture during 2013 was support for the establishment of a new network of those involved in independent advocacy. We also supported the establishment of a new informal network of Cork-based community and voluntary groups with an interest in Community Health. In general, though, we were unable to devote as much time as we would like to this area given the limitations of our resources.

Strengthening SHEP's Organisational Effectiveness

During 2013 the Project continued to support improved organisational effectiveness. We continued with our process to introduce quality assurance processes. A new SAGE accounts package was introduced in January. Significant programmes of in-service training and supervision were conducted for the Project's Trainers, Community Tutors and Coiscéim Counsellors. During 2013, considerable energy was put into policy development - several new policies were completed and the Project's Child Protection Policy was completely revised.

668 people
supported with

Low-cost Counselling

In 2013

124 people
supported with

Independent Advocacy

In 2013

Priorities for 2014

We have identified a number of key priorities for 2014 as follows: i) finalise a new Strategic Plan (2014-16); ii) continue to work on implementing the SHEP Quality Assurance programme; iii) seek alternative streams of finance in order to diversify programme funding; iv) follow through on the evaluation findings and recommendations from the evaluation of the work in Limerick; and v) finalise preparations for marking the 40th anniversary of SHEP in 2014.

Appreciation of Support

The Management Committee and staff of The Social and Health Education Project would like to sincerely thank everyone who supported our work in 2013. The support of our main funders - the HSE, Irish Aid, and ICCO - greatly appreciated. Total expenditure by SHEP in 2013 was €1,264,746. Total expenditure of HSE funds in 2013 was €720,633. Support from the Cork Education and Training Board, Kerry Education and Training Board, The Family Support Agency, The Department of Social Protection, Citizens Information Board and Janssen Pharmaceutical all played an important role in enabling SHEP to deliver our extensive programme of work for 2013 in support of a wide range of people from a wide range of backgrounds. Copies of our most recent audited annual accounts are available on our website www.socialandhealth.com. Thank you for your interest and support.

SHEP - promoting health and well-being since 1974

The Social and Health Education Project,

Village Centre, Station Road, Ballincollig, Co. Cork & Park Road, Killarney.

Phone (021) 4666180 Email: socialandhealth@eircom.net

website: www.socialandhealth.com



Family Support Agency

