Our Services

New to Simon in 2006 the Dublin City Tenancy Sustainment Service is an initial 2 year project funded by Dublin City Council in conjunction with the Health Service Executive and the Homeless Agency. We work with service users moving from homelessness into a new home *and* those housed who are at risk of becoming homeless. Through client focused individualised support plans and bi-weekly home visits we aim to identify specific needs/deficits that may cause a return to homelessness. These include arrears, intimidation, addiction, anti-social behaviour, poor life skills, social isolation, domestic violence, physical or mental ill health. Early intervention and preventative measures are vital and advocating and linking our service users with local community support networks are essential components of our work. With a staff team of 11 professionals and our obliging active volunteer group of 50 we work together to ensure that our service users are given the best possible opportunity to reside in a safe place that they call HOME.

Our Emergency Accommodation on Harcourt Street provides accommodation, hot meals, laundry services and vital support for up to thirty single people who have been identified by our Outreach Team as vulnerable & sleeping rough on the streets of Dublin. Residents can spend a number of nights or a number of months at Harcourt Street, where they can avail of one to one Counselling, Group Work, Needle Exchange and Harm Minimisation, use of our Wet Room for Alcohol Dependant Residents and Social Outings managed by staff and volunteers. Through key-working, residents are assisted to look at move-on options that are available to them, with assistance from our Resettlement Team or Transitional Housing Programme.

Alcohol Treatment Services offer a three branch support system to those service users who are homeless and find themselves struggling with alcohol/drug addiction. The Alcohol Detox Unit is a 21 day residential medical detoxification programme with 24hr nursing /G.P. coverage run in partnership with the South Western Area Health Board. The Detox Unit provides a safe and non-judgmental environment where men and women who are alcohol/methadone dependent can safely withdraw. The unit caters for 8 individuals and during their stay within the Unit they attend daily group sessions which look at the various areas of their lives that have been affected by addiction. The aim is to equip service users with the motivation and confidence to move onto the next stage in their recovery. Residential Alcohol Treatment Programme (REHAB) accommodates 11 men and women over a 12-week programme with 24hr supports on site. The Service assists residents to sustain their sobriety with structured therapeutic and practical interventions. From a practical viewpoint education, employment, and accommodation finding are all integral parts of the support package offered. Our rehab programme has 2 Aftercare Houses where service users who have completed their 3 month treatment programme can reside in an alcohol drug safe environment.

Our Addiction Support and Aftercare Team is a 3 strong team of dedicated workers who link in with services users who have completed the detox/rehab programme.

Dublin Simon Outreach Team provides a service to Rough Sleepers with the aim of moving them off the streets and out of homelessness. The team consists of 10 paid staff and 127 volunteers (in 7 separate nightly teams) with a dedicated Outreach team member allocated for the Clondalkin catchment area. Both the staff and volunteers work 365 days a year. The Outreach Workers cover shifts from 8am – 12 midnight and offer information and referrals to emergency accommodation, a link to mainstream health and social welfare services, referrals to addiction treatment, a link to food and clothing, advocacy and key-working and case management. Our Social Club and Soup Run Volunteers work every evening from 7pm and they compliment the work of the Outreach staff. They make contact nightly with new and well known rough sleepers, offering them food, social contact, and seek to build trusting relationship with them. Our Outreach team has access to a number of emergency beds throughout the City, including our own Shelter. They book and escort the service user to a place of shelter.

3 Long Term Housing Projects based at Sean Mac Dermott St, North Circular Road and Canal Road provide permanent accommodation for 60 people who have been homeless in the past and need varying degrees of support. Their support needs may be low, medium or high. Two of our houses provide a shared community experience with 24hr staff cooked meals, laundry, cleaning facilities and group activities. Our Canal Road Project offers greater independence, with tenants having their own self-contained flat and supportive staff on site during 9-5 hours only.

Transitional Housing Programme on Dorset Street is a 9 month supportive housing project offering 15 residents an opportunity to prepare themselves for independent living in the community. Each resident has a self-contained flat with their own key and 24hr access. They are responsible for their own utility bills and can decorate the flat to their choice. Every effort is made by the 3 on site staff to assist the resident to find more permanent accommodation during their 9 month stay. Life skill deficits, addiction issues and child-care issues are addressed by a named key-worker who is available to assist with any issues arising during a resident's stay.

Resettlement Team with its 7 staff offer professional housing needs assessments and an accommodation finding service. The team support service users at all stages of their search for independent living and will refer service users to the most appropriate accommodation available to them. This accommodation may include sheltered housing for our older clientele or supported housing within other services. Service users may meet their key-worker weekly to source accommodation and address any outstanding issues that both parties feel may hinder their ability to live independently. Our resettlement team utilise our Transitional Housing project for service users who may need a little extra support before moving on into their own home. They also offer Post-Settlement Support for a short period after a service user moves into their new home.

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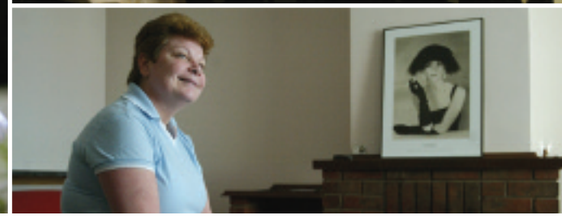

Dublin Simon Community
Annual Review 2006 - 2007

Chairperson's Statement - Philip Flynn

Dublin Simon Community is progressing well in the new direction we set ourselves almost two years ago. At that time we committed the organisation to respond more directly to the needs of service users and to become a leader in delivering the very best quality services. We developed a challenging strategic plan and received the support of staff, volunteers, service users and Board members.

Today, I think we can all feel good about the progress that is being achieved. I would like to thank everyone - staff, volunteers, donors and service users - for their significant contributions and continued commitment. I also thank the CEO and the senior management team for their dynamic day-to-day leadership of the change process.

I would like to particularly acknowledge and thank the members of the Board for their considerable time input over the past year. The range of skills and experience available within the Board has been crucially important in delivering a significant programme of work.

The teamwork and mutual support exhibited by all Board members has made it a real pleasure for me to work in that team.

While I am delighted with all the achievements of the past year, we still have significant tasks to complete in 2007 so that we deliver fully on our strategic plan. For our part, the Board remains committed to promoting a caring, professional and collaborative working environment which aims for excellence at all levels. We must ensure that we continue to achieve best practice in our governance and administration so that we can demonstrate value for money to government and to our private donors and sponsors.

Equally, we must challenge ourselves to set a leadership example in the continued development of all our services, so that everyone in need of one can get a home of their own and be equipped with the necessary skills and supports to sustain independent living and full participation in society.

Chairperson - Philip Flynn

Fun Run 2006

CEO Statement - Sam McGuinness

CEO - Sam McGuinness

Over the past year we have continued to learn a huge amount from the people who are homeless and use our Services. We know they have lost friends and that scares them. Most are tired, suffering illness, lonely and vulnerable. They are looking for help and feel discarded. They want to get their lives back and know they are recycling themselves constantly. They know the problems because they have them, they know the answers and want to share them. They want a home and a to live in a neighbourhood like the rest of us.

They know they have health issues, behavioural issues and relationship issues. In many cases they did not start out with any or all of these but they have them now. We need to ensure their participation in decision making and their involvement in the drawing up of their care plans. We should all have the same rights to health, safety, respect, dignity and information.

Dublin Simon is committed to ensuring that the people who use our Services have a major say in decision making on issues that effect their lives. We cannot accept the extent or the depth of marginalisation we still witness today on the streets, in shelters or B&B's. We believe there is no excuse. These issues have been identified time and again, the resources are available. Plans to make a difference have been drawn up. We need to solve the problem not keep treating it. The root causes are known and the necessary responses are committed to. These have been well documented in the present Homeless Agency Partnership Action Plan (2007 – 2010) ' A key to the door ', and await implementation.

As an organisation we in Dublin Simon must be more impatient for progress and change, play our collective parts AND be more demanding for faster delivery, results and conclusions. Otherwise, today's children will be the next generation of homeless adults.

Kiliminjaro Hike 2006

Our Board of Directors

Brian Brady - Studying for an Honours Degree at Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology, Brian is a photographer and former service user.

Mary Deevy - Volunteer on the soup run and emergency shelter for more than 16 years , Mary retired from the Board in 2007.

Dympna Dolan - Volunteer for 7 years and lecturer in the Further Education Sector, Dympna is Vice Chairperson.

Edward Farrelly - Barrister. Edward is Chair of the Audit and Governance Sub-Committee.

Philip Flynn - CEO of the Digital Hub Development Agency, Philip is Chairperson of the Board.

Stewart Kenny - Psychotherapist and founder of Paddy Power Bookmakers, Stewart has been Board member since 2005.

Kevin Loughran - Design engineer in the IT/ Electronics industry, Kevin is Secretary to the Board.

Darren McCallig - Minister in the Church of Ireland, Darren has been a soup run volunteer for the last 5 years.

Michael McDermott - Financial Director with the Digital Hub Development Agency, Michael has been a Board member for 2 years.

Ken Molloy - New Board member, Ken was a former service user, now in employment.

Neil Pope - Business owner in the recruitment and organisational development sector, Neil is a volunteer for the last 5 years.

Katherine Whidden - With 25 years professional experience in human resource management, Katherine is Chair of the Finance and Organisation Sub-Committee.

How we work

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

- Outreach and emergency accommodation for people sleeping rough
- Specialist health, addiction treatment and learning services
- Helping people make the transition out of homelessness
- Supporting people in their own homes.