

PRESS RELEASE  
2<sup>nd</sup> November 2010  
Images at Photodesk

## **SIMON 'HOUSE OF CARDS' APPEAL LAUNCHED**

### **2010 campaign aims to raise €500,000 for homeless as alternative to sending Christmas cards**

The Simon Communities in Ireland have launched their twelfth annual 'House of Cards' Christmas Appeal and are once again appealing to Irish businesses to make donations to Simon as an alternative to sending corporate Christmas cards. In return, businesses get their logo or title published within one of two full page newspaper adverts. A greetings e-card and banner is also available for their website indicating support for Simon. The money raised is used to support people experiencing or at risk of homelessness including front line emergency services which provide food, warmth and shelter for those sleeping rough as well as for long-term housing options.

The Appeal has raised almost €4.5 million since its establishment in 1999. This year Simon hopes to raise over €500,000 which will support those most in need. Many companies have already pledged their support for the 2010 campaign which is an integral element of the Simon Communities fundraising calendar each year.

"The Simon 'House of Cards' Christmas Appeal supports all the Simon Communities in Ireland and we rely heavily on the money raised. In recent years the recession has had a significant impact," said Jennifer Craig, Simon Appeal Co-ordinator. "We are aware that many companies are finding it more difficult to support charities. With this in mind we have introduced an additional category for the Simon 'House of Cards' Appeal where companies can donate €750 and be involved. Using this alternative to sending corporate cards means participating companies can make a genuine difference to people's lives this Christmas and New Year. The money raised last year meant shelter for thousands of people across Ireland, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week"

Funds raised from the Simon 'House of Cards' Appeal are vital for moving people off the streets and into a home of their own. Former Simon service user Glenn Gannon said: "The Simon Community was a lifeline for me while I was sleeping rough; with their help I was able to move out of homelessness and get my life back together again. Appeals like the Simon 'House of Cards' are so important for raising funds; every year the generosity of others helps hundreds of people like me to find a home of their own again."

For over 40 years, the Simon Communities have been offering a range of much needed services, providing soup and sandwiches to those sleeping rough, arranging emergency accommodation, and helping people make the transition to sustainable independent living.

To find out more about taking part in the Simon 'House of Cards' Appeal, contact Jennifer Craig at the Dublin Simon Community, 01- 47 22 111 or log on to [www.houseofcards.ie](http://www.houseofcards.ie).

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For further information, photography or interviews with a spokesperson from Simon, please contact: Christine Lydon, WHPR, Tel: 01-669 0030 or 087 283 7407

**Notes to Editor:**

The local Simon Communities in Cork, Dublin, Dundalk, Galway, the Midlands, the Mid West, the North West and the South East provide the best possible care, accommodation and support for people at risk of and experiencing homelessness.

Together, with people who are homeless, we tackle the root causes, promote innovative responses and urge the government to fulfil their commitments, providing a coordinating role for campaigning in the areas of housing and homeless policy from the Simon National Office.

Through these local Communities Simon delivers support and service to over 4,500 individuals and families who experience – or are at risk of – homelessness on an annual basis.