



Fighting Blindness Annual Report

April 2011 – December 2011

Fighting Blindness is an Irish, patient-led organisation funding research into treatments and cures for blindness. We also provide a unique professional counselling service for people and families affected by sight loss.

Our vision is to cure blindness, support those experiencing sight loss and empower patients.



**Fighting
Blindness**

Cure. Support. Empower.

Cure. Support. Empower.

Board of Directors

Michael Griffith

Chairman

Ronan Holahan

Treasurer

Patricia Burke Secretary

Stephen Farrelly

Patrick Byrne

Gerry Kerr

Kevin Bowers

Colm Cronin

Ena Prosser

Yvonne Campbell

CEO's Office

Avril Daly

CEO

Larissa Silva

PA to the CEO/

Administration Manager

Research

Anna Moran

External Affairs Manager

Dr. Maria Meehan

Research Officer

(Maternity Cover)

Fundraising / Events

Tony Ward Interim Head
of Fundraising

Clodagh Ryan Senior

Fundraising Events

Manager

Cathryn O'Leary Senior

Community Fundraising

Manager

Rita Dolan Direct

Marketing Executive

Michael Ryan Community

Fundraising Officer

Accounts

Deborah McCann

Financial Controller

Jim Brady

Finance Manager

(Maternity Cover)

Press Relations

Lauren Dare

Communications Executive

Susan Quirke

Communications Executive

(Maternity Cover)

Insight Counselling Centre

Mary Lavelle

Head of Counselling

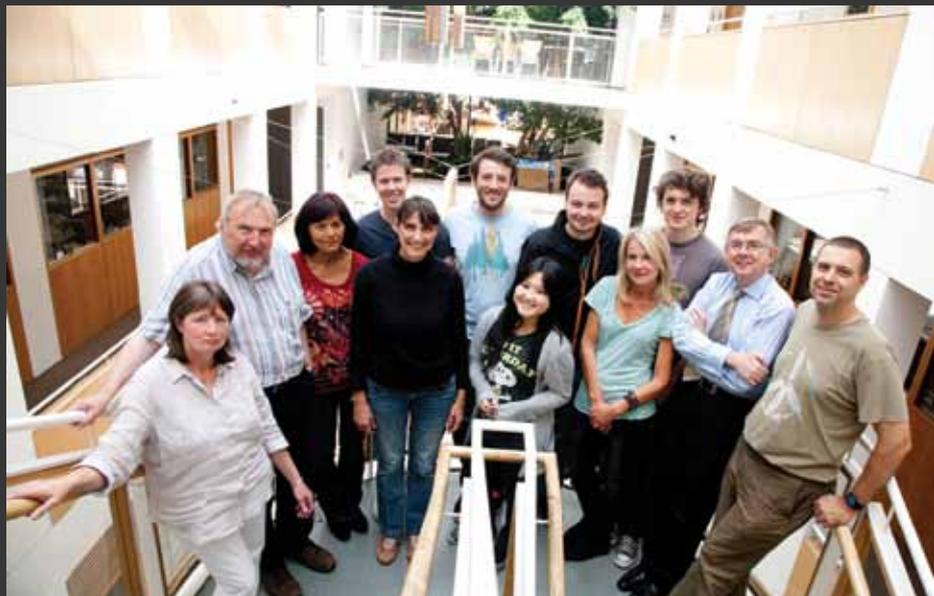
Ann Cooke

Counselling Administrator



Contents

Chairman's Report 4
CEO's Report 6
External Affairs 9
Fundraising 13
Insight Counselling Centre 16
Financial Report 17



Photographs in order from top: Alison Reynolds, Research Fellow; Fighting Blindness supporters taking part in the Glendalough Trail; The Research Team at Trinity College Dublin (2012).

Fighting Blindness takes its first steps towards Therapy Development



Michael Griffith
Chairman

In 2011, Fighting Blindness made a giant leap forward in the development of therapies for inherited retinopathies when Genable Technologies—the biotechnology company that developed from our flagship gene therapy project at Trinity College Dublin—raised €5m to invest in pre-clinical development.

We also invested in three new projects to add to our research portfolio. Prof. Pete Humphries and his team have commenced work investigating the RPE 65 gene, which causes a form of RP, and Prof. Jane Farrar received a grant to continue with the next stage of research into retinal stem cells.

Stem cells are without question one of the only ways in which vision lost through the death of cells in the retina can be restored. Accelerating the development of research into the regeneration of retinal cells through adult stem cells is a priority for Fighting Blindness and will remain so. We are working with Irish and international experts in this field to ensure this research is prioritised.

Once we understand what genes affect us, we can potentially access appropriate gene therapy trials while contributing to the overall research effort. To this end, we launched Target 3000: A Gateway to Vision. As part of this project, Fighting Blindness will fundraise so that members who want to have their genes sequenced can

do so without shouldering the cost. The results of this sequencing will go towards creating a national register for inherited retinopathies.

The benefits of a disease-specific register are well documented in such fields as cancer research and cystic fibrosis. In order to advance our own research, we need to establish such a register in Ireland, and so we invite all of you to sign up for the test and become involved with our exciting fundraising activities.

This report reflects the decision of the Board of Directors to change the organisation's financial year to reflect the calendar and therefore put forward for review a nine-month financial year, from April 1 to December 31, 2011.

The gross income of €1,644,607 (€ 2,206,228 in 2010/2011) and net contribution of €909,651 to 31st December 2011 (€1,316,529 in 2010/2011) shows a satisfactory outcome at year end and was in line with the budget.

Fighting Blindness invested €217,221 in research (2010/2011 - €503,815) in the nine month period. The decrease in research funding is due to the conclusion of funding commitments to existing projects and receipt of grant funding for new projects coming onstream after the reporting period.

In the past three years, Fighting Blindness has taken important steps to cut costs while

maintaining our commitments to fund research, provide support to our members and to be a voice for patients with all forms of sight loss through our advocacy work. We restructured the organisation so that it could operate effectively in an uncertain economic climate, and so we have not grown our income in this period but kept on budget and fulfilled the tasks set for ourselves.

I know that I speak for the Board and the staff when I say that we are not content to remain in this position. With the launch of our new strategy, we intend to grow the organisation and the development of research to find cures and treatments.

The commitment you, as members, volunteers and supporters, have given us over the years can not be stressed enough. Quite simply, without you we would not be here to see results that demonstrate how close to our goals we have come.

The development of our communities is a key strategy for us, as we want you to become involved in all that we do. I would like to acknowledge the exceptional work of our Board, staff and researchers over the past year to keep Fighting Blindness on the road to achieving its mission.

By working together, our future will be a bright one. 

Fighting Blindness: Building a Gateway to Vision

2011 sees the first ever research project funded by Fighting Blindness start its journey towards Human Clinical Trails.



Avril Daly
CEO

This period was a momentous one in the history of Fighting Blindness, as in October 2011, the first project funded by our charity charted a new and exciting journey towards therapeutic development.

Genable Technologies raised €5 million to bring what it hopes will be a breakthrough treatment for dominantly-inherited RP to human clinical trials. Researchers Prof. Pete Humphries, Prof. Jane Farrar and Dr. Paul Kenna among others have spent many years studying the genetics of retinitis pigmentosa (RP) and other forms of rare and inherited retinopathies, as well as more common causes of retinal degeneration. This particular piece of work focuses on dominant genetic diseases, where a defective gene from one parent “dominates” the other parent’s normal gene in their child.

Researchers hope that a single injection to the eye will silence the mutated gene and replace it with a healthy version—one that has been genetically modified to ensure that it cannot, in turn, be silenced. Having established proof of principle for the drug, the company is now moving towards human trials to prove its safety and efficacy.

2011 also saw projects added to our research portfolio and the development of new campaigns such as Target 3000: A Gateway to Vision. Dr. Paul Kenna is heading up the programme and hopes that the information will lead to the development of a National Register of Inherited Retinopathies.

Support and Advocacy

Fighting Blindness remains dedicated to providing support to members; initially this was through peer-to-peer contact and, in the past decade, through the professional psychotherapy at the Insight Counselling Centre. We advocate for our members, both nationally and internationally, to ensure our voices are heard and our views considered in all policy development—Nothing About Us Without Us.

Age-related Eye Disease

In April 2011, Fighting Blindness attended national and international meetings, focusing scientific developments in AMD and general management of the growing condition. The results of the CATT study (Comparison of AMD Treatment Trials) and the concern regarding use of off-label medicines in the treatment of wet AMD while a licensed option is available continues to be a major discussion point in the field of AMD. The results ultimately display outcomes, but patient groups are concerned about patient safety and informed consent.

2011 was the EU Year of Active Ageing. With so many of our members affected by age-related sight loss, Fighting Blindness was asked to attend a special EU meeting discussing the opportunities and threats that confront society in addressing the challenges of ageing and eye disease. The consensus was that maintaining the respect, dignity and quality of life of older patients with AMD, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathies and other chronic diseases has to be a priority.

We used the information gathered at these events to highlight the issues faced at home during AMD Week in September 2011, in conjunction with Novartis Ireland, the NCBI, Association of Optometrists in Ireland, and the Irish College of Ophthalmologists. RTE's Mary Kennedy acted as spokesperson, with lots of people with AMD telling their stories. We secured media coverage and hosted an exhibition of photographs featuring patients and celebrities, reflecting what each enjoyed most about their vision.

National Plan for Rare Disease

Since 1994, Fighting Blindness has been involved in a European-wide movement to establish National Plans for Rare Diseases. People with rare diseases are marginalised in society and face diagnostic odysseys in trying to access the best possible information on their conditions. The information and the supports can be available in many cases—particularly for people with rare and genetic conditions causing sight loss—however, communication across the medical professions needs to be improved. In 2011, I was appointed by the Minister for Health to a steering committee that is working towards the development of a National Plan for Rare Diseases by 2013. This project is ongoing and a consultation took place in 2012; full details are on our website.

Research Advocacy

As a small patient organisation with major goals, it is essential that we work with like-minded organisations and stakeholders. We remain committed to our positions on the board of the Irish Platform for Patients Organisation Science and Industry (IPPOSI), who are committed to forming consensus on the development of treatments for unmet medical needs; to the Medical Research Charities Group (MRCG), to support the development of medical research supported by charities in Ireland; and to the Genetic & Rare Disorders Organisation (GRDO), who have represented the voices of over 200,000 Irish patients affected by genetic and rare disease since 1988.

Internationally, we are the first and only Irish representatives on the board of the European Patient Forum (EPF) and hold the vice presidency of the European Organisation for Rare Disease (EURORDIS). We are also committed to the development of Retina International to ensure that the voice of all those affected by retina disease is strengthened as we enter a new age in therapeutic development.

“ Our goals are bold but achievable, and we are convinced we will be in a position to restore vision and prevent blindness through our decades of work. ”

Outreach

In 2011 we developed our community, education and outreach programme through the recruitment of a Community Fundraising Manager. We visited many communities and are looking forward to bringing our message to a town near you. We talk to schools, universities, hospitals, work places and community centres. Please contact us if you would like our team to visit your group. You can keep up to date with our progress throughout the country on www.fightingblindness.ie/community.

So where are we now?

224,000 Irish people are affected by vision impairment, with this figure expected to increase to 270,000 by 2020. With a population of just over 4m, these figures highlight the fact that those with vision impairments are among the largest constituencies in the country. With more people diagnosed every week, it is vital that the Irish government honour their commitment made to the WHO in 2003 and develop a National Vision Strategy.

With difficulties in gaining equitable access to therapies for common and chronic eye disease

already an issue for some, ensuring access to emerging treatments for conditions that are rare is a real concern. Fighting Blindness has stepped up its effort to campaign for a system that allows fair and equitable access to medicines in this country. Sight loss is no longer just an issue of disability—it is also an issue of health and wellbeing and must become a public health priority.

We have embarked with our colleagues on discussions on what a national vision strategy for this country would contain. In 2012 this will be presented to the government.

As we move to launch our new strategy, we need you to join with us more than ever. Our goals are bold but achievable, and we are convinced we will be in a position to restore vision and prevent blindness through our decades of work. This will not be without its challenges, but as a united force our unwavering determination will bring about the bright and hopeful future envisioned by our founders in 1983.

I thank you for your commitment, time and support over three decades and look forward to more good news in the decade to come. 

2011 - 2012 has been another exciting and full year for External Affairs at Fighting Blindness.

Clinical Trials

DCCR

The Dublin Centre for Clinical Research continues to make preparations for its first trial on Lebers Congenital Amourosis, which will be the first gene therapy trial to take place in Ireland. The first step is to create a patient registry in order to recruit participants. We estimate that around 15% of the Irish LCA population has been identified and we are keen to ensure that this number grows.

Target 3000: A Gateway To Vision

It is believed that around 3000 people in Ireland are affected by genetically-inherited retinopathies. As we move into the era of clinical trials, we must ensure that we have as much up-to-date information about individual conditions and genes as possible, to enable participation in relevant trials as opportunities arise. We are encouraged by the emergence of Next Generation Sequencing, a technology which allows more ready diagnosis of the specific genes involved in retinal degeneration. Researchers at Trinity College Dublin are now using this technique to identify specific genes for conditions such as retinitis pigmentosa and other inherited conditions. The screening involves a small blood sample along with an



Anna Moran
External Affairs Manager

electroretinogram (ERG) which measures the eye's light sensitive cells. This initiative is in its early stages but we are making good progress in the establishment of the patient register, having over 100 participants to date.

Retina 2011 Conference

The Retina Conference is one of our most important events and we were delighted to see it expand in 2011. While the scientific meeting has been happening in various formats for over 10 years, 2011 was the first year in which we included a Public Engagement Day. The positive response to all elements of the conference was overwhelming.



Expert Groups

Medical and Scientific Advisory Board

During 2011 we were proud to establish a new Medical and Scientific Advisory Board of national and international experts in the areas of medical research, including but not limited to retinal research. It is responsible for advising the Fighting Blindness Board of Directors and its executive in enabling their research strategy.

Chief Scientific Advisor

Prof. Robin Ali has continued to support Fighting Blindness in his role as Chief Scientific Advisor, lending valuable expertise regarding research strategy and governance. During 2011 he took on the position of Chair of the newly established Medical and Scientific Advisory Board. He also presented at our Retina Conference. We look forward to continuing our partnership with him.

International Panel of Experts

The International Panel of Experts describes the wide network of scientists, researchers and principal investigators upon whose expertise Fighting Blindness occasionally has cause to call, for the purpose of peer review or as invited speakers at Fighting Blindness meetings. During 2011 we developed this group to more than 50 expert individuals.

Research Communications Group

We established a group in 2011 to assist us with research communications. Comprised of postdoctoral researchers, the group has been extremely helpful in contributing to our wider communications, including the AMD brochure, as well as report writing on the Retina Conference and other international events.

Research Project Update

Genes and Gene Therapy

1. FB08GEN (Genable)
2. FB06HUM (IMPDH1)
3. FB08FAR (LHON)
4. FB09HUM (IAPB)

1. Gene therapy platform technology for dominant retinitis pigmentosa

Genable Technologies Ltd

In November 2011 we announced the major breakthrough that Genable Technologies Ltd had secured €5 million in venture capital funding. This investment will enable the work to move into human clinical trials. The technology, known as suppression and replacement therapy, holds promise that a single injection into the eye will suppress the mutated, faulty gene and replace it with a healthy version.

2. On the molecular pathology of retinal degradation caused by mutations within the IMPDH1 gene

Prof. Peter Humphries, Trinity College Dublin (MRCG / HRB 2006)

The RP10 form of retinitis pigmentosa caused by mutations within the IMPDH1 gene is an aggressive, early onset condition responsible

for around 5% of cased autosomal dominant disease. While this form of RP is very severe, the group has shown that a targeted disruption of the relevant gene gives a model demonstration showing virtually no disease pathology. The concept suggests that simultaneous co-suppression of both normal and mutant versions of the gene might convert a severe dominant retinopathy into a much milder form of disease, perhaps with few or minor symptoms, over the patient's lifetime.

3. Gene therapy for Leber's hereditary optic neuropathy using AAV2 to transfect the NDI1 gene

Prof. Jane Farrar, Trinity College Dublin (privately funded)

LHON is a inherited mitochondrial disorder that can result in significant sight loss. The mitochondria are the powerhouses of cells, and in LHON, this is compromised. The Trinity group are exploring ways of modulating or rescuing the symptoms associated with LHON by delivering a gene which in essence provides energy to the compromised cells in the eye.

4. AMD: validation in murine model of novel approaches to suppression of retinal neovascularisation

Prof. Peter Humphries, Trinity College Dublin (supported by IAPB)

Current treatments for wet AMD treat established disease. The approach developed in this project is pre-emptive and has been designed to intervene in early stage disease where the inner blood retina barrier is intact and impervious to systemically administered drugs. The group has developed a procedure for controlled, periodic, reversible modulation of the inner blood retina barrier which allows low molecular weight compounds to access the affected areas. There is huge potential for this as a minimally invasive systemic therapeutic modality for retinal disease, including RP and AMD, where, in early stage disease, the iBRB is intact and therefore impervious to systemically administered drugs.

Cells and Cell Therapy

5. FB07FAR (stem cells)

6. FB06KEN (stem cells)

5. Exploration of stem cell based therapies for retinal degenerations

Prof. Jane Farrar, Trinity College Dublin (MRCG / HRB 2007)

Stem cells hold great promise in the future treatment of a wide range of disorders, including inherited retinal degenerations. However, obtaining cells with the potential to repopulate particular tissues in the body is a big challenge. This project is working with microRNAs to influence the differentiation and development of cells and will measure and evaluate the effects on a mouse model. An increased understanding of the components involved in driving mammalian photoreceptor differentiation (such as microRNAs) may provide opportunities to develop methods which will in turn facilitate the generation of such cells in vitro and in vivo. Therefore, it is of interest to explore if miRNAs may be of value in driving photoreceptor differentiation.

6. Directing retinal stem cells to become functionally integrated cone photoreceptors in host retinas

Dr. Breandan Kennedy, University College Dublin (MRCG / HRB 2006)

This project finished this year, demonstrating the possibility of taking retinas from zebrafish and growing them in plastic dishes. These retinal "explant" cultures survived in vitro and could differentiate. The establishment of the technology meant that the group could identify factors that control eye development and to screen for drugs with therapeutic or toxic action in the eye. This technology will be used going forward in ocular drug discovery and development projects.



New Projects

7. FB11HUM

8. FB11FAR

7. Exploration of the Candidacy of RPE65 in the Etiology of adRP with Choroidal Involvement

Prof. Peter Humphries, Trinity College Dublin (MRCG / HRB 2011)

This project is focused on two families affected by autosomal dominant retinitis pigmentosa with choroidal involvement, having a mutation in the RPE65 gene. It is thought that the studies proposed in the project may reveal a new disease mechanism associated with RP and may also bear relevance to the design of future therapeutic strategies. Affected members of the family were reported in 2011 to possess a small sequence variation within the RPE65 gene which may render them amenable to therapy and it is the purpose of this research to undertake further investigations into the molecular pathology of the disease in this family such as to obtain a clearer picture of the molecular basis for therapeutic benefit.

8. Stem cell therapies for treatment of diverse retinal disorders

Prof. Jane Farrar, Trinity College Dublin (MRCG / HRB 2011)

Stem cell therapy holds great promise for the potential reconstruction of retinal tissue, where retinal degeneration is at an advanced stage. The aim of such treatments would be to replace cells that have died in later stage disease. However, in order for this promise to be realised, a source of transplantable photoreceptor precursors needs to become available and transplantation techniques need to be improved so that large quantities of cells can be persuaded to integrate functionally into degenerating retinas. This project is focused on addressing these areas in an effort to expedite potential treatments using this technique. 👁️

2011 was a short financial year for Fighting Blindness, but it was certainly not short on support from our volunteers, fundraisers, members and friends.

Together we not only raised funds for research, counselling and advocacy but we raised the awareness of Fighting Blindness throughout the country by engaging new donors and volunteers.



Elaine Leinaweaver
Head of Fundraising, 2011

Treks and Challenges

Fighting Blindness started off the year with a cycling trip in the hills of Tuscany. The cycle was a tough physical challenge that covered more than 50km a day over difficult terrain and long steep inclines, testing the stamina of all of our cyclists. A special mention must go to the participants on the two tandem bikes—both the visually-impaired riders and their pilots who had to work even harder to complete this route.

Later in the year, an amazing group of 24 people from the small island of Jersey (plus friends and relatives from Ireland, US and UK) trekked Kilimanjaro in September, raising a staggering €122,000 for Fighting Blindness. The group was organised by Tom and David Brown, two

brothers with Usher Syndrome and patients of Paul Kenna. Their brother Liam, now living in the US, joined the trek and raised a very impressive €46,000 on his own. We must give a very big thank you to all the Browns and their extraordinary friends and family.

We also sent a group of 10 of our regular trekkers to the Caribbean island of Cuba in November. The trek started in the faded grandeur of Cuba's unique capital city, Havana, before the group took to the hills on a challenging hike through the Escambray mountain range in the central part of the island.

We had over 200 supporters participating in the second year of the Glendalough Trail, a 15km off-road race, and we are looking forward to exceeding our target of 250 participants this year.



In September 2011, 24 supporters from Jersey, Ireland, UK and USA reaching the summit of Kilimanjaro and raised €129,100.96 for Fighting Blindness. The group was organised by two of our members Tom and David Brown.

Fighting Blindness was represented at many marathons and walks, including the New York, Dublin and Cork Mini Marathons. We also had supporters taking part in the Belfast and Clonakilty Marathons. Thanks to everyone who pounded the pavement to help us find treatments and cures for blindness.

National Raffle and PMD

This period was also a very positive one for our direct marketing campaigns. In November we launched our winter raffle campaign, which netted €113,618 for research. We would very much like to thank our friend and volunteer Aine Mae O'Mahony, whose story was the subject of the call for support.

Our Private Members Draw also was a strong campaign in this period, with an increase in members and many winners of cash prizes, luxury holidays and of course our star prize, a Nissan Pixo. Thank you to all those who continue to make the yearly subscription of €100. These funds are vitally important and go a long way to supporting the work of the organisation, enabling the support of research and our counselling service, as well as our education and outreach projects.

In 2011 we decided to invest in regular giving campaigns that will bring a steady stream of income to the organisation over a period of years. In the autumn we launched a door-

to-door campaign in the Dublin area. These campaigns are based on long-term direct debits which are essential for the financial stability of the organisation, and we are extremely grateful to Gerry Kerr for allowing Fighting Blindness to use his story of coming to terms with sight loss in our materials.

Volunteer Led Fundraising

In April 2011 we began our drive to develop our community fundraising programme and brought on board a new community fundraising executive, Cathryn O'Leary. The initial target was to develop community fundraising in the counties of Leinster but it has extended much further than that, with events happening throughout the country. These events range from supermarket collections, rowathons, church gate collections, music festivals, Christmas carol collections, sponsored walks, table quizzes, parachute jumps, car boot sales, dine in the dark events, coffee mornings to almost anything our volunteers can dream up.

Volunteers play a fundamental role in supporting Fighting Blindness, and we have seen our numbers of volunteers grow hugely in the last year. We now have active volunteers in almost 20 counties throughout Ireland. Their willingness to help and the time they give us is invaluable. We are so grateful to all of our volunteers who organised or helped out at events.

There were too many events to mention them all here, but the real highlight was the Upperchurch Drombane Weekend, which brought in more than €53,000. The whole community in this dynamic little village came together to run a range of events over the weekend with amazing results. People and organisations in that area still run smaller events such as hunts and soccer matches in aid of our work.

In Dublin our volunteers came out in full force through the wintery months of November and December to sing carols and sell Christmas cards on our behalf. We were also the benefactors of the entry fee into the Marlay Park Christmas Fair and have been chosen as benefactors again for 2012, such was the positive impact the organisers felt from being involved with Fighting Blindness.

New church gate collection permits have been established in counties such as Wexford, Carlow, Clare, Roscommon, Wicklow and Kilkenny, and the number of permits continues to grow. A special thanks to Frank Kelly, Eric Beggs and Tony Ward, who played a significant role in their home counties of Offaly, Louth and Monaghan respectively to recruit volunteers and organise church gate collections.

Upcoming Events

It's never too late to get involved. Get in touch with us today to join one of our exciting fundraising events or to arrange your own event. We have a highly motivated and experienced team of fundraisers who are just waiting to hear from you and help you bring your ideas to fruition.

Thank you!
The Fundraising Team 🙄



This year, despite a cut in funding, Insight Counselling Centre continued to provide psychological help and support to many individuals experiencing sight loss.



Mary Lavelle
Senior Counselling Psychologist

By the end of 2011, almost 400 people had availed of the face-to-face service. Many others contacted us by telephone and email requesting information, guidance, referrals and links to other related services.

Our monthly support group meetings in Dublin and Cork remain ongoing; our thanks to the Irish Guide Dogs for providing the venue for the Cork meetings. We also provided a support group for non-affected family members, which was very well received. We are very thankful to Colette Kerr for facilitating this.

We continue to provide a support service at both the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital and the Mater Hospital in Dublin each Wednesday and Thursday morning, respectively. We wish to thank Dolores Leavey, who gives so generously of her time at the Eye Clinic in the Mater Hospital.

An outreach meeting held in Derry in June 2011 was very well attended and very successful. We are planning to hold more outreach meetings during the coming year.

We are very grateful for the continuing financial support of the Health Services Executive, without which this service could not be provided.

We would also like to thank our corporate sponsors for their continuing support for the centre and all those who take part and support Fighting Blindness events. Your contribution is invaluable to the development of this vital service.

If you would like any further information or if we can help in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us at (01) 6746496 or email insight@fightingblindness.ie. 

Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account) for the period 1st April 2011 to 31st December 2011

	01/04/11 to 31/12/11 €	Year Ended 31/03/11 €
Incoming Resources		
Incoming Resources from Generated Funds		
Voluntary Income	339,728	308,565
Activities for Generating Funds	1,302,174	1,892,735
Investment Income	2,705	4,928
Total Incoming Resources	<u>1,644,607</u>	<u>2,206,228</u>
Resources Expended		
Costs of Generating Funds	734,956	889,699
Net Incoming Resources	<u>909,651</u>	<u>1,316,529</u>
Charitable Activities	684,040	919,873
Governance Costs	7,049	14,156
Total Resources Expended	<u>1,426,045</u>	<u>1,823,728</u>
Net Incoming Resources	218,562	382,500
Balance Forward at 1st April	316,146	(66,354)
Balance Forward at 31st December	<u><u>534,708</u></u>	<u><u>316,146</u></u>

Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses

There are no recognised gains or losses other than those disclosed in the Statement of Financial Activities for the year.

Income and Expenditure

The Board of Directors of the company decided to change the financial year to reflect the calendar and therefore this report is in respect of the nine month financial period from April 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011.

The gross income of €1,644,607 and net contribution of €909,651 to 31st December 2011 shows a satisfactory outcome and was in line with similar period from last year.

From April 1 to December 31, Fighting Blindness invested €217,221 in research (2010/2011 - €503,815). These figures include funds invested as part of a commitment to Genable Technologies Limited and this investment is shown as a Balance Sheet item.

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2011

	31/12/11 €	31/03/11 €
Fixed Assets		
Tangible Assets	7,688	7,145
Financial Assets	518,092	458,092
	<u>525,780</u>	<u>465,237</u>
Current Assets		
Debtors	96,966	83,968
Cash at Bank	777,876	351,755
	<u>874,842</u>	<u>435,723</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(865,914)	(584,814)
	<u>8,928</u>	<u>(149,091)</u>
Net Current Liabilities		
	<u>534,708</u>	<u>316,146</u>
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities		
	<u>534,708</u>	<u>316,146</u>
Financed by: Accumulated Reserve	<u>534,708</u>	<u>316,146</u>

Bankers:

AIB Bank plc.,
37/38 Upper O'Connell Street,
Dublin 1

Auditors:

BFGD Chartered Accountants,
1 Castlewood Avenue,
Rathmines,
Dublin 6

Solicitors:

M.J. Kennedy & Co.,
Parochial House,
14 Main Street,
Baldoye,
Dublin 13

Income and Expenditure

The information above has been extracted from the financial statements of Fighting Blindness for the year ended 31st December, 2011. The auditors have reported without qualification on those financial statements which are available upon request from Fighting Blindness. The Financial Statements are presented in a form to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for charities.

Balance Sheet

The surplus for the nine month period amounts to €218,562 (31st March 2011 - €382,500) increasing the Accumulated Reserves to €534,708 at 31st December 2011 (31st March 2011 - €316,146). This is a positive outcome when the unprecedented economic environment is considered. As was the case last year, we anticipate the fundraising climate will remain volatile in the coming year. In spite of this we are confident that the new structures implemented over the past couple of years and the new strategic development plan due to be launched in late 2012 will, with the support of a strong and dedicated team, maintain a steady fundraising outlook.

Auditor Opinion

In our opinion the Financial Statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Company's affairs as at the 31st December 2011 and of its surplus and cash flows for the period then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2012 but excluding the provisions of the Companies (Amendment) Act, 1986.

We have obtained all the information and explanations we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the Company. The Financial Statements are in agreement with the books of account. In our opinion the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the Financial Statements.

Margaret Deehan

For and on behalf of BFCD
Chartered Accountants
and Registered Auditors 



Deborah McCann
Financial Controller



**Fighting
Blindness**

Cure. Support. Empower.

Fighting Blindness

1 Christchurch Hall, High Street, Dublin 8, Ireland

T: +353 1 709 3050 **F:** +353 1 709 3010

E: info@fightingblindness.ie

W: www.FightingBlindness.ie

Reg Charity No CHY 6784