



Omagh Support & Self-Help Group

**Strategic Plan
2004 to 2007**

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Introduction & Background to OSSHG

- 1.1 Omagh Support & Self Help Group (OSSHG) was founded in the aftermath of the Omagh Bomb in 1998. Widely acknowledged as the worst single act of terrorism in the last 30 years, on Saturday 15th August 1998 at 3.10pm a car bomb exploded in Omagh, County Tyrone, killing 29 people plus two unborn children, and physically injuring over 200 others. 21 died where they fell while 8 more died on the way to, or in, hospital. Nine children (5 girls and 4 boys; including an 18 month-old baby), two unborn children, 14 women and 6 men died at the scene or in hospital. The powerful blast wave was so powerful that the bodies of several victims were never found. Further from the epicentre, the blast tore limbs of many people. The intense heat of the explosion caused severe burns. As well as the blast, shards of glass and metal sliced through the crowd of civilians. The bomb not only affected those directly injured and bereaved, but impacted significantly on the wider community.
- 1.2 A cross-departmental strategy to deliver practical help and services to victims of the Troubles, launched on 11 April 2002 by the NI Assembly, defines “victims” as *“The surviving physically and psychologically injured of violent, conflict related incidents and those close relatives or partners who care for them, along with those close relatives or partners who mourn their dead”*.
- 1.3 Omagh Self Help & Support Group is a victims group, made up of victims from all denominations and walks of life. With a current membership of over 60 victims of the Omagh Bomb, the group is represented by a Committee of 15 members, including Chairman, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Whilst the group primarily operates within the area of Omagh District, it retains close alliances with victims of the bomb located in Buncrana and Spain, as well as a wider network of victims throughout Ireland.
- 1.4 The group’s core objects, as set out in its constitution, are summarised as:
 - ☑ Relief of poverty, sickness, disability of victims
 - ☑ Advancement of education and protection
 - ☑ Raising awareness of needs and experiences of victims, and the effects of terrorism
 - ☑ Welfare rights advice and information
 - ☑ Improving conditions of life for victims

The Current Situation

Setting the Strategic Context

2.1 The purpose of this is to examine the various reports and research into victim's issues in Northern Ireland so as to establish the strategic context in which the Strategic Plan of the Omagh Support and Self Help Group is developed. It begins by following the developmental pattern of the Victims Strategy for Northern Ireland from 1998 - the year of the Omagh Bomb and the year the Omagh Support and Self Help Group were established.

Developmental Programme for Victims

2.2 1998 saw the publication of the SSI Report (*Living with the Trauma of the Troubles*), which examined the feasibility of providing greater recognition for those who have become victims in the last thirty years as a consequence of events in Northern Ireland. The main recommendation outlined in the report was:

“To improve coordination and liaison of services, a small advisory panel should be established in each Health and Social Services Board’s area, representative of the range of professionals and voluntary organisations working with those who have been affected by the conflict. The panel should include individuals who have encountered trauma and would be willing to advise the panel in the light of their own personal experience.”

This year also saw publication of the Bloomfield Report (*We Will Remember Them*) of which key recommendations were:

- ☑ Community developments taking place should be supported and encouraged by Boards, Trusts and other funding bodies as part of an overall coordinated response to the needs of affected individuals;
- ☑ The location of services must be carefully considered to ensure that they are easily accessible to those who need them;
- ☑ The manpower requirements of the Psychology Service should be examined;
- ☑ The DHSS/PSNI should convene a Northern Ireland working group to address concerns about the counselling of persons affected by the conflict;
- ☑ Each Trust should prepare suitable explanatory pamphlets on what services are available in its area with points of reference where help can be accessed.

2.3 The 1998 Statement published in the Belfast Agreement stated that it is essential to acknowledge and address the suffering of victims as a necessary element of reconciliation. The Establishment of Victims Liaison Unit, NIO, followed this in the same year. The DHSS/PSNI Circular on victim's issues was also published in 1998. The focus of the circular was to instruct Boards and Trusts to take forward the recommendations of the Bloomfield and SSI reports. The circular recommended the establishment of the Trauma Advisory Panels and outlined their key responsibilities as:

- ☑ Co-ordination of services in the Board's area;
- ☑ Enabling greater coherence and cohesion of the network which exists in the area;

- ☑ Improving the understanding of emerging needs and the shared development of methods for tackling them; and
- ☑ Clarifying and promoting a better understanding of roles and relationships on the continuum of provision.

2.4 The following year, 1999 saw the establishment of HSS Board Trauma Advisory Panels. It was also the year that the Inter-departmental working group for victims was established; this was followed in the year 2000 by the establishment of Victims Unit, OFMDFM. In 2001 Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government stated that:

“The Executive will continue to pay special attention to the particular difficulties faced by the victims of the ‘Troubles.’”

The Programme for Government recognised that service provision is not the remit of one department but rather a theme that should run across the current administration. One of the actions of Programme for Government is to:

“Put in place a cross-departmental strategy for ensuring that the needs of victims are met through effective, high quality help and services. This will be facilitated by an inter-departmental working group on victims.”

Between 2000-2002 Trauma Panel Coordinators were appointed in some of the Health Boards, with the exception of Sperrin Lakeland who had its own Victims Support Officer. In 2002 the OFMDFM had funding identified for Trauma Advisory Panel Coordinator Posts. In 2002 there was the publication of Victims Strategy (*Reshape, Rebuild, Achieve*). Victims have been defined in the Strategy as:

“The surviving physically and psychologically injured of violent, conflict related incidents and those close relatives or partners who care for them, along with those close relatives or partners who mourn their dead”.

The key messages coming from the consultation exercise and findings from the research for the above strategy was that:

- ☑ **victims want recognition of their situation;**
- ☑ **more and better information on available services should be provided;**
- ☑ **practical help and services are required, particularly in the areas of health, education and learning, housing and developing business skills;**
- ☑ **the Trauma Advisory Panels have an important role to play; and**
- ☑ **partnerships would be vital in delivering the strategy.**

2.5 The strategy outlined a number of key aims that should be recognised by all groups providing services to victims of the conflict. The aims of the victims' strategy are to:

- ☑ Promote and facilitate an improvement in the standard of services being provided to victims and to seek to address any identified gaps in service provision;
- ☑ Increase awareness in Government and the wider public sector regarding the needs of victims and to encourage a sympathetic and understanding approach to meeting those needs;

- ☑ Secure the implementation of policies and practices designed to meet the identified needs of victims in a strategic manner across the devolved administration and ensure that barriers to access are overcome;
- ☑ Ensure that all Government Departments and Public Authorities recognise the particular circumstances of victims and play their part in ensuring that barriers to social inclusion are overcome;
- ☑ Ensure that Government Departments and statutory agencies adopt a committed and co-ordinated approach to victims' needs, working, where appropriate, in partnership with voluntary and community organisations;
- ☑ Increase awareness among the public (especially victims and their representatives) to the approach of the devolved administration in meeting the needs of victims;
- ☑ Meet the commitments on victims' issues contained in the Programme for Government.

Specifically the strategy gives details of how the different sectors should implement the strategy all of which would require consultation work in specific areas with victims.

Victims Needs

2.6 Research by Deloitte & Touche (2001) into services to victims of the troubles found that:

- ☑ the increase in public funds over the past two/three years has increased awareness of victims related issues and resulted in an increased range of services to victims which are accessible at a local level
- ☑ the establishment of the Victims Liaison Unit (VLU), the Victims Unit and the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund has provided further funding opportunities, which have sought to address issues relevant to victims.
- ☑ there was a concern that funding structures created unnecessary competition between the statutory and voluntary sector
- ☑ health service provision to victims is determined by geographical location and there is an absence of a centralised strategy for victims
- ☑ operation and functioning of the Trauma Advisory Panels is hugely variable
- ☑ Health Trusts have had to assume greater responsibility for services to victims without any increase in funding
- ☑ there was a need for training and mentoring for group workers, as well as standardised and accredited counselling and specialist training within the health service
- ☑ there was a perceived need for a public health campaign to make people aware of the effects of trauma and de-stigmatisation of the concept of being a 'victim of the troubles'.

2.7 The research also highlighted the views of victims which were:

- ☑ groups tend to define services in the context of the voluntary and community sector rather than in terms of Government or statutory providers
- ☑ the respective roles of the voluntary and statutory sectors needed clarification
- ☑ there is no such thing as a 'typical victim' and this is reflected in group activity which attempts to cater for a broad spectrum of needs
- ☑ groups expressed a reluctance to avail of services defined as 'Government' or 'statutory'
- ☑ there was a degree of hostility towards 'Government' and some argued that the expectations following Bloomfield had not been met

- ☑ some groups believed that they were being used as part of a wider political agenda and that a group's political disposition impacted on how a group was funded
- ☑ concerns were raised that a "victims industry" was evolving as an end in itself rather than a means to an end
- ☑ there was a perception that a 'golden circle of safe groups' existed (i.e., certain groups were financially favoured by Government and funding bodies).

While the views presented above came from people who were affiliated to victims groups, the views presented below belong to victims who are not members of any groupings which were as follows:

- ☑ some individual victims did not want to join groups because they believed groups had political agendas
- ☑ individuals had 'survived' without groups and for many, grief was a private affair not for public consumption
- ☑ individual victims were unaware of the range of services available to them, other than through contact with a GP or through the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund (NIMF);
- ☑ the NIMF was generally welcomed although concerns were raised with respect to administrative procedures
- ☑ strong views were expressed that Government funding was becoming too centered on groups to the detriment of individuals
- ☑ the very visible responses to particular tragedies within Northern Ireland tended to reinforce feelings of neglect amongst individuals.

This research has highlighted the very diverse aims and objectives of victims groups but also the diverse needs and perceptions of the victims themselves.

Consultation with OSSHG Committee

2.8 A process of assessment was undertaken by members of the Committee of Omagh Support & Self Help Group as part of the strategic planning progression. Areas considered were the role of OSSHG – as it was when the group first started up, and in relation to how the group has progressed over its five year's existence – and identification of its strengths and weaknesses. The key feedback from this consultation process is summarised as follows:

- ☑ The Group has not diversified from its original objective of meeting the needs of victims, and 'fighting the corner' for those affected by the Omagh Bomb, but lack of funding has restricted the level of activities the group could realistically undertake as a voluntary organization.
- ☑ Whilst the Committee recognises its public perception of 'justice' group, this is a much broader issue than simply prosecution of those responsible for the Omagh Bomb, and the group feels very strongly that justice involves the wider recognition of victim's needs and fair and equitable treatment for those affected by terrorism.
- ☑ Due to the make-up of the group, there is recognition that it is primarily focused on those *bereaved* by the Omagh Bomb. This is attributed solely to restrictions caused by lack of resources and funding and is something the Committee would be keen to address.

Strengths

- ☑ The Committee sees its key strength in the solidarity and determination of the group to continue urging for fair and proper treatment of victims – evidenced in its continued presence after five years with virtually no funding input.
- ☑ The fact that the group is cross denominational, and is made up of people from all walks of life is a further strength.
- ☑ The membership of the group in that it is a representative body for victims made up of victims of the Omagh Bomb is a strength in that the group is considered ‘accessible’ to victims throughout the country
- ☑ Many of the group’s achievements are seen as strengths – the classification of the ‘Real IRA’ as a terrorist organization, linkages created with other victims in Buncrana, Claudy, Dublin and Monaghan , and development of an archiving project and film depicting the events and effects of the Bomb are examples of this.

Weaknesses

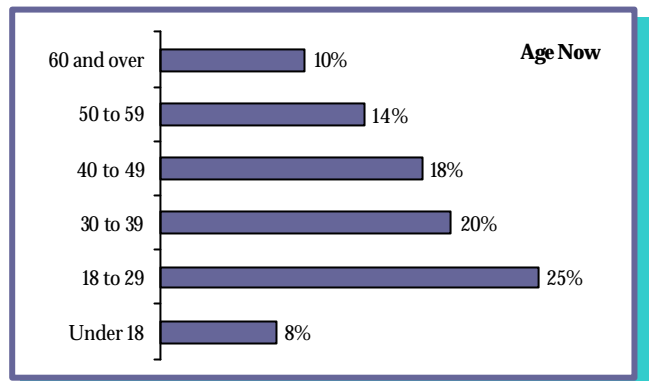
- ☑ Three key weaknesses were identified in the course of the consultation process which have significantly affected the group’s ability to develop and meet its core objectives. These are:
 - The management and administrative capability of the group. Because of the circumstances of the group’s formation, many of the committee would never have been involved in a community/voluntary organization before. Because of this, there is a feeling within the committee that there is a real need now to look at its structures and systems to enable efficiency and effectiveness. Specific areas which the group feels weak in include funding applications, monitoring and evaluation, planning and co-ordination, and proper organization and management of meetings.
 - Lack of funding, strongly linked with the group’s capacity (and never having been in a position to require applications for funding etc in the past), has significantly restricted the groups activities. There is a strong belief that, with financial support and management/administrative back-up, the group could do so much more than it is currently able.
 - A negative public and statutory perception of the group as being simply about lobbying for justice in a prosecutory sense. Whilst this is an important issue to the individuals involved in the group, there is a strong will as a group to promote and address the wider ‘victims’ issue of proper addressing of victims needs, to promote the effects of terrorism and create a lasting memorial to those affected by the Omagh Bomb, to build on linkages with other victims, and develop as a positive voice in the development of practical victim support services.

Consultation with OSSHG Members

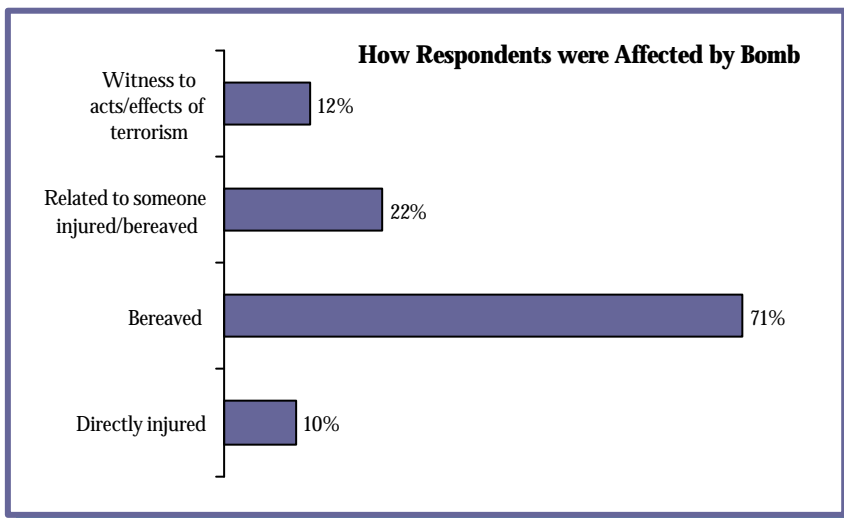
2.9 A questionnaire was sent out to 60 victims of the Omagh Bomb who have membership and/or linkages with Omagh Support & Self Help Group at the end of 2003 (a copy of which is included as Appendix I). The purpose of this exercise was to qualify beliefs and opinions held by the Committee of those they represent in relation to uptake, adequacy and satisfaction with existing support services (voluntary and statutory), and to gain a clear perspective of how OSSHG could best meet the needs of its members.

Demographic Details

2.10 Respondents were almost equal in relation to gender (45% females and 55% male), and was across a representative range of ages as illustrated on the right. Over half of all respondents are aged under 40 years of age, with almost a quarter of those taking part having been under 18 years of age at the time of the Bomb (24%).



Almost three in four of all respondents have been directly bereaved as a result of the Omagh Bomb, in keeping with the Committee's

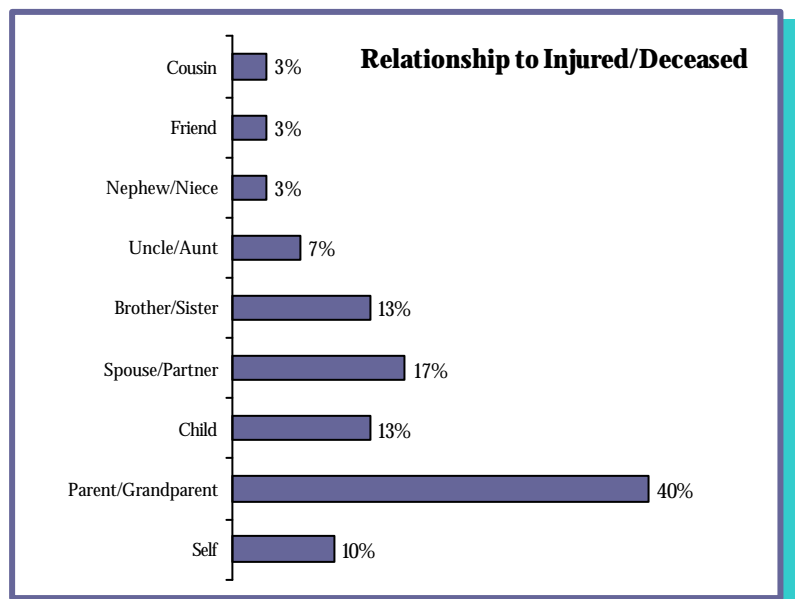


appraisal of its make-up. One in five were directly injured or witness to the atrocity, and a further one in five related to someone injured or bereaved (as illustrated below). The fact that the figures add up to over 100% highlights the multiple effects the Bomb had on members of the OSSHG. Not only were members affected personally on that day, but the impact of the Bomb also affected their families and friends.

The chart below highlights the far-reaching effects of the Bomb on family networks, with 4 in 5 of respondents

having a member of their immediate family killed or injured, and a further 1 in 7 a member of the wider family network.

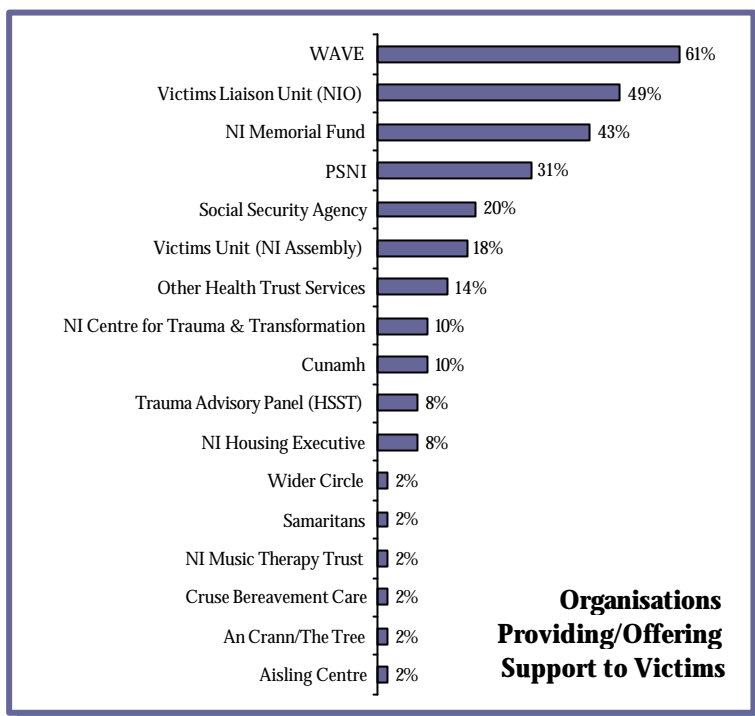
Two thirds of all those consulted have an ongoing health problem as a result of the Omagh Bomb, 9 in 10 of these having Depression or a depressive illness (such as agoraphobia or Post Trauma Stress Disorder). A further one in ten have physical health problems or disabilities as a direct result of the Omagh Bomb.



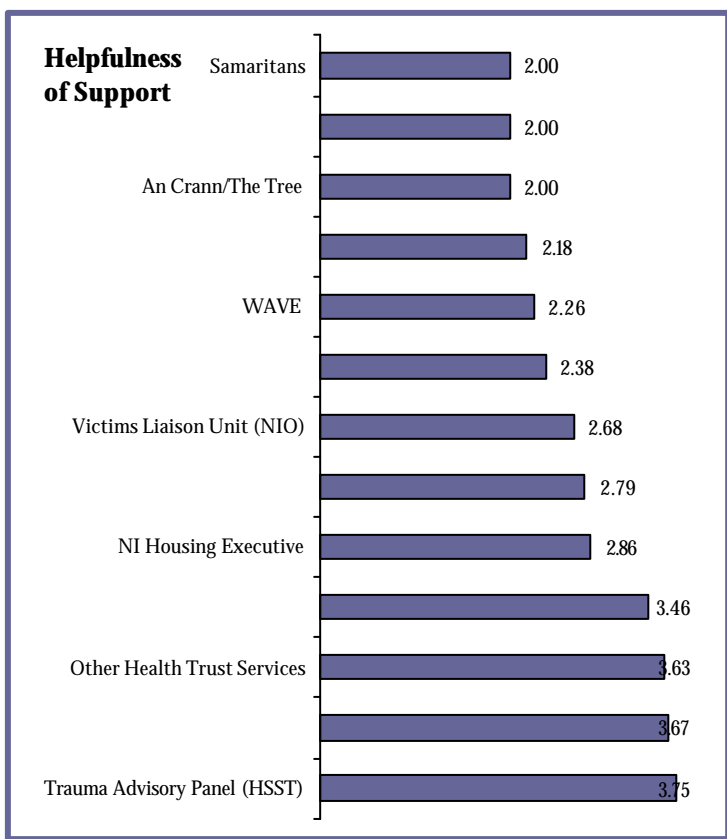
Support for Victims Interviewed

2.11 A wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies with a remit for/interest in supporting victims of terrorism were listed, and respondents invited to identify those organizations who offered support, or whose services were sought, in the aftermath of the Omagh Bomb. The most commonly identified support service was that of WAVE (as illustrated), a voluntary based organization, with statutory agencies the most frequent following this. A number of organizations listed had not contacted/been contacted by any of those interviewed. These were:

- FACT (Families Achieving Change Together)
- FAIR (Families Acting for Innocent Relatives)
- New Life Counselling Service
- Nexus Institute
- Threshold
- VAST (Victims And Survivors Trust)
- Womens Aid Federation



Poor uptake of support services in general, plus the lack of a single clearly identified source of support (HSST service or other statutory or voluntary agency) may support the findings of research by Deloitte & Touche (2001) into services to victims of the troubles which highlighted that many victims were unaware of the range of services available to them.

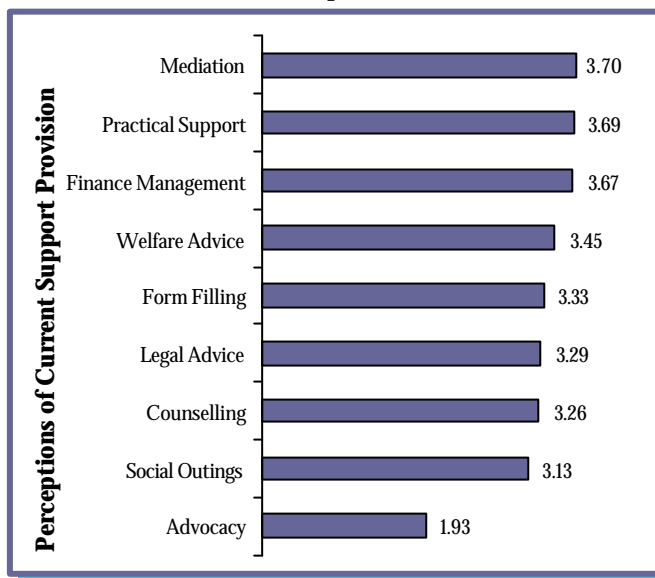


Respondents were asked to assess the helpfulness of support received by the above-named providers on a scale of 1 to 4 (with 1 being Very Helpful and 4 being Not At All Helpful). Voluntary organisations (including the Samaritans, Cruse, An Crann and WAVE) were general considered to be mostly helpful to those interviewed, with HSST based services classed as not helpful at all to those interviewed.

A concerning **one in five respondents had negative feelings** after receiving one or more victim support services. The most common grievance expressed was that support was of a poor standard, and that there was a lack of

understanding or experience by support providers into the needs of victims. Over half of those who had negative feelings after receiving support stated they ended up feeling worse than they had before seeking help, and had severe depression as a result.

Almost one in five of all respondents felt that either there was no help available to them, or that it was too difficult to access, with a further one in ten stating that where support was provided, it was discontinued after a short period of time.



Overall, perceptions of current support provision amongst those interviewed are very low, with advocacy (belonging to a group of people that represents victims experiences and needs) the only form of support respondents felt satisfied in.

Victims interviewed felt that support provision was poorest in terms of mediation with press, police and public officials, practical support in day to day living in the event of bereavement/injury, and help with personal financial management. Whilst it was generally expressed that there are a lot of organisation providing counselling services, counselling specific to victims of terrorism is perceived to be poor (as indicated previously). Support

required, as expressed by those interviewed, focussed on practical, hands-on support that recognised the needs of those who have become bereaved and/or injured (mentally and physically) through terrorism.

Support Required

Financial Help/Practical Support	46%
Consideration of victims' needs	38%
Getting together/Sharing experiences	15%
Counselling	15%

Echoing sentiments expressed in Deloitte & Touche's 2001 findings, there is a tangible feeling of detachment of those victims interviewed in relation to the government, as illustrated below. It would seem that there is a strong perception of neglect in terms of support and recognition of victims and their needs, and a lack of confidence in the statutory structures and supports that exist.

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never	<i>Don't Know/ No Response</i>
I believe the government understands my position	-	-	14%	80%	6%
I believe the government supports my position	-	2%	14%	78%	6%
I have confidence in the current political situation	-	2%	-	90%	8%
I believe there is enough support available for victims	-	18%	-	73%	10%
I believe the government cares about me	-	6%	-	82%	12%
I feel ignored	69%	16%	2%	6%	8%

Support which OSSHG could Provide

2.12 Respondents were invited to identify ways in which Omagh Support & Self Help Group could best meet the needs of its members in addition to activities already ongoing. The most common suggestions were that of providing the practical support and help that is felt to be most lacking in current support provision, and using the group's unique make-up as a victims group made up of victims to tap into the lack of understanding and recognition that is perceived in current services, as listed below.

Other Support Group could provide	
Financial Help/Practical Support	32%
Someone to talk to/understand	32%
Holidays/Social Trips	21%
Courses/Advice	18%
Justice/Address issues	18%
Properly trained Counsellors	11%
More for Youth	3%

Stakeholder Interviews

2.13 To enhance the consultation process, telephone interviews were conducted with key stakeholders whose details are shown in Appendix III. The purpose was to elicit the views and perceptions of key people with whom the group had worked with or had interactions with in the past. This was a vital component of the data collection in order to gauge the strengths, weaknesses, and possible opportunities and threat factors, which would have to be taken into account when developing the future strategy of Omagh Support & Self Help Group.

The information obtained from these interviews has been analysed and developed into the following themes and reflects the collective views and perceptions of all those interviewed.

Strengths

1. The group was generally viewed to have good potential for interagency work and development of support networks for not only the victims of the Omagh Bomb but also for support and help to other victims outside of their group.
2. Recent developments in terms of undertaking the needs analysis and strategy development were viewed as very positive steps forward.
3. The development of project based work was also described as a significant improvement in the groups overall development.
4. Have been successful in Lobbying for the Welfare of Victims.
5. Have created a high profile with the media, which could be utilised to create awareness of the group's developments in a positive manner.
6. Strategic Plan is seen as a very positive step in the group's development.

Weaknesses

1. Lack of clear objectives and understanding of the principles of the funding of victims groups.
2. Need to develop SMART Objectives.
3. Lack of ability to develop partnership working with either statutory or voluntary organisations.

4. Only one clear objective outlined by the group and that was lobbying for justice, which was automatically cutting the group off from eligibility for funding for other developments.
5. The group is generally perceived as a pressure group with little support work delivered.
6. Group is perceived as representing only a small number of the families of the Omagh Bomb.
7. Committee lack organisational and financial management knowledge, which is essential for the management and delivery of funded projects.
8. Didn't apply for Peace II Funding, which was a major mistake.
9. Group can be very demanding with the attitude that the "world owes them", and with no effort put in by them to help themselves obtain funding.
10. Lack of interaction with other victims representative groups and the voiced opinion that they are the "only real victims group".
11. Inability to communicate effectively with funding bodies, statutory organisations and other voluntary and community based organisations, has resulted in the group being perceived as un-cooperative in dealings with others.

Opportunities

1. Strategic plan will give a clear focus and direction to the Group
2. Many funding bodies, public bodies and voluntary sector organisations expressed the desire to work with and support the group.
3. The unique knowledge and expertise within the group in terms of the needs of victims and support to victims was perceived as a very valuable asset.
4. Opportunity to develop projects, which meet the criteria for funding, should be explored.
5. Opportunity exists for the group to work with the WELB on the Archiving Project.
6. Funding opportunity with the LSP for training and development.
7. The group as part of their long term sustainability should work closely with their local Health and Social Care group as they will be the commissioners of community services and the group could have input into the consultation process and aim towards the development of a service level agreement for the delivery of aspects of victims support services.
8. The group should also avail of the opportunity to have input into the consultation process for the Community Development Strategy currently being conducted by the WHSSB.
9. There are also opportunities available to work with the community relation's section of the local council.
10. There are lots of opportunities and support available to the group but it is the group's responsibility to learn to adapt and work with others.

Threats

1. Inability of the group to adapt or change in order to deliver on their Strategic Plan.
2. The failure of the group to take up the available opportunities.
3. Failure of the group to develop managerial skills or capacity building.
4. Inability to learn to work with others.
5. Inability to develop a broader strategic focus.
6. Failure to develop support services for victims.

Summary of Current Situation

2.14 While there were many positive comments and outlined opportunities highlighted, it is the overall perceptions and realizations of the groups' weaknesses, both internal and external, which have to be overcome if the group is to move forward.

The strategic planning process has been a positive and beneficial tool in developing a clear and definite direction for the group to follow and build on over the coming three years. The feedback provided by its membership highlight a number of avenues that the group can explore to meet its original objects (as set out in its constitution) and be a strong and positive influence on addressing the practical needs of those victims of terrorism both in Omagh and beyond. The feedback provided by key stakeholders has identified how best the group must develop itself in order to access supports necessary to achieve these objectives, and internal appraisal and assessment within the Committee has stimulated a new focus and appreciation of how best to progress and develop.

Vision & Mission of OSSHG

- 3.1 Because of its achievements of recent years, Omagh Support & Self Help Group is now in a position to reinforce its existing strengths, to develop new initiatives, and to face the immediate and challenging future with a focused sense of commitment to its mission.
- 3.2 The strategic planning process has given the Group the opportunity to review its focus, activities, and objectives. The core objects of the Group as its work has developed are as follows:
- ☑ Fighting the corner of all victims of the Omagh bomb
 - ☑ Challenging procedures (compensation, etc)
 - ☑ Trying to get proper respect and treatment for victims
 - ☑ Signposting/advisory based on own experiences (for example, if other victims approach the group)
 - ☑ Identifying these real needs in a wider context (through liaison with other groups, etc) and
 - ☑ Practical addressing of the needs of victims

- 3.3 On the back of this, a draft Mission Statement incorporating the above points has since been drawn up, which is:

Our mission is to promote, advocate, and address where possible, the needs of victims of the conflict in Ireland in order to achieve health, peace of mind, security and the foundations for personal growth. We are committed to addressing the real and practical needs of those bereaved and injured as a result of terrorist activity, and ensuring that victims are afforded the respect and consideration they deserve.

- 3.4 This Strategic Plan is more than aspirational - it is a statement of committed intent. At the same time, it is not a straitjacket. As conditions change, so aspects of the Plan will need to be amended, but wherever possible the Group's decisions will be guided by it.

Strategic Objectives

4.1 The strategic objectives of the group have been set out as follows:

1. To develop the management capabilities of the Committee
2. To develop the effectiveness and efficiency of the group over the next three years
3. To increase the networking capacity of the group, and develop partnership working with other victims groups and with the Statutory authorities
4. To provide practical help and support to the victims of Omagh, and to reach out and share with other victims of the troubles.
5. To continue to advocate for justice for the victims of the Omagh Bomb as part of the healing process
6. To develop projects which are needs led
7. To act as a source of information to other victims
8. To provide an educational resource which will be available to a wide audience and help preserve a very personal account of the Omagh Bomb and its aftermath
9. To incorporate a medium of continuous reflection so as to be truly representative of the needs of the group members

4.2 There are a number of projects that have been identified by the group, based on the strategic planning process, that will form the foundations upon which future growth and development can be established. These projects form the basis of the following Action Plan for Year 1, after which the Group has committed to looking again at how to further expand and develop itself as a leading victims representative and support organisation. These are summarised as follows:

Training & Capacity Building

An intensive programme of team building, training and development in management, and best practice in community group operations

Database Development

Development of a database facility which will integrate all those contacts – victims and support organisations – which the group have made contact with to date. The Group will also use its media contacts to encourage those who are not affiliated to any support group/organisation to come forward

Advice/Guidance Book

A short booklet (actual content to be defined through Committee discussion and discussions with contributors) detailing sources of help and support, entitlements, and benefits of support, intermixed with victims' experiences

Archiving Project

A project in partnership with WELB to create a lasting memorial of documentation on the events surrounding the Omagh Bomb for public access and historical annals

Corrymeela Exchange Week

Continuation of the hugely successful August trip to Corrymeela in association with Buncrana victims of the Omagh Bomb which is both cross-denominational and cross-border

Liaison with Other Victims' Groups

Meetings and residential colloquia with other victims groups (including Claudy, T Ban, and Dublin/Monaghan) which will focus on sharing of experiences interlinked with stress management/reduction therapies (e.g. aromatherapy, meditation) and social outings

Research into Victims' Needs

An extensive analysis into the experiences and needs of victims, supports received, perceptions of supports received and available, gaps and barriers in accessing support, and suggestions for improvement

Website Development

A publicly accessible worldwide domain (actual content to be defined through Committee discussion and discussions with contributors) which will likely include updates on activities of OSSHG, items/news of interest, a 'bulletin board' facility in association with other support providers, and a discussion/'chatroom' facility

Youth Programme

A cross community programme of activities for up to 20 young people affected by the Omagh Bomb which will incorporate personal development activities, awareness building, team development, and outdoor pursuits activities.

Action Plan

Objectives and Actions	Who	Timescale	Cost	Source
Aim 1- To recruit Project and Admin Officer	Management Committee & QE5 Consultancy	April – June 2004	£30,000	CRC
Aim 2 – To obtain New Offices	G. McFarland (Treasurer)	April-June 2004	£6,000	CRC
Aim 3- To Develop and run the Youth Project	Youth Project Sub-Group Leader- K. Skelton (Vice Chair)	May -July 2004	£1,800	CRC
Aim 4 – To undertake a Training Needs Analysis and Residential Training Programme for Committee	QE5 Consultancy	Completed by 31 st July 2004	£4,175	CRC
Aim 5 – To organise and Sixth Anniversary Service Completed on 15/08/04 Awarded £1350	Ann Wilson, Godfrey Wilson, Michael Gallagher and Sharon Watters (Project Officer)	June-Aug 2004	£1,350	CRC
Aim 6 – To create and distribute a Quarterly Newsletter and create a Newsletter database	Newsletter Sub-Group & Project Officer	June 2004 ongoing	To be confirmed	CRC
Aim 7 – To develop Groups Databases and update regularly	Database/Website Subgroup & Project Officer	June 2004 ongoing	To be confirmed	To seek Funding for further Development
Aim 8 – Archiving Project	Archiving Sub-Group & Sharon Watters Leader – M Breslin	September 2004-June 2005	£25,000	OLSP

Aim 9 – To create a small guide for Victims	Information and liaison Sub-Group	Pending	£4,995	CRC
Aim 10- Website Development Project	Database/Website Subgroup & Project Officer	Pending	£6,300	CRC
Aim 11- Complementary Therapies	Alternative Therapies & Cultural Sub-Group & Project Co -ordinator	Pending	£6,700	CRC
Aim 12- To hold an Art Exhibition	Alternative Therapies & Cultural Sub-Group & Project Co -ordinator	Pending	£470	Omagh District Council
Aim 13- Team Building Event	Management Committee & Project Co-ordinator	Pending	£1,700	CRC
Aim 14- Informative Evenings (Monthly) for all group members	Information & Liaison Sub-Group	Pending	To be confirmed	CRC
Aim 15- Liaison with other Victims' Group	Information & Liaison Sub-Group	Pending	£4,250	CRC
Aim – 16 Advocate for the rights of Victims & Promotion of OSSHG	PR Sub - Group	Ongoing	To be confirmed	Self –Funding
Aim – 17 To source funding and enhance sustainability	Funding Sub Group	Ongoing	To be confirmed	CRC LSP Omagh District Council Sperrin Lakeland Trust

Appendix I

Sources referenced in Strategic Context

The Social Services Inspectorate Report, *Living With The Trauma of The Troubles*, 1998

Sir Kenneth Bloomfield's report, *We Will Remember Them*, 1998

The Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety Consultation Paper, *Best Practice – Best Care*, 2001

The Deloitte & Touche Evaluation of Services to Victims and Survivors of 'The Troubles', 2001

The Northern Ireland Executive, *Programme for Government – Making a Difference 2002-2005*, 2002

The Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety Report, *Priorities for Action 2002-2003*, 2002

The Report of the Healing Through Remembering Project, 2002

The Victims Unit at the Office of the First Minister & Deputy First Minister Strategy Document, *Reshape, Rebuild, Achieve*, 2002

The Victims Unit at the Office of the First Minister & Deputy First Minister Progress Report on *Reshape, Rebuild, Achieve*, 2003

Appendix II

Omagh Support & Self Help Group Needs Analysis Questionnaire

Please note that any information contained in this survey will not be collected, held or published in any way that identifies the response given by any individual

Where possible answers are given, please tick the box that applies to you.

1. Are you...

Male Female

2. What age are you now?

Under 18 40 to 49
18 to 29 50 to 59
30 to 39 60 or over

3. At what age did you become a victim?

Under 18 40 to 49
18 to 29 50 to 59
30 to 39 60 or over

4. How were you affected?

Directly injured Please go to Q4a
Bereaved Please go to Q4b
Related to someone injured/bereaved Please go to Q4b
Witness to acts/effects of terrorism Please go to Q5
Other (please tell us about this)

Please go to Q5

4a. Do you have a disability/ongoing health difficulties as a result of injuries sustained?

No Yes

Please tell us about this...

4b. What is your relationship to the deceased/injured person?

Parent
Child
Spouse/Partner
Brother/Sister
Uncle/Aunt
Nephew/Niece
Friend

5. Were you offered/did you seek support from any of the following, and how did you find this support?

	Offered Help	Sought Help	Very helpful	Mostly helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not at all helpful
Victims Liaison Unit (NIO)						
Victims Unit (NI Assembly)						
Trauma Advisory Panel (HSST)						
Other Health Trust Services						
NI Housing Executive						
NI Memorial Fund						
PSNI						
Social Security Agency						
An Crann/The Tree						
Cruse Bereavement Care						
Cunamh						
Aisling Centre						
FACT (Families Achieving Change Together*)						
FAIR (Families Acting for Innocent Relatives)						
New Life Counselling Service						
Nexus Institute						
NI Centre for Trauma & Transformation						
NI Music Therapy Trust						
Samaritans						
Threshold						
VAST (Victims And Survivors Trust)						
WAVE						
Wider Circle						
Womens Aid Federation						

* Previously Families Against Crime by Terrorism

6. Did you have any negative feelings after seeking/being offered support?

No

Yes

Please tell us about this...

7. How do you see current provision in relation to the following?

- Advocacy**
Belonging to a group of people that represents your experiences and needs
- Counselling**
Including relaxation techniques and coping tools
- Financial Management Support**
In managing your finances in the event of bereavement/injury/other loss
- Help with Form Filling**
For benefits and other forms
- Legal Advice & Support**
In your rights, the pursuit of justice, etc
- Mediation**
Help in dealing with media, public officials, police, etc
- Practical Support**
Things like childcare, help about the home, respite care, etc
- Social Outings/Trips**
For adults, children, and families
- Welfare Advice & Support**
About benefits and entitlements, etc

	Very Good	Good	Poor	None at all

8. What other support do you think should be available to victims?

- 9. Do you believe that the government understands your position?**
- 10. Do you believe that the government supports your position?**
- 11. Have you confidence in the current political situation?**
- 12. Do you believe there is enough support available for victims?**
- 13. Do you feel that the government cares about you?**
- 14. Do you feel ignored?**

	Always	Mostly	Some-times	Never

15. What else do you think Omagh Self Help & Support Group could do to help you?

Thank you very much for your help in this
Please give your completed questionnaire to any of the Group, or send to QE5 Ltd, 187 Killyclogher Road, Omagh BT79 7PN before December 30th

Appendix III

Key Stakeholders Consulted

Name	Title	Work-base
David Bolton	Director	Transformation Centre
Sean Coll	Victims Support Officer	Sperrin Lakeland Trust
Frances Taylor	Clinical Service Manager Mental Health Services	Sperrin Lakeland Trust
Martin Quinn	Community Development Manager	WHSSB
Christine Rodgers	Community Relations	ODC
Harry Parkinson	Manager	OLSP
Paul Dolan	Manager	LSPG
Caroline Evans		OFMDFM
Sarah Todd		VLU
Brian Mullen	Core Funder	CRC