



# Annual Report 2014



Charity Ref: XT672  
Charity No: NIC100247

## Introduction

### Maurice Brooks

## CEO Summary

### Joe Hyland

Finance and cash flow has dominated the Board's agenda during the year, and we are grateful for the loyal support of our regular funders and our volunteers. I am glad to say that despite the difficult economic environment SOS has successfully delivered its planned projects for SOS Bus and Schools Programme. Sadly the PSNI were compelled to cease a significant level of funding but I am pleased to report that alternative sources of funding were successfully identified by our CEO and we ended the year in the black.

The Board also reviewed the Memorandum and Articles of the Charity and appointed Edwards and Co as its Solicitors to bring them up to the standard required by the Charity Commissioners. A series of extra meetings were devoted to the development of the Strategic Plan for 2014 – 2016, which were facilitated on a pro bono basis by Francis Martin of BDO, to whom we are very grateful. The Board has been conscious of the need to ensure that our Governance is of the highest order and a number of meetings have been attended to improve its knowledge.

I was appointed your Chairman in February. During the year we lost three valued Board members. Sadly Neil Gordon died after a long battle with cancer. He contributed unstintingly to the work of SOS and he will be sadly missed. Ivan McMinin and Alan Skelton both resigned from the Board due to personal reasons. Their resignations were accepted reluctantly and underlined the need to strengthen the Board and fill identified skills gaps. Thanks to the vision and inspirational leadership of our CEO, Joe Hyland, and the great support of our staff and volunteers, we will confidently face the many challenges and opportunities in the year ahead.

Maurice J Brooks, Chairman SOS NI

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2014 has been a remarkable and often challenging year as together we overcame the obstacles of change in a developing charity. The diminishing financial environment that all charities have to adapt to will be the focus of our attention in the coming years. Nevertheless the reputation and value of the SOS NI brand is continually growing, which to a large degree has helped us meet our increasing need for funds.

It is my time to say thank you.

**To my Board of Directors.** As your CEO and an SOS NI volunteer, I wish to thank you for your trust, support and guidance over the past 12 months.

**To my office staff.** We have seen a deluge of change as new demands were placed on you. Thank you for seeing us all through, for your patience with me, and for your constant care and direction of SOS NI Team Leaders and volunteers. Thank you for the training, for the administration and management involved in ensuring we've met every single shift come rain, hail or winter storm.

**To those involved in the SOS Schools Programme.** The project has started to come of age and has become a proven education programme, making a real difference to young people. A heartfelt thank you to you as together we are creating a different future for those we most care about. This is where social change lies.

**To our Bus drivers, Flasking Teams and each and every one of our wonderful volunteers.** You are the heart of the organisation. Working the hours, taking risks, holding the hands of the lonely, disaffected and vulnerable, you are SOS NI. I thank you in particular.

**Finally, thank you to our stakeholder partners who work and care for people alongside us. Thank you to our supporters, our funders and those that consider and pray for us in the roles we fulfil as we unconditionally care for the most vulnerable and needy, expecting nothing in return.**

We will undoubtedly face a bruising time ahead, there is much to be done on the streets of each town in NI as the PSNI, councils and health services face huge reductions in budgets, impacting on their ability to deliver their core services to the public.

We must try and fill those growing gaps to succeed in delivering our often life-changing SOS NI services and programmes to the people living, working and visiting Northern Ireland. It's only by working together that we can make the future better, safer and stronger for us all.

**From a grateful Chief Executive, thank you...**



Joe Hyland MBE, CEO SOS NI

SOS NI holds volunteering at the heart of the organisation and endeavours to provide relevant and enjoyable training to ensure all our SOS volunteers are equipped for their often difficult work in the wider communities we serve.

In 2014 we further enhanced our SOS Volunteer Handbook and then provided essential refresher training to 130 existing volunteers. We also put a further 84 new volunteers through the improved SOS induction training which also incorporated the new handbook.

We are pleased to say we worked in partnership with a number of outside organisations to deliver our SOS training this year. ASCERT delivered our mandatory Listening Skills and Drug Awareness training to 42 new volunteers and NICRAS, the Welcome Organisation and Aware Defeat Depression all delivered workshops during the refresher and handbook training.

In 2014, Staff and Team Leaders were also invited by the Belfast Health and Social Care trust to take part in their two day Mental Health First Aid course. We were delighted with all the feedback from the volunteers stating that all the training was both beneficial to them in work and their daily lives

During the year we also further developed our essential induction training for new SOS Team leaders, the key people who take responsibility and lead our volunteers each night. The first to benefit was Gay Vaughan, Gay joined a wonderful group of 12 existing dedicated and experienced Team Leaders who each weekend effectively deliver our core SOS caring services into the early hours.

## *Developing the SOS Volunteer Pool*

2014 was a great year for volunteering with SOS NI as we saw the organisation grow to boast a community of 240 dedicated people from all walks of life. The organisation welcomed 84 new volunteers who have been mentored and trained and who now go out regularly with teams on the SOS Bus and deliver our valuable weekend services. This new wave of applications go through a more rigorous volunteer application process, interviews are conducted with all potential volunteers followed by a 3 month probation period where each new volunteer is buddied and their behaviour and suitability monitored by experienced SOS volunteers during their training shifts. Detailed reports are then written from each shift describing each new volunteer's skills and gifts helping us to define their suitability to work with vulnerable adults in the difficult conditions we sometimes find on the streets of Belfast.

There are also a number of experienced volunteers who now give their time to oversee the interviews of every new volunteer, collate information and update the volunteer files.

Other volunteer roles have been developed, such as the Schools Programme volunteer, working with young people in schools to provide the right tools that can help them to make 'better lifestyle choices' and in doing so help change their future. Also the Food Programme volunteer, collecting food from local supermarkets and delivering it to those in need around the city every morning.

New roles have also been created; the SOS Response Team Leaders and volunteers who are dedicated to working in our new SOS response minibuses trawling the city looking for the lost and vulnerable in the dark alleys and corners of the Cathedral Quarter and other parts of the city.

We can now respond much better to calls from bars and clubs and other partner organisations finding people in need requiring assistance. To date we have had such great success, with the SOS Response Teams and positive responses from our many stakeholder partners and people on the street that we hope to develop this programme further in 2015.

SOS Volunteers represented the charity at many outside events in 2014. Volunteers were invited to be part of a welcoming committee at the City Hall during Queen Elizabeth's historical visit to the city and after a night out volunteering on the SOS Bus, the Lord Mayor Nicola Mallon personally invited 4 of our Volunteers to a reception dinner at City Hall to celebrate the 'Unsung Heroes' of the city.

## *What makes it work?*

This organisations very existence would not be possible without the dedication and commitment of our volunteers whose passion for delivering SOS services is the driving force that allows us to continue to reach out to the disadvantaged and vulnerable in our city. SOS Volunteers are the beating heart of the organisation; their unrelenting care is what inspires hope in others and makes SOS NI a trusted charity to all who know it.

We would like to thank our volunteers for all their hard work, for how they have rallied through the difficult financial times we have faced and the way in which they always provided outstanding service on the streets of Belfast.



## SOS Projects



Our Core Night-time Service operated from 2 x 60 feet 'bendy buses' which act as hubs from where we deliver our night time services. The buses act as 'Safe Havens' to clients where they can come for tea, coffee, soup, bread, medical support, caring support and a listening ear. Our 240 Volunteers provide unconditional care to the vulnerable and those in need, providing blankets, sleeping bags and clothing where required. SOS NI works in partnership with ProParamedics who provide professional medical services, in dedicated medical bays on board each bus. Our 'bendy buses' operate in Shaftsbury Square on Friday and Saturday Nights and at the Odyssey on Saturday nights. Our trained volunteers are led by one of 12 experienced Team Leaders, delivering our services between 10.30pm and 3am.

During 2014 we have also been developing our outreach service by operating 2 Response Minibuses, each with a dedicated driver and Response Team Leader. The Response Teams allow SOS NI to cover the whole of Belfast City Centre Area, proactively seeking out those in need of help and assistance. The Response Teams also provide support to walking teams; these walking teams can cover areas not accessible to the minibus.



The Response Minibuses are used to provide support at the scene, bring clients back to the 'Bendy Buses' for further assistance, take them directly to Emergency Departments or to home. SOS NI is dedicated to working in partnership with statutory agencies such as PSNI and Belfast City Council and with other volunteer groups and Third Sector bodies. During 2014, SOS NI volunteers worked a total of 9982 hours in which they interacted with over 36,125 people, providing in-depth interventions on board the SOS Buses, 145 of whom received medical treatment. 98 Clients who visited the Bus were unable to get home. 45 of these were taken home by SOS mini-buses, 22 were collected by parents and friends after being contacted by SOS volunteers and taxis were organised for a further 17 clients.



SOS NI is operating a food programme to provide food to those experiencing food poverty. In partnership with a local supermarket SOS NI collects waste food 6 nights a week. This food is delivered the following morning to a range of other volunteer organisations and Third sector bodies. The food collected is mostly perishable food, which requires a quick turnaround time. SOS NI volunteers using our SOS branded minibuses can respond to this requirement. The food collected includes bakery goods, cakes and pastries, fruit and vegetables, milk and fruit drinks.



SOS NI has developed its distribution network throughout 2014 and the organisations that benefit from the food include: The International Meeting Centre, Morning Star Hostel, Welcome Organisation, FASA, NI Community for Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Centenary House and others. During 2015 the intention is to grow the food distribution business and SOS NI is currently in discussion with a number of potential suppliers.





## **Schools Education & Empowerment Programme**

SOS does not tell young people NOT to drink – most will anyway, our task is to better prepare them...

In Northern Ireland's schools children receive an average of two and a half hours per year dealing with drugs and alcohol mostly through the Learning for Life and Work (LLW) part of the curriculum. By year 11 (14yr olds) most youngsters have adopted a chosen path and their early life-style and habits are really forming. They are ready to join adult society and are primed to start that journey with much of the news and media they see and many of their chosen role models projecting the primary methods of their transition from teenager to adult is sex and the use of alcohol and other drugs.

The education system in the UK is failing far too many of our children and yet it is primarily within the schools that we must win the battle and provide young people with the right tools to help them make 'better lifestyle choices'. Excess alcohol consumption costs Northern Ireland £900m each year and according to the British Medical Association alcohol has been a factor in 75% of stabbings, 70% of beatings and 60% of murders, with 80% of weekend Emergency Department (ED) admittances being alcohol related.

The SOS Schools programme primarily targets young people who live in areas of high deprivation and social disadvantage, a growing percentage of these children will be 'looked after children' or will be at risk children whose names are on the child protection register. In 4 phased sessions the SOS education programmes which are Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (S.T.E.M.) based, are delivered throughout the full academic year and fully engage young people in understanding the facts and myths, the physiology of the body and how alcohol impacts on behaviours. Providing a strategic view of the alcohol industry and society's use and misuse of substances taken as a whole, SOS facilitators reframe the personal relationship we each have with alcohol and provides an awareness of the financial drivers, the surrounding industry and businesses that profit as well as the consequences of both short and long term misuse of their products. We look at the impact and cost to statutory and emergency services both locally and nationally and try to develop a holistic approach to this difficult social problem.

In 2013/14 academic year the programme directly benefitted over 1250 young people in 9 schools with approximately 500 young people indirectly benefitting. This project also directly engaged and worked alongside 45 families triggering topics for discussion in the home working with parents/guardians in relation to alcohol, challenging values and promoting positive communication within the whole family. In 2015/16 we are targeting 2000 young people 11yrs to 17yrs old in 16 schools and 4 community groups, their parents/carers, teachers, mentors and community leaders.

## Project development

The SOS schools project now requires financial resourcing to extend the existing programmes to:

- Employ and train two new internal facilitators and deliver the programme into more schools
- Employ a full time Administrator
- Cover the increased cost of educational materials
- Cover the increased ancillary costs in respect of coordination and facilitation

## The Key Outcomes for the young people we work with:

- To build individual understanding, capacity and resilience - changing behaviour in more schools
- To identify need and teach 'Active Researching' to find solutions and resolve problems
- To work in groups, learn mind mapping, project plans and develop presentation skills
- To develop the right tools empowering and enabling them to make better lifestyle choices
- To gain an understanding of what are the right *social norms* and reflect on what is good citizenship
- To be part of the process in building better family and social cohesion and relationships
- Train more teachers and increase their understanding of the social issues surrounding alcohol



**“Unless we  
change  
behaviour we  
have simply  
wasted time and  
money”**

## *In Kind Contributions*

SOS is extremely grateful to all our local businesses partners who provide 'In Kind Contributions' to assist us in the delivery of our Services. These contributions are made at no cost to SOS NI and they greatly enhance the service we provide.

Allied Bakeries supply us with all the bread, pancakes, muffins and rolls that we provide at the buses. Our Coffee is provided by Johnsons Coffee, our tea is provided by Punjana and Farmview provide us with all our milk.

SOS NI relies on ProParamedic for the provision of all our medical services, this is provided at a discounted rate and is essential to the delivery of our services.

## *Partnerships*

SOS NI is committed to working in partnership to make Belfast a safer place and a place where people can feel safe. Over the past 7 years SOS NI has worked very closely with the Police service of Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and Belfast City Council. We also work closely with bars in the surrounding areas who can contact SOS during the evening and night when in need of assistance with vulnerable clients.

This collaborative approach ensures that the resources of SOS NI are targeted at the times and in areas of most need. As part of the Night Time Volunteer Steering Group we work very closely with Belfast City Centre Management, Street Pastors, Nightlife, Community Rescue Service and others. This group was established to ensure that there was co-ordination of night time volunteer services and effective communication between the different organisations.

## *Finance and logistical support*

It's important we recognise that the governance of SOS NI is supported by outside agencies who help the SOS Board and Senior Management in the delivery of its roles and responsibilities.

Thanks, to Wilkinson and Wilson we wish to extend our thanks for the monthly management accounts that inform and give us comfort and for the generosity of spirit you provided when the going gets tough.

Thanks, to the folk who've given of their time and expertise in helping us develop the various strategic, business and work plans that are the backbone of good governance in any organisation. Thanks to our bankers at Danske for their continuing support in these most difficult financial times. ***Thanks to all our friends who continue to believe in us even when we ourselves are not sure we can endure...***



**SOS N.I.**  
**COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**  
**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014**

|   | 2014<br>£      | 2013<br>£       |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>   |                |                 |
| <b>VOLUNTARY INCOME</b>   |                |                 |
| Voluntary grant income  | 87,273         | 74,782          |
| Statutory grant income  | 28,835         | 47,600          |
| Corporate grant income  | 101,149        | 60,973          |
| Individual income   | 71,912         | 17,289          |
| Events income   | 42,975         | 68,631          |
| Goods/services income   | 2,864          | 18,762          |
|   | <u>335,008</u> | <u>288,037</u>  |
| <b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>   | <u>335,008</u> | <u>288,037</u>  |
| <b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>   |                |                 |
| <b>COSTS OF GENERATING VOLUNTARY INCOME</b>                                   |                |                 |
| Staff costs – wages and salaries  | 18,185         | 21,907          |
| Subcontracted - fundraiser  | 8,400          | 8,300           |
| Event expenditure   | 4,706          | 12,627          |
|   | <u>31,291</u>  | <u>42,834</u>   |
| <b>CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</b>  |                |                 |
| Staff costs – wages and salaries  | 106,100        | 91,545          |
| Schools project   | 30,046         | 21,437          |
| Sundries  | 5,631          | 5,749           |
| Public relations  | –              | 1,800           |
| Mileage and motor expenses  | 7,605          | 6,074           |
| Volunteers clothing   | 1,427          | 4,996           |
| Volunteers training   | 1,853          | 4,718           |
| Rent  | 8,767          | 8,500           |
| Subcontracted – core worker   | 8,532          | –               |
| Insurance   | 9,845          | 10,934          |
| Telephone   | 2,045          | 2,357           |
| Design, printing and stationery   | 6,841          | 7,461           |
| Subcontracted – relief driver   | 8,882          | 10,229          |
| Advertising   | 1,086          | 1,017           |
| Professional fees   | 9,070          | 5,197           |
| Bus maintenance and fuel  | 28,466         | 27,126          |
| Repairs and computer costs  | 4,400          | –               |
| Pro Paramedics  | 22,639         | 23,062          |
| Catering supplies   | 5,947          | 6,749           |
| Bank charges and interest   | 3,378          | 1,661           |
|   | <u>272,560</u> | <u>240,612</u>  |
| <b>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>   | <u>303,851</u> | <u>283,446</u>  |
| <b>NET INCOMING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR<br/>BEFORE DEPRECIATION</b>            | <u>31,157</u>  | <u>4,591</u>    |
| Depreciation  | (21,800)       | (78,539)        |
| <b>NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES<br/>FOR THE YEAR BEFORE DEPRECIATION</b> | <u>9,357</u>   | <u>(73,948)</u> |

## Community Fundraising

Community Fundraising is a very important source of income generation for SOS NI, accounting for around 30% of the income required to delivery our services throughout the year. Community Fundraising not only raises much needed income for SOS NI but also helps to raise the SOS NI profile and engage our Volunteers in supporting SOS. During 2014 a small Community Fundraising Group was established to create a greater focus on community fundraising and this worked well throughout the year. There are a range of Community Fundraising activities that are undertaken ranging from bag packs, bucket collections and collection tins, to specific SOS NI arranged events, including sporting activities. SOS NI is also fortunate in that schools, community groups and individuals also carryout fund raising activities in support of SOS NI. We would like to thank everyone who has supported SOS NI throughout the year, without your support SOS NI would not be in a position to deliver our services in support of those most vulnerable and in crisis. The full break down of 2014's Community Fundraising intake is as follows:

Sleep Out **£3236**

Belfast Marathon **£778**

Christmas with Concentio **£1457**

Cityside Fun days **£1552**

5 a side Football Competition **£1739**

Supermarket Bag Packs **£5281**

Bucket Collections - Pubs **£2783**

Carl Frampton Fight - Collection **£2777**

Ulster Rugby - Collection **£623**

Church Contributions **£9758**

Collections Tins **£3668**

Raise the Roof Comedy Night **£1661**



Concentio Concert - May **£2180**

Memorial Evening Neil Gordon **£10270**

Golf Day **£4290**

Just Giving Contributions **£4827**

Pancakes for Medics **£1615**

Belfast Royal Academy **£2900**

Sky Dive **£500**

Slieve Donard Challenge **£459**

Sunflower Fest **£1814**

Appeals/Presentations **£1746**



**Total: £65914**





**Comedy Night:** On 27th February 2014 a comedy night was held in the Black Box in Belfast. One of the main organisers of the event was Seamus Fox an SOS Volunteer. The event was a huge success with a range of comedy acts playing to a full house raising £1661!



**Pancakes for Medics:** On pancake Tuesday SOS NI held this event to raise money to support the medical provision provided to SOS NI. Allied Bakeries kindly supplied 3500 pancakes which were delivered to 10 businesses and schools. The proceeds of the sale of pancakes of £1615 assisted in off-setting the cost of medical support.



**Musical Memorial Evening:** This event was held on 31 November in Holywood Parish Church. The musical evening was a memorial to Neil Gordon, an SOS Board Member and long-time supporter of SOS NI, who passed away earlier in the year. The event was organised by Maureen Hume and attended by many friends of Neil and the Gordon family, raising over £10,000.



**Christmas with Concentio:** This event was held in December 2014 at Stormont Presbyterian Church. Helping SOS raise £1457. The Concentio Choir entertained the audience with Christmas Carols and other musical pieces during a wonderful evening. The Concentio Choir are regular supporters of SOS NI having performed a number of fund raising concerts for us.



## **2014 SOS NI Key Events**

In delivering our Core Night Time Services SOS NI has gained significant expertise and experience in dealing with issues affecting the night time economy. As an extension of our weekend services SOS NI has also provided support to specific events during 2014. We were tasked to a number of these events by Belfast City Council, working in partnership with the Council, PSNI the NI Ambulance Service and Event Organisers.

**DJ Hardwell Concert:** In January 2014 this concert was held at the Odyssey Arena, attracting an age range of 14yr–18yr olds from across Northern Ireland. SOS NI deployed both ‘bendy buses’, medical staff and 24 volunteers. Many of the young people attending the concert came by coach and had clearly been consuming alcohol and drugs during their journey, consequently some of the young people were refused entry to the event and had nowhere to go.

Many could barely stand and SOS volunteers provided support to many of these young people, however due to the extent of intoxication, ambulances had to be called for 14 youngsters. This could have led to the loss of life and ultimately led the NI Ambulance Service to declare a major incident. For the remainder of the night NIAS staff worked closely with SOS Volunteers, using our SOS ‘bendy buses’ as the central co-ordination point for all services, it was a very upsetting and busy night’s work.

**St Patrick’s Day Celebrations:** On 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014 SOS NI provided support to the St Patrick’s Day celebrations in Belfast. In partnership with Belfast City Council, Queen’s University, UUU, PSNI and other volunteer organisations, SOS NI deployed one ‘bendy bus’ and 2 minibuses in the area of The Holylands in Belfast where we had specialist medical support on board to assess and treat those in need. Throughout the day over 20 SOS Volunteers interacted with young people in the area, providing support and assistance when necessary. The deployment of SOS Volunteers and other partners assisted in maintaining a mood of celebration and fun and though many people needed care and quite a few needed medical support no major incidents were recorded.

**A level results night:** In August 2014 SOS NI provided services in support of young people celebrating their A Level results. The SOS ‘bendy bus’ was deployed at the Odyssey arena the SOS minibuses operated as Response Teams, providing a presence throughout the City Centre area, proactively answering to requests for assistance. This was a busy night with 20 volunteers deployed helping many young people, 20 of whom required services on the bus however thankfully here were no major incidents recorded.

**Tennents Vital:** In August 2014 SOS NI deployed services in support of the Tennents Vital Concert in Boucher Road. The SOS ‘bendy bus’ was located in Shaftsbury Square, from where 2 response minibuses were operating. The minibuses patrolled the major routes to and from the venue at Boucher Road. At the conclusion of the concert SOS Volunteers stayed on to provided a presence in the immediate vicinity of the venue, assisting those lost, over-intoxicated or needing medical attention as required.