

What's Going on this Christmas in Simon

Christmas is one of the busiest times for raising awareness of homelessness and Dublin Simon has plenty going on over the next month.

Christmas Dinner for our Service Users

The National College of Ireland on Mayor Street have offered Dublin Simon Christmas Dinner for our service users this year. A full three course dinner will be provided on Saturday December 22nd between 12pm and 3pm. For more information or if you'd like to volunteer for the day contact Sandra at **086 3867606**

Christmas Raffle Simon's Sensational Christmas Raffle is being run for the first time this year. Prizes on offer are:

1st Prize: VIP trip to see Man Utd play Newcastle on 11th – 13th of January '08. Includes flights, 4* accommodation for two nights and great seats!

2nd Prize: €500 Clery's Voucher

3rd Prize: €250 Clery's Voucher

There are only a thousand tickets on sale at a cost of €10 each so ask your friends and family to buy now. Available from Lisa or Jen on **01 6715551**

Christmas Appeal With an Emergency Christmas Gift of €25, or whatever you or your family or friends can afford, you can help fund our vital services that can help break the downward spiral of life on the streets for many without homes. For more information contact Jen at **01 6715551**

House of Cards Simon Communities House of Cards Christmas Corporate Appeal continues to encourage Irish businesses to make donations instead of sending Christmas Corporate Cards. If you know any company's that might be interested they can get in touch with Glenda at **01 6715551**

Christmas Cards Dublin Simon Christmas Cards are now on sale at our Camden Street and Thomas Street shops or contact Sharon or Harry at **01 6715551**.

Carol Singing We have a number of locations organized around town for carol singing this year. You can catch a song on December 8th in Powerscourt or St. Columbas School; December 13th in Arnotts; December 15th in Dundrum and St. Stephen's Green; December 20th and 21st on Grafton Street; December 22nd in the Jervis Centre; December 23rd in Arnotts; and December 24th on Grafton Street and Crown Alley. There are still a few dates to be confirmed and we would welcome further help with collecting and singing. Contact Sharon at **01 6715551**

Staff, Volunteers and Service Users Carol Singing On December 20th we'll all be out on Grafton Street belting out a few carols. We need more volunteers, especially any with a note or two in their head! Any staff, volunteers or service users interested can contact Sharon on **01 6715551**

Church Gate Collections We have a number of Christmas Church Gate collections organized and are looking for volunteers for a final few locations. These

include on the 24th and 25th of November at St. Dominics in Tallaght; SS Peter and Paul and also St. Lawrences in Baldoyle; St. Fergals in Bray; St. Pious X in Templeogue and John the Baptist in Clontarf.

On the 1st and 2nd we are looking for volunteers for River Valley in Swords; St. Patricks in Skerries; Church of the Assumption in Howth; St. Fintans in Sutton and also Clonskeagh.

Contact Sharon on **01 6715551**

Clothes at Christmas Our shops in Camden Street and Thomas Street have a constant need for clothes, books, etc. and Christmas time is especially busy for them so please support Terry and her staff with anything that will help replenish her stock. Contact Terry at **01 4757012**



After 181 miles across Ireland – 15 of the 20 who took on the Coast to Coast Challenge in September and raised over €45,000 for Dublin Simon Community

SUSS

Service User Support Service

Keep your eyes peeled for the new SUSS newsletter for service users that will be available mid-December!

Dublin Simon Newsletter

Dec 07



Working to end homelessness in Dublin



Service user and staff in Sean McDermott Street (photo: Fran Veale)

Upcoming Fundraising Events

- Kilimanjaro Feb 29th 2008
- Everest in Ireland July 2008
- Coast to Coast 2008
- 25th Annual Fun Run 2008

Contact Harry at: T: 01 671 5551



Kilimanjaro October 2006

Dublin Simon Community 1-2 Cope Street, Dublin 2

Tel: (01) 671 5551 • Fax: (01) 671 5524

Email: info@dubsimon.ie

Website: www.dubsimon.ie



View from a Volunteer

I joined the Simon Community as a Volunteer just over a year ago. I suppose I probably signed up for the same reasons that a lot of other people do: I'd seen people begging around town and wanted to do something other than throwing coins into a cup, but had no idea how to go about it.

I heard about the Simon, went for the interview, the ladies who interviewed me listened to what I had in mind and suggested that I attend the Social Club in Capel Street on Monday nights.

Before I attended the Social Club, I'll be honest, I had a preconceived notion of a "typical homeless person". I think it's fair to say that notion has been shattered over the last year! At the Club, I've met some of the funniest, most intelligent people I've ever been lucky enough to meet. Every week I'll learn something new, the broad knowledge some of the guys have on so many subjects is genuinely breath-taking and I've also had the misfortune of being humiliated at Scrabble on far too many occasions. A chastening experience! Not that I'm trying to paint a completely idyllic, rose-tinted picture. Obviously

there are people who attend the Club that you wouldn't leave unattended with your wallet, but in my experience the good far outnumber the bad. Initially I would have preferred to have been assigned to the Soup Run, but now I'm delighted with the way things have worked out. By meeting the same "users" week in, week out in Capel St. I think I've been able to get to know them much better, and hopefully build up a bond of trust and friendship with some of them. The same goes for the other Volunteers of course. Everybody from day one was very friendly and very helpful for which I'm very grateful.

Warren

Dublin Simon Community works at all stages of homelessness, providing;



- Rough Sleeper Intervention and Emergency Accommodation
- Specialist health, addiction treatment and learning services
- Helping people make the transition out of Homelessness
- Supporting people in their homes

Emergency Accommodation

Our Harcourt St. accommodation unit provides hot meals, laundry services and vital support for up to thirty single people who have been identified by our Rough Sleeper Team as vulnerable and sleeping rough on the streets of Dublin.

Residents can spend a number of nights or a number of months at Harcourt St., where they can avail of one to one counselling, group work, needle exchange and harm minimisation. Alcohol dependent residents can use our wet room, and social outings are managed by staff and volunteers. Through key workers, residents are assisted to look at move-on options that are available to them with assistance from our Resettlement Team or Transitional Housing programme.



Dublin Simon Service User
(Photo: Fran Veal).

Service User Participation

My name is Daniel. I'm 21 years old. I had been sober for 18 months, but it was murder.

I had been suffering from what's called untreated addiction. After the 18 months I had 3 slips within 4 months, and I knew I had to sort the problem before it got out of hand, especially because I'm expecting my first child. To be honest I wasn't worried or nervous, because I'm no stranger to rehabilitation.

From the minute I attended groups I knew there was something different about this place. They were actually teaching us everything relevant to alcoholism, rather than the nonsense I was fed with in other groups and services. All the groups here made perfect sense, we discussed all sorts like; relapse prevention, coping with obsessions, anger management, stress management and so on. My favourite groups were; Assertion and conflict resolution, as aggression and ironically passivity were two of my main defects and blocks to recovery. There was also that sense of freedom because you are allowed out between and after groups, which allowed me to attempt Alcohol Anonymous meetings and work the 12-steps of AA with my sponsor, who is now a close friend.

It wasn't all groups, groups, groups – there was great fun on the programme as we had Social club on Thursday evenings, and Saturday morning which helped us as a group to have fun and become friends. Being an alcoholic usually means not mixing with others, unless there was drink involved. So even though it was fun it brought us to enjoy life without alcohol and to learn new hobbies, which is vital for when we leave here, so there is a method to enjoyment.

The staff are all sound and very helpful and the group I was in was great.

I made some great friends here, and I am going to miss everyone. It was an enjoyable 3 months but also full of learning. "you can only get out what you put in". I would recommend it to anyone. It will definitely give you tools that will help you to stay sober. Whether you want to stay sober and use the tools is up to you.

Me personally; I am going to finish the 12-steps when I finish, attend meetings and help the alcoholics who still suffer, with the knowledge I have learned here in Dublin Simon, and the message of the AA.

So if you are coming to Dublin Simon Community, work the programme as much as you can.

"Work it, you are worth it."

Daniel Gahan.

Spotlight on the Work of Tenancy Sustainment

Mary spent a few years in emergency B&B accommodation with her son. She became homeless due to domestic violence from her previous partner. In 2004 Mary was allocated a Dublin City Council two bedroom flat.

Mary has a history of alcohol misuse for a number of years – she decided to put her son into voluntary care in November 2005 as she felt she could not cope due to her alcohol misuse. Mary has had two admissions to Simon Detox programme and had previously worked with the Simon Rough Sleeper Team. On her second admission she was referred to Tenancy Sustainment. She was also referred to Dublin Simon's Aftercare Programme which she attended on a weekly basis and also attended the holistic treatments on offer. Mary was then referred on to Barrymore House Residential Alcohol Treatment Programme, which offers a four week residential after care treatment for people in recovery. Our Dublin Simon Tenancy Sustainment worker linked in with Barrymore and

advocated on Mary's behalf. She was offered the four week programme from Barrymore House which she completed in October 2006. Mary has remained sober since her discharge from Simon Detox and she continues to attend aftercare programmes and groups.

Dublin Simon's Tenancy Sustainment worker has linked in with relevant Social Worker in relation to Mary's access to her child. The Tenancy Sustainment worker has attended a child care review in which she discussed Mary's progress to date. Mary has continued to link in with her Social Worker and attends all access visits with her son. Over the nine months she has worked hard to remain sober, her son being her biggest motivator.

Mary continues to link in with a number of community services in her area. She is currently carrying out voluntary work in the local resource centre and an after school club.



(Photo: Fran Veal).