



**PRESS RELEASE**

**25/09/09**

## **Donegal MABS EuroWatchers launched by Minister Hanafin**

### **Home Budgeting Programme helps communities throughout Ireland**

The Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Mary Hanafin T.D. today (**25<sup>th</sup> September 2009**) launched the Donegal MABS EuroWatchers - Home Budgeting Programme, a free, money management programme for use with community groups.

The home budgeting programme is a shared initiative that was initially developed by staff from MABS Iarthair Dhun na nGall, MABS National Development Limited and Donegal VEC. The EuroWatchers programme is now available free of charge to 21 VECs nationwide who will deliver the programme to up to 2,000 learners in 2009.

Speaking at the launch, Minister Hanafin said, **“EuroWatchers is a very welcome and timely contribution to promoting effective household budget management and assisting people to avoid debt problems. It facilitates people to develop core skills which, in turn, make them better equipped to manage their budget from week to week or month to month and better able to cope when there is an unexpected loss of income or an unanticipated cost. This programme also sits very well with MABS’ overall approach to community education.**”



**“EuroWatcher is designed to cover the key issues and areas that people managing a household budget need to take into account and each of the modules reflects the proven MABS perspective on how to manage money effectively and avoid problem debt.”**

The EuroWatchers Programme has been produced as a resource for use with adults at basic education level – predominantly those participating in VTOS programmes, literacy programmes, or in other community education activities in their local area. In the main, tuition is provided by an experienced VEC tutor with specific expertise in community education while the local MABS Service will deliver aspects of the programme.

Commending the staff of Donegal MABS for their involvement in delivery of part of the programme Minister Hanafin said, **“the joint-delivery model for community education work is an effective use of MABS staff time and expertise, while also supporting delivery to a wide group of learners by other experienced professionals. The ongoing and active involvement of MABS staff in education activity ensures that community education remains at the heart of the money advice process, and further assists in refining the help and assistance given to MABS clients.”**

Speaking at the launch of the programme Noreen Doogan, Money Adviser at Letterkenny MABS said **“EuroWatchers will be beneficial to all participants whatever the economic climate, as it will provide them with the mechanisms to manage their money better no matter what their income is. It will also mean that they will have obtained the skills they require regarding the need to save for both planned and unexpected events. They will also have gained the knowledge to make more informed choices should they need to borrow in the future.”**



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The Minister concluded by thanking all those involved in the project including, Noreen Doogan and Margaret Gallagher from Iarthair Dhun na nGall and North Donegal MABS, The Boards and

Chairpersons of both services who facilitated and supported their staff in the work, Martina Needham of Donegal VEC and Carol Dunne National Development Officer responsible for community education in MABS who is supported by Denise Kennerney.

MABS are funded by the Department of Social and Family Affairs and have offices in 65 locations throughout the country. The National MABS Helpline is available on **1890 283 438** (for the price of a local call) to take calls from members of the public seeking help and advice or on their website at [www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie).

The Department of Social and Family Affairs is providing almost €18 million to fund MABS in 65 locations throughout the country.

**ENDS**

### **Notes for Editor:**

MABS is a national, free, confidential and independent service for people in debt or in danger of getting into debt. Professional and confidential advice is available. MABS money advisors help clients to assess their financial situation, make a budget plan for the future and deal with creditors.

The Money Advice and Budgeting Service can be accessed in three ways:

- Through 52 MABS companies operating in 65 locations around the country which provide a face-to face service;



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- the MABS website [www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie) which offers an online money management facility and
- the MABS national Helpline 1890 283438 (or 1890 BUDGET) which aims to provide ease of access to MABS support for those experiencing debt problems.

The contact information for local MABS offices around the country is also available on [www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie)

### **Contact details for Iathar Dhun na nGall Teo MABS are as follows:**

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