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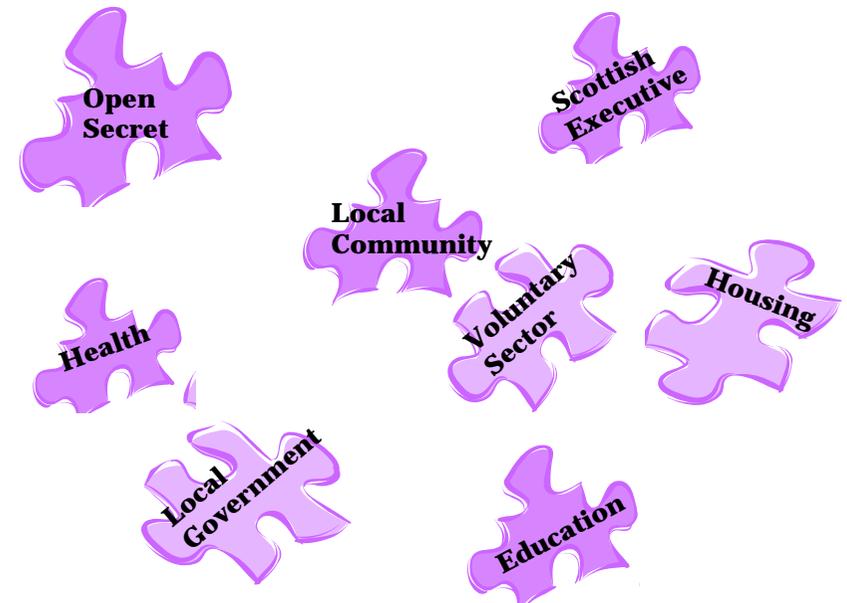
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# OPEN SECRET

## Annual Report

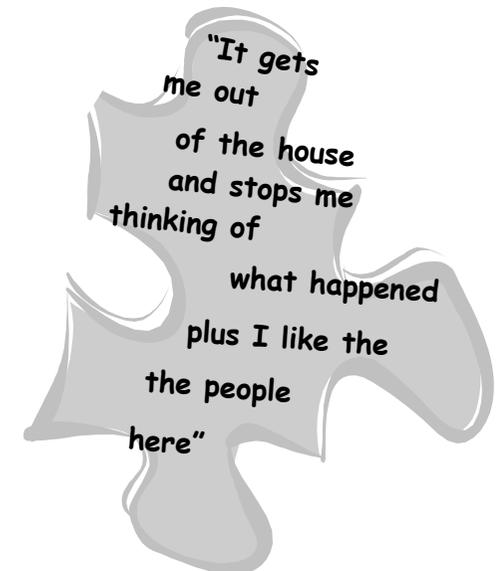
### 2004-2005



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# STIRLING YOUNG WOMEN'S GROUP





## **STIRLING YOUNG WOMEN'S GROUP**

When the age limit for accessing Open Secret services was lowered from 16 to 14 years the number of referrals of young people increased correspondingly. We offered group work as an effective way of providing a service. In addition some young women who had received one to one support had expressed interest in getting together as a group.

The idea of running a group for young women surfaced. This was a very exciting and interesting idea. Kathy Norrie, Volunteer Support Worker very kindly agreed to co-facilitate the group with me.

We had five young women interested in the group. We negotiated with Social Work who agreed to provide transport. This partnership with social work services enabled us to provide safe transport for vulnerable young women accessing an evening group.

Our aims for the group were to overcome isolation and raise self-esteem. The group ran over a 12 week period and the attendance was very good. We experimented with a range of activities. Over the 12 weeks we incorporated a variety of artwork, paper mache, small exercises and a "chill out" evening. We secured a grant from Youth Support, which enabled us to buy; dressing up clothes, to enjoy a bowling trip on the last evening, and to provide juice and crisps on a weekly basis.

We were left with a sense of achievement, but also an awareness of what had not been done. We knew that over the 12 weeks we had built up a level of trust that would provide the foundation for future growth both with group members and with partners.

***Sally Forshaw***  
***Development Worker***

***Kathy Norrie***  
***Volunteer Support  
Worker***



## **SPECIAL THANKS**

**Special thanks for the year April 2004 to  
March 2005 go to:**

**All volunteers and members of the Management  
Committee who have given of their time and energy.**

**Angela Dreyer-Larsen, who has resigned from her  
position, for her commitment and drive as Treasurer  
over the last year.**

**All the parents from the Parent Support Groups who  
have helped in Open Secret training events. Sharing of  
their experiences is always valued.**

**Service users who have fed back their experiences to  
us to enable us to better our services.**

**Bill Pitt for his continued support of the organisation.**

**The Preceptory of Falkirk.**

**Our Landlords, Couples Counselling.**

**Our many and varied supporters, funders and fund-  
raisers for their belief in Open Secret's work.**

## FOREWORD

In this report you will find highlighted just a few of the projects that Open Secret has been running in 2004.

Open Secret has three offices, Falkirk, Stirling and Alloa. Falkirk gets most of its operational money from Falkirk Council. A range of services are delivered as part of a three year service level agreement. This includes a part-time Parent Support Development Worker. Evelyn was in post until she took up the Manager's position. Parent Support consists of providing non-abusing parents of children who have experienced sexual abuse with individual and/or group work services. Two Parent Support Groups currently meet within the Falkirk office, one for parents whose children are under 16 years and the other for parents of adult survivors.

Our learning from this service provision resulted in the development of a joint Stirling/Alloa Parent Support Group based within the Stirling Office.

Many parents who have accessed our services have been willing and very able to bring their real life experiences to training.

This fantastic resource has produced wonderful positive feedback from the trainees who remark on feeling very privileged and humbled.

In Stirling we have been operating a project looking at the links between Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse, jointly funded by Stirling Council and the Scottish Executive Domestic Abuse Service Development Fund. In the past year we secured some funding from the Nationwide Charitable Trust and employed a part-time Development Worker to train befrienders. This is a new and exciting initiative for us and we will report on this more fully next year. The Stirling Homelessness Project has secured a second tranche of funding to enable us to continue to develop services to people with issues relating to abuse and homelessness.

## CHOOSE LIFE - WORK IN PRISONS





## **CHOOSE LIFE - WORK IN PRISONS**

Open Secret obtained funding from the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) through the Scottish Executive's Choose Life Fund to provide a service within three prisons, namely, HMP & YOI Cornton Vale, HM YOI Polmont and HMP Glenochil.

This service became operational on 14th February 2005. Funding was provided for the equivalent of 1 full time post, however a decision was made to employ 2 part time development workers and a sessional worker.

We were soon engaged in an active induction period within the prisons and we were able to meet a variety of prison personnel including Governors, Prison Officers, Medical Staff, Psychologists, Chaplains and Social Workers. We have undertaken SPS training in a number of areas; "Anti Hostage", "Act" and "Key Training".

Practical details were attended to during the first few weeks alongside the service being publicised widely.

A referral system was put in place and by the end of March 2005 Open Secret was in business!

Initial feedback from service users is very positive.

Six months into the project we are all looking forward to the challenges of working in this environment.

***Kay Long & Ilene Easton***  
***Development Workers***

***Sue McDougall***  
***Sessional Worker***

In Alloa we are funded by Clackmannanshire Council and The Robertson Trust. This current funding enables us to run a limited service in the area. We have come to realise over the past year that the demand for our service in Alloa far exceeds the resources we have coming in.

Covering the Forth Valley area also means we can access support from the Health Board. We receive funding each year to support our direct service.

Choose Life is a Scottish Executive Initiative aimed at reducing suicide in Scotland. We successfully bid for three year's funding to undertake long term group work with women in Falkirk and in Stirling and also to develop a dedicated service for men in Stirling. In addition we received one year funding for long term group work with women in Alloa. These projects have enabled us to look at the value of long term work in Open Secret. Previously, our funding related to the delivery of short term services. We will be collating and writing up our findings from this work.





# STAFF TEAM

## FALKIRK OFFICE

Evelyn Kennedy  
Debra Pickering  
Patricia Nunn  
Vacancy

Manager  
Depute Manager  
Development Worker  
Development Worker (Parent Support)  
Development Worker  
Development Worker (Cornton Vale)  
Development Worker (Polmont YOI)  
Administrator  
Administrative Assistant  
Administrative Assistant  
Finance Officer

Prentice Smy  
Kay Long

Ilene Easton  
Traci Kirkland  
Maryanne Whitelaw  
Lindsey Hemsely  
Gina Williamson

## STIRLING OFFICE

Vacancy  
Hazel Walker  
Sally Forshaw

Development Worker  
Development Worker  
Development Worker—  
(Homelessness Project)  
Volunteer Co-ordinator  
Administrative Assistant

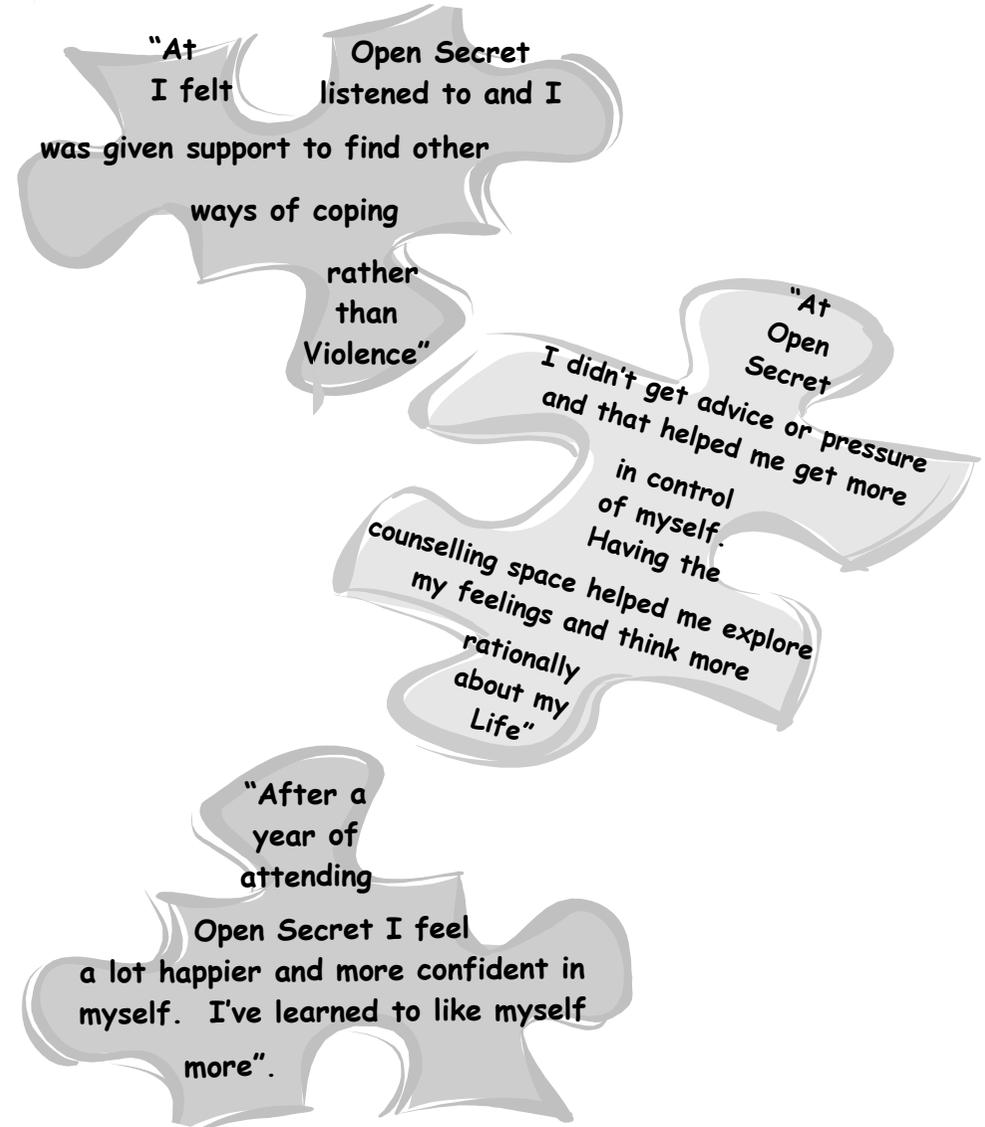
Marijke Moerman  
Morven Cattigan

## ALLOA OFFICE

Anna Gibbons  
Angela Wallace

Development Worker  
Administrative Assistant

# YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORK





## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORK

This year has involved setting the foundation for effective youth work within Open Secret.

New publicity material was developed to promote the service specifically for young people and update policies and new procedures developed to ensure we are keeping adequate records while complying with child protection requirements.

Over the last year, a combined effort between staff and volunteers resulted in an individual service for over 70 young people. One of the challenges has been to secure match funding for the Comic Relief posts and we have secured this funding from Children In Need. This new funding will enable us to extend our service to young people from age twelve.

Specific partnership work has included links with Grangemouth High School through the Grangemouth Locality Health Promotion Group. Currently we are working with Social Work Services—Throughcare and Aftercare, to provide social activities for young people. We are also participating in joint bids to enable us to develop these services. Joint working with Impact Arts in Glasgow is planned for the coming year and links with Dialogue Youth will involve young service users in gaining the confidence to join a Focus Group. This will also support young people and help them to contribute to local community planning.

**Prentice Smy**  
**Youth Development Worker**



## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Jackie Higgins  
Allison Hunter  
Lorraine McColl  
Ann McDougall  
Claire Morris  
Prem Bhamra  
Wendy Brown  
Rosemary Davies  
Sally Forshaw  
Kira Harvison  
Pauline O'Brien  
Jan Robertson  
Iain Wilson  
Barbara Murray

Norma Lowrie  
Irene MacDonald  
Sue McDougall  
Alan McKie  
Helen Baldwin  
Vicky Boslem  
Lynn Cunningham  
Sue Devlin  
Yvonne Gray  
Kathleen Norrie  
Carole Shaw  
Catherine Taylor  
Elaine Woods

***If you feel you have the skills, time and commitment to further the work of Open Secret and would like more information about volunteering, please contact Patricia Nunn on 01324 630100 or email [patricia@opensecret.org](mailto:patricia@opensecret.org)***

## SESSIONAL WORKERS

Nicki Baker  
Helen Lamb  
Lorraine McColl  
Marijke Moerman  
Jacquie Sharp

Linda Grierson  
Maggie Lewis  
Sue McDougall  
Kathleen Norrie  
Mark Johnstone





## **OPEN SECRET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

In thinking about this introduction to the 2004/05 Annual Report, I found myself reminded of the Chinese saying 'May you live in interesting times'. It is difficult to think of a more appropriate description for the past year in that it has been interesting, stimulating and often scary.

Open Secret has a new manager – Evelyn Kennedy – who is well placed to lead the organisation through what will be challenging times.

Managing a value led organisation like Open Secret is increasingly demanding. The Management Committee is tasked, first and foremost with being legally responsible for Open Secret. Beyond that, it is our responsibility to ensure that the organisation is accountable to staff and volunteers, to our funders, to our clients, and to Local and National Government.

The services that we provide cost money and much time is spent in trying to access funds from a variety of sources. The complexity of our work is a direct result of the complexity of the many funding streams that support Open Secret.

The Management Committee would hope to provide security and continuity at this time of re-evaluation of strategy and direction.

We need to stand back from the day-to-day operation of the service and take an objective view of the critical issues of the strategy, the allocation of resources and the long-term financial security of Open Secret.

Attracting people with the necessary skills to serve on the Management Committee has been difficult but we are hopeful that with some assistance from the Volunteer Centre we will be up to full strength shortly.



## **STIRLING/ALLOA CHOOSE LIFE LONG TERM SUPPORT GROUP**



# **STIRLING/ALLOA CHOOSE LIFE LONG TERM SUPPORT GROUP**

As a direct result of Choose Life funding in both Stirling (3 yrs) and Alloa (1 yr), Open Secret have been able to offer a longer term group facility for women who have survived child sexual abuse. This group takes place in a community setting and commenced in February of this year and will run for 1 year and be evaluated to inform future groups.

Women combat huge fears to come together. They gain a sense of belonging and feel less socially isolated. The best way to record the work they have achieved is, with their permission, to share some of their feelings.

Many women present a different face for the world. One woman's drawing was of a card with a sun on the front and clouds and storms inside.

***Hazel Walker & Anna Gibbons  
Development Workers***



You will read in these pages of the commitment of staff and volunteers. You will read that Open Secret has supported people to connect with the pain of the past in ways that give them the strength to move on to build a future. You will read of the imagination that has gone into creating safe space and time for those using the service and you will read of the importance that Open Secret places on developing partnerships, raising awareness and campaigning on issues of child protection and sexual abuse.

I am proud to be associated with such a dynamic organisation and I would like to thank all staff, Friends, volunteers and members of the Management Committee for their continued support.

***Ellen Dickie  
Chair  
Management Committee***

**Do you have about 4–5 hours per month to commit to working with a vibrant, exciting and challenging organisation?**

**If you are interested in becoming a member of the Management Committee please give me a call on 01786 472449.**



## TREASURER'S REPORT

From a personnel point of view, the year has been a difficult one with two changes throughout the period. However, the situation has been resolved and the financial systems in place are working well. The amount of work taken on by Open Secret has increased substantially from previous years and each project has to be accounted for on an individual basis for funders reports. This adds pressure to the finance and administration team of Open Secret and also means that Wages are often complicated. Additional funding has been received from the Scottish Executive Violence Against Women Service Development Fund, Stirling Council Homeless Task Force Fund, Nationwide, Choose Life and Comic Relief.

The financial outcome of £15,167 profit this year against £3,637 deficit of last year demonstrates that the organisation has worked hard to turn the situation around by £18,804. Total income for 2005 increased by £76,389 in 2004. Donations increased by an impressive 154% and earned income through training, funded sessional work and room hire has increased by 75% in the year. Both of these have made a big contribution to the overall healthy end of financial year picture.

There is however, a continual problem to keep the core activity of the organisation funded in the three different areas of Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire. This is a particular problem in Clackmannanshire where the core cost of the service being provided is not being adequately funded. It is a continual battle to raise funds for core activity without which the wonderful projects Open Secret runs could not exist.

**Angela Dreyer-Larsen**



## FRIENDS OF OPEN SECRET





## FRIENDS OF OPEN SECRET

The past year has been one of the busiest for the Friends group, in fact the busiest ever. Since securing the grant from Direct Grants, a fund administered by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, we have been able to achieve a great deal, from employing our own Development Worker to arranging a whole host of activities.

We, as a group, attended a play “A Load of Old Women and a Bunch of Slappers” as part of the Edinburgh Festival – Oh yes, we treated ourselves to tea beforehand.

A very successful massage training course was held over two days last September and one member decided to go on a course at Falkirk College (now Forth Valley College) to specialise in body massage.



We also organised craft workshops i.e. glass painting, candle making, card making and paper crafting, this was something to behold. The group also organised Christmas card making workshops. The cards were sold to boost our funds.

Some members of the group attended various events with members of Open Secret staff – The Health Hut event in Grangemouth and a May Day Safety Event in Stirling. In January this year we arranged a very successful five week course concentrating on Women’s Safety – this was an extremely helpful course and we all developed our own strategies in keeping us safe.

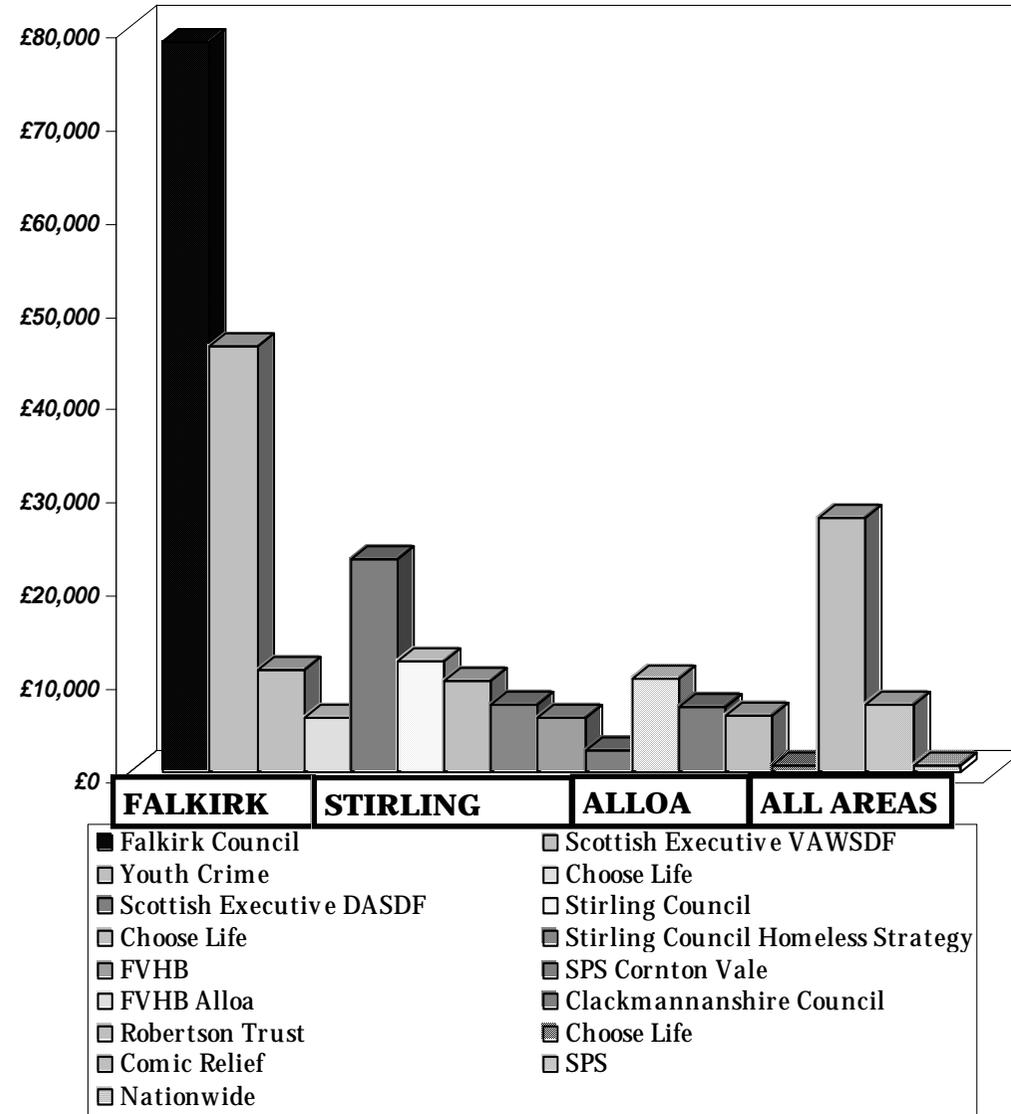
We also arranged a drumming workshop taster – this was a very enjoyable 2 hours .

I am sure I’ve overlooked something but as you can see it was a busy year!

**Kate**



## FUNDING April 2004— March 2005





## MANAGER'S REPORT



Even now it's hard to imagine that Catriona Laird no longer works for Open Secret. Catriona and Open Secret were almost synonymous. If you thought about one, you thought about the other!

Catriona left Open Secret in June 2005 ending a period of 11 years working relentlessly in the field of childhood sexual abuse and other related issues.

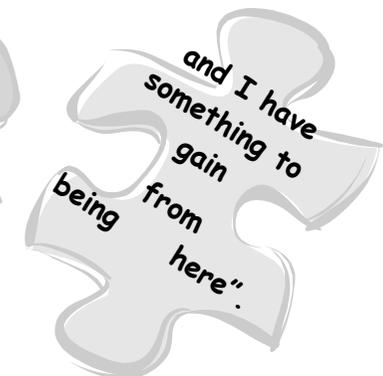
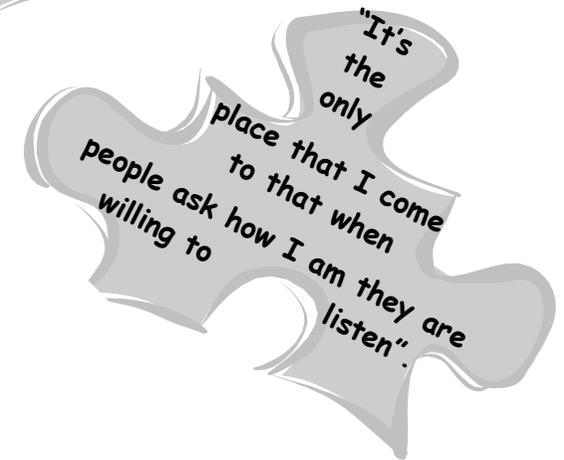
In 1994 Catriona, working alongside a part-time administrator, set up Open Secret in a small office in the Old Sheriff Court building in Falkirk. Today we have 3 offices providing services across Forth Valley and a staff complement of 16 (full and part time staff).

We should never underestimate the monumental task faced by Catriona and the steering group in the early years of developing this service. Many similar organisations have folded whilst Open Secret has gone from strength to strength.

I joined the organisation in 1998 and from the outset was struck by Catriona's energy and determination to tackle issues (often head on) and to rise to the many challenges she faced. Undeterred, Catriona had the ability to encourage and establish creative and diverse ways of addressing the effects of abuse upon individuals, groups and communities. In turn this helped her towards developing new initiatives.



## CHOOSE LIFE LONG TERM THERAPY GROUP



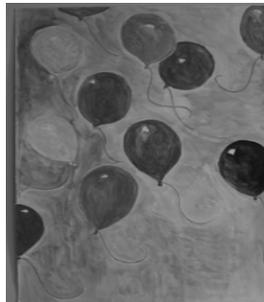


## **CHOOSE LIFE LONG TERM THERAPY GROUP**

This group is funded by the Scottish Executive Choose Life initiative and offers a longer term facilitated group to survivors whose lives have been affected by suicide or self harming coping strategies.

The group began on 24th August 2004 and is funded until March 2006.

The group has worked to create a safe space where women can share their strength and their vulnerabilities, to listen to each other and to be heard.



In the room where the group meets there is a picture painted by a person who has used the services of Open Secret. One of the women believes this picture symbolises some of the process of the group. She says “The balloons represent the different problems that the women bring. Balloons hold a lot of air and like balloons we hold a lot of feelings. We can let go of these feelings safely in the group.”

***Patricia Nunn & Anna Gibbons  
Development Workers***



In accepting the post of Manager, I did so in the knowledge that challenges in relation to funding continue as does society's denial of childhood sexual abuse.

Open Secret has an experienced and committed staff team, including sessional and volunteer support workers where all individuals are driven by strong values and a real and clear sense of our purpose and direction.

Alongside this, we have a Management Committee who, whilst relatively new, share our vision and sense of commitment and determination to provide accessible and meaningful services.

We are inspired by our work and in particular by our service users courage and determination and through working in partnership we will continue to provide services that address and meet real needs as you will see as you peruse our report.

***Evelyn Kennedy  
Manager***



## SERVICES FOR WOMEN WITH LONG TERM COMPLEX NEEDS

In the midst of a busy year developing working partnerships, providing a direct service to survivors and training/supporting volunteers, there are two pieces of work that stand out for me.

The first was my involvement with colleagues from Health, Social Work and other voluntary agencies in organising an Open Space event on 1st March 2005 at Falkirk Town Hall. The event was funded by Choose Life via the Falkirk Suicide Prevention Liaison Group and its purpose was to create an Open Forum where people whose lives have been affected by suicide/suicidal feelings and or self harm could inform services and service planners about their needs. This event represented a model of community working and active citizenship where people who use services were supported to lead workshops discussing their burning issues and to have a say in what services should be provided.

The second was a teambuilding away day to celebrate the commitment of Open Secret's worthy volunteers. We were ferried across to the lovely island of Inchailloch, a nature reserve on Loch Lomond, where we camped for the night, shared a terrific barbeque with the seagulls and ducks and learnt about the islands flora, fauna and history on a guided walk.

For volunteers and staff working with the affects of sexual abuse and violence this tranquil place offered a space to reflect, refresh and restore hope and energy. It also gave us an opportunity to celebrate the partnership between staff and volunteers and build working relationships.



**Patricia Nunn**  
**Development Worker**



## SERVICES FOR WOMEN WITH LONG TERM COMPLEX NEEDS

