









Chairperson's Report



2009 Review



Andrew's Story



Long Term Supporters



Full-time Volunteering



Part-time Volunteering

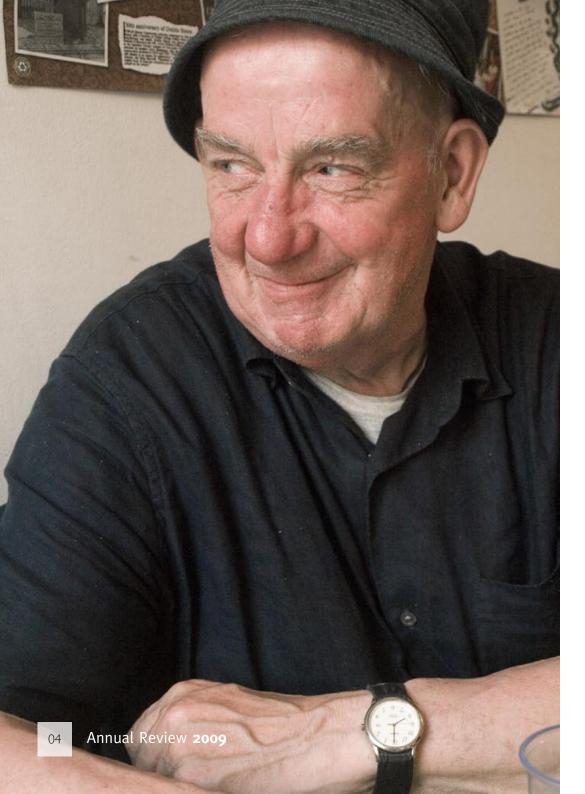


Service Development



Stats at a Glance







We will help people who find themselves homeless, for whatever reason, to stabilise, rebuild their lives and settle in their own place.

Throughout the past year our challenges increased hugely and even more so as we headed into a bitterly cold winter, reducing temperatures and equally frozen and shrinking government resources for the services we provide.

During this time we continued demonstrating to everyone, especially people who were rough sleeping, otherwise homeless and at risk, why Dublin Simon Community will never give up as it provides one of the most recognised, trusted and reliable deliveries of quality outcomes and cost effective responses.

One of our greatest causes to commemorate was our Dublin Simon Community 40th year anniversary at Dublin Castle and the attendance of Bob Geldof, who was a volunteer in his youth, and President Mary McAleese. An equally important event was being notified of our success as the preferred bidder in the competition for the provision of Housing Support Services for the four local authorities across the Greater Dublin area in accordance with the published award criteria.

In the meantime, in excess of 80% of people who are homeless, last count 2,144 households, are either sleeping rough or stacked up in sometimes unsafe, inferior emergency accommodation, for 6 months or more. Over 50% of them are still there, more than 2 years later, there are simply insufficient accommodation

Review of Challenges



options. We have limited places to take them; they have nowhere to go, no future choices, nowhere to call home. All of this in a country with excess housing stock everywhere. We will stay focused on the main thing, which is to provide the best services. We will help people who find themselves homeless, for whatever reason, to stabilise, rebuild their lives and settle in their own place. We will believe in people always, do the right thing, and act in the best interests of all Dublin Simon Community stakeholders.

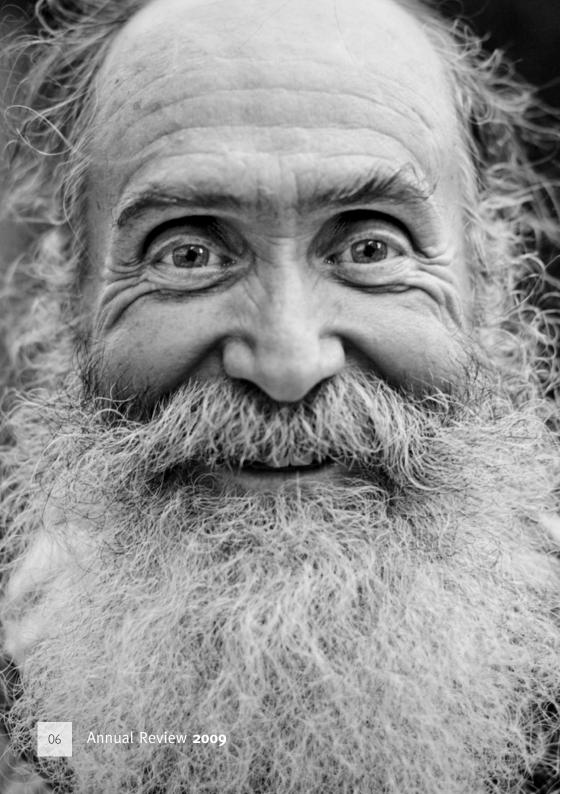
While we try to contemplate on the increasing requirements and demand for our services, we experience greater competition for the limited funds available and have no guarantee of ongoing state support. In these chaotic times, our service users, staff and volunteers are all dependent, more than ever, on the ongoing generosity of our core supporters to see us through. We will continue to strive for the wisdom, skill and expertise to stretch every penny available.

You, who have had the courage and belief to help, we continue to depend on you and we thank you for your support.

Sau

Sam McGuinness

CEO





There were a number of significant events and outcomes throughout 2009 that made Dublin Simon Community proud to be one of Ireland's leading organisations in the charity sector. Some of the key

The 40th Anniversary

highlights included:

This year our 40th anniversary was marked by a host of events to celebrate our hard work and achievements. It culminated in a very special and joyous occasion in Dublin Castle with President Mary McAleese in attendance. All of the events served to show our appreciation and gratefully acknowledge the significant contributions made by all the volunteers, staff, donors, funders and statutory agencies down through the years.

Strategic Plan 2009-2011

Following wide consultation and a significant amount of hard work by a dedicated team, the organisation's three year Strategic Plan was adapted.

Reconfiguration of Homeless Services

During the year the process of consultation and decision making in relation to the provision of homeless services in the future took place. The Homeless Agency, relevant Government agencies and service providers were all actively engaged in the process. Credit must go to the hardworking team in Dublin Simon Community involved in the process which has resulted in the organisation being well placed as a key player in the sector for the future. The growth and development in our Long Term Supported Housing and Treatment services will ensure growth and a strengthened position.

Chairperson's Report 2009



Staff and Services

Alongside the frontline services the comprehensive range of support services including HR, Administration and IT enabled the organisation to meet its targets and achieve its potential. Through the determined and consistent efforts of the CEO, senior management, staff and volunteers Dublin Simon Community remained resilient and positive in meeting the many challenges it faced during the year. The Fundraising, Media and Communication campaigns throughout the year were by any standard extremely successful. This was set against a background of continuing economic decline and cuts in statutory funding. Our strong campaigning voice served as a constant reminder of the plight of people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Charities Act

The Charities Act 2009 was enacted in February. It is a significant milestone for all of us operating in the not-for-profit and voluntary sectors in Ireland. Dublin Simon Community is confident that it complies with the provisions of the act and will continue to do so into the future.



Dympna Dolan CHAIRPERSON





2009 was the 40th Anniversary of Dublin Simon Community which was founded by Trinity and UCD students in 1969. Their original soup run continues to this day while Simon has grown enormously to cater for the growing needs and complexities of homelessness in Ireland. Here's a quick snapshot of some of our other work and activities that took place during this year.

As lanuary began and people all over Ireland struggled with their New Year resolutions, Dublin Simon Community was again reminded that throughout the year, our service users continuously face the challenge of new beginnings. Often this involves taking steps to control a drug or alcohol addiction issue. In January, one of our service users, Sean, moved out of homelessness and into a home of his own. Sean had spent most of his young adult life as a substance misuser. Through his time with the Dublin Simon Community, Sean was supported in controlling his drug and alcohol addictions and moved from Dublin Simon supported housing into his own accommodation. Sean's story highlights the challenging steps that our service users take daily to make positive changes in their lives. Throughout 2009 Dublin Simon moved many people out of homelessness and into their own homes. Our Learning and Development team also assisted many others to access education and gain new skills. This is an important part of our work as homelessness is not just about the absence of a roof overhead or a set of keys. Our focus has always been on addressing the complex needs of our service users and assisting them to participate in society and relearn vital life skills.

Throughout the year, staff and volunteers at Dublin Simon organised a variety of activities and outings for our service users. In February a six week cookery programme was introduced at our Eblana emergency shelter in Dun-Laoghaire. Every week a different

2009 Review - a look back.



meal was prepared with the residents by a tutor and these classes proved so successful that weekly cookery classes were also introduced for residents at Hazelwood House. Later in the year, residents from our Detox and Rehab facility went on a three day excursion to the Cavan Adventure Centre and service users from the Eblana emergency shelter in Dun-Laoghaire went on a Paintball trip. These outings provide a great opportunity for everyone to relax and enjoy themselves and leave behind, even for a short while, some of the difficulties of their own lives.

During 2009 the 40th year anniversary was commemorated by reflecting on the origins of Dublin Simon. In May, a group of volunteers replicated a sleep out which took place forty years ago by our founding volunteers to highlight the extent of homelessness on Dublin's streets. The volunteers were even joined by some of the original sleep out participants. During that time, we also held a number of flag days around Croke Park supporting Dublin and opposition fans to get their faces painted and show their true colours!

Throughout the year, Dublin Simon continued its campaigning tradition and in June focused an email campaign to all candidates for local



2009 Review - a look back.

election in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow to affirm their commitment to support government strategy to end long-term homelessness by 2010.

In August we continued work on extending our services and began a tender process for Housing Support Services from the Local Authority as part of the 'Pathway to Home' initiative. The Housing Support Services model uses visiting workers to provide support and sustainment to individuals who are accommodated through the Department of Environment initiative 'Support to Live Independently'. The tender was successfully awarded to Dublin Simon at the end of the year.

Over the years, the success of Dublin Simon can only be attributed to our strong team of committed volunteers who continue to drive us forward. In September, our 40th Anniversary Commemoration event took place in Dublin Castle and many of the founding volunteers were joined by President Mary McAleese, musician Luka Bloom and former volunteer Bob Geldof to commemorate Simon volunteers past and present. Earlier in the year Dublin Simon held a creative competition throughout the community and the winners were present at Dublin Castle to showcase their contributions to all present.

During Simon week, October 2009, the motto was 'seven days of action on homelessness'. All the Simon Communities in Ireland came together to highlight the collective Simon services and in Dublin, Michael Finneran, the Minister for Housing and Local Services visited our Emergency Shelter at Island House and our Detox and Rehab facility in Usher's Island. The week culminated in our 26th annual Fun Run which attracted over 2,000 participants.

Dublin Simon continually works to improve the services to benefit those we serve. During October we conducted a health survey to ascertain the complex health needs (mental and physical) of our service users which highlighted, among other things, that over 25% of people accessing our services have both a diagnosed mental health and diagnosed physical health condition. The results allow us to understand further the complex needs of people experiencing homelessness and continue to campaign for the adequate supports to be in place.



In November, we established a new Dublin City Tenancy Sustainment clinic in Ballymun following the success of a similar clinic in Finglas. These clinics form a vital part of our homelessness prevention services by working to assist people to maintain their tenancies with Dublin City Council.

A drug information drop in service was also opened at our Eblana emergency shelter in Dun-Laoghaire. The service is open to people who are rough sleeping in the area and provides information on addiction issues and local homeless services. The drop in service is a joint initiative run with the Local drugs Task Force, HSE Outreach, Dun-Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, the Local Addiction Team and Drop.

Our 40th anniversary culminated in a hugely successful Sing for Simon campaign in December. Dublin Simon volunteers and supporters came together to take part in a 24 hour Carolathon on the longest night of the year. Several Irish musicians also showed their support including Glen Hansard, Bono, Damien Rice, Liam O Maonlai and Mundy, among others, who took part in a special busking event on Grafton Street on Christmas Eve.





Life can be tough when you are homeless and mentally ill without the right medication.

Andrew's Story



Andrew* first experienced homelessness after he was released from a short stay in prison. Andrew was suffering from mental health problems and found himself with no money and nowhere to stay in his local area, so he came into Dublin city centre in search of shelter.

"The time I spent on the streets was a bit scary and quite dangerous", explains Andrew. "At the end of the day I was just glad to get a bed in an emergency hostel but they're not very comfortable. I also slept rough occasionally, it was horrible. The first time I came across Dublin Simon Community was through the Soup Run volunteers when I was on the streets who really helped and impressed me".

Soon after, Andrew was able to see a GP who prescribed medication and referred him on to the Dublin Simon Community detox and rehab facility at Usher's Island.

"I'm a paranoid schizophrenic. Life can be tough when you are homeless and mentally ill without the right medication. A lot of people on the street suffer from a mental illness", says Andrew. "When I came to the detox and rehab here it probably saved my life. I opened up and I found myself. I stayed off the drink for nine months and things just fell into place; I was happy with life."

After a stay in one of Dublin Simon Community's aftercare houses, Andrew was later referred to high-

support housing. "This is a great place and I'm very happy here", Andrew says of his new home. "The staff are wonderful; they treat me like a human being. There is a lot of help and I am getting counselling and seeing psychiatrists. The Dublin Simon Community has given me hope, without them I have no doubt that I would be ten feet under."

Andrew hopes to move on to more independent living and is looking forward to returning to his previous career in computer programming. "I want to get back to work and repay my debt to society," he explains. "I'm quite positive. This has given me the chance to plan for the future and I have high hopes for it. I come from a very good family and I had a perfect upbringing. I never thought that homelessness would happen to me. I'm in debt to Dublin Simon Community because homelessness could happen to anyone."

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Dublin Simon Community continues to provide vital care and support, forty years after its founding, thanks to hundreds of dedicated and committed supporters who help us throughout the organisation.

Darren McCallig has been a supporter of Dublin Simon Community for almost ten years. He began volunteering as a soup runner and later became a member of the Board of Directors, on which he still sits. During 2009, Darren orchestrated an operatic concert in Trinity College in aid of Dublin Simon Community, as part of the 40th year commemorations. Over the years Darren has assisted us in many capacities, from organising memorial services for past residents to sitting on the Fundraising and Communications Committee and helping with fundraising projects.

"Working with the people on the streets and getting to know their stories have been the highlights of supporting Dublin Simon Community. It's an old cliché, but you really get so much more than you give from meeting these people. Also, getting to know the fundraising team there has been really fantastic. I doubt there is another charity which raises so much money with such a small team.

I'm always blown away by the long term supporters I meet at events. At any one time there are several hundred part-time volunteers working for Dublin

Darren, Longtime Supporter



Simon Community. When you think back over forty years of the organisation, there is an army of people out there who have some connection to us. There is a huge reservoir of goodwill towards what we do.

Over the years, I've learnt that the worst thing about being homeless isn't necessarily the cold or the wet or the hunger. It's the loneliness and the feeling of invisibility; that you're sitting on one of the biggest streets in the country and everyone tries to walk by without looking at you. I might not stop and give money to every person I see on the street now, but it's nice to say hello, it can make a world of difference."

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Sean, Full-Time Volunteer



During 2009 **Sean Ginty** worked as a full-time volunteer in the Dublin Simon emergency shelter on Harcourt Street which enabled him to put his psychology degree to practical use and to offer support and encouragement to the Harcourt Street service users.

"I knew I wanted to do something using my psychology background and I've always had a strong sense of social justice. But when I got my degree I wasn't able to get a job in that field. So, I got onto another career path with a good paycheque that was hard to walk away from but last year I was laid off because of the recession. I saw an advert from Dublin Simon looking for full-time volunteers. I had no paycheque anymore and no excuse. I was completely free to do what I wanted. It has worked out very well as I had always wanted to do something that was practical as well as being psychology orientated.

I've never been one of those people who have had a negative view of homelessness. But coming from New York, one of the basic survival skills you pick up is to screen them out, they just fade from view. Working in this area now has certainly made me more attuned to what's going on, it's a lot harder to be one of those people who can completely ignore the person on the street

Now when I go out with people, I find myself being the only person who says hello to the guy sitting on the corner and the people I'm with don't even register that there is a person there. That's a common attitude. Volunteering with Dublin Simon has made me more empathetic, compassionate and more accepting.

The Dublin Simon Harcourt Street emergency accommodation is always challenging. It's very low threshold so you're getting the most vulnerable cases and all sorts of issues, drug use, psychological issues; you never know what's going to come at you next. You need all sorts of different techniques and coping mechanisms.

The best moments are usually when we get someone moved on. Recently we had three people moving on in the same day, two to our supported housing in Dorset Street and one to private rented accommodation. It's a really great feeling when people are excited and motivated to take steps towards independent living."





66 I love watching the progress of each individual; their health, vitality and strength returning. 99

Fiona, Part-Time Volunteer



Fiona Moloney volunteers as a part-time yoga teacher at the Dublin Simon Detox and Rehab facility on Usher's Island.

"I got involved with Dublin Simon four years ago when I fundraised for the Kilimanjaro hike. When I left my job to become a yoga teacher I wanted to get more involved with Dublin Simon on the ground with the people. A girl who volunteered with Simon in Usher's Island attended my yoga class and I asked her was there anything I could do. Shortly after, I started doing a yoga class on Thursday mornings with the guys and girls in the rehab programme In Usher's Island.

When they come to my class, the residents have just gone through detox and they are physically very weak. A lot of them have been in pain for so long that they don't know what it's like not to have pain. So we do gentle yoga, breathing techniques and relaxation yoga nidra.

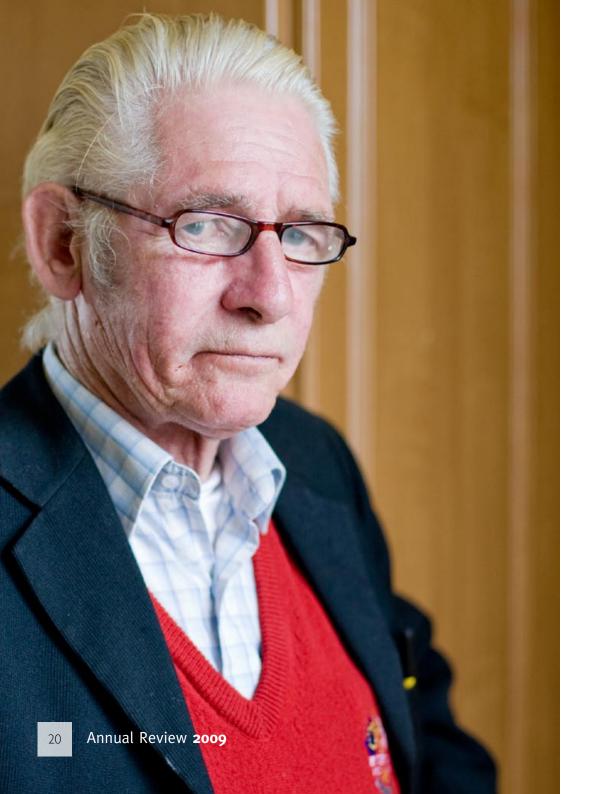
Some of them are quite shy and can be sceptical at the start but they really try hard and love the sense of achievement. I always hope that they will remember what they have learnt from the classes, particularly the meditation so they can access it any time they are feeling stressed.

Professionally, volunteering has taught me a lot. Many of the residents have old injuries and I've had to deal

with more unusual bodies. I've adapted my classes to make sure everyone can achieve something and not be afraid of their ailment. The people there are no different to anybody else in any walk of life. There is such ability and potential.

I always come out of the classes feeling energised. I love watching the progress of each individual; their health, vitality and strength returning. I'm quite astonished at the level of enthusiasm, positivity and generosity. They are kind and considerate to each other and there is a real sense of family there."

A lot of them have been in pain for so long that they don't know what it's like not to have pain.





2009 was an extremely busy year throughout Dublin Simon Community with staff, service users and volunteers participating throughout in some of the below developments.

Contract for Housing Support Service Awarded

Support to Live Independently (SLI), is a new Government scheme of mainstream housing and housing support. A competitive tender process was held by the four Dublin local authorities in collaboration with the Homeless Agency in September 2009 and an initial awarding of the tender for the Housing Support Service was awarded to Dublin Simon Community at the end of the year.

The Dublin Simon Housing Support Service will be organised so that it can be deployed flexibly across locations within the four Dublin local authority areas, supporting the range of needs arising and the varying needs of individual households as they progress from homelessness towards independent living.

Area Development

Our Area Development team established links with both Statuary and Voluntary organisations in both Kildare and Wicklow with the aim of identifying the need of the local homeless population.

Dublin Simon attended the Bray Homeless Forum and worked with some local community groups on addressing this homeless need. Dublin Simon intends to expand its work in the two counties with a Development Plan in 2010.

Treatment Services

2009 saw an increase in Detox beds from 8 to 11. Of these, 9 are for alcohol detox and 2 for clients stabilising on Methadone but who want to detox from alcohol. The Dublin Simon Detox Unit is a low threshold unit with 24/7 nursing cover and visiting GP's five days a week. The programme is made up of group work, one to one keyworking sessions, social activity,

Service Development 2009



and a medically assisted physical detox from alcohol primarily.

From here clients have an option to move onto our low threshold Residential Rehab programme which is a 12 bed unit where clients spend up to 3 months. All clients engage with the Dublin Simon Community Resettlement Team so as to work towards moving out of homelessness.

Following Rehabilitation clients can be supported in the community by our Aftercare Team to be abstinent. This service provides one to one support and group support for up to 30 clients for a 12-18 month duration. This is a relapse prevention reintegration programme to facilitate the maintenance of gains made in primary treatment, support reintegration into the community and prevent relapse into substance use and homelessness.

Dublin Simon Community Treatment Services also began piloting QUADS (Quality in Alcohol and Drug Standards) in 2009 in conjunction with Progression Routes Initiative and the Health Service Executive.



Service Development 2009

Volunteer Programme

2009 was another great year for Volunteering in Dublin Simon Community with up to 23 full-time Volunteers at any given time in projects across the organisation. Because of the success of this programme a feasibility study was carried out to look at possibilities for increasing this number to approximately 30. The part-time Volunteering programme in Dublin Simon Community also began to develop further with part-time volunteers placed throughout services. This is in addition to the long tradition in Dublin Simon Community of part-time volunteers in the Social Club and Soup Run.

Service User Participation

A process of consultation on service user participation took place in 2009. This produced a three year strategy for Service User Participation in the organisation which has commenced. Dublin Simon Community was also represented in Copenhagen at the Feantsa Service User Participation Conference entitled "Sharing the Power- Working Together" by Majella Darcy (Head of Specialist Services) and Sheila Hudson (Board Member and former Service User).

Practice Development

In 2009 the Quality working Group in Dublin Simon Community began working on a three year Quality Strategy and implementation plan. This strategy includes such initiatives as the 'Outcome Star' measurement tool which was piloted in Dublin Simon Community in 2009 with the help of Homeless Link in London. The strategy recommended three Quality Standard packages which would be appropriate for Dublin Simon Community, namely Quads, Excellence through People, and Putting People First. The Quads pilot project has commenced in Treatment Services while the Practice Development Unit introduced the SPSS system of data analysis. It is anticipated in 2010 with more accurate data collection that we will have robust statistics on which to base and analyse service needs for our clients which, together with the 'Outcome Star', should enhance Dublin Simon Community's ability to predict need and recognise early warning signs that difficulties are arising in terms of service need for our service users.

Dorset St from Transitional Housing to Short Term Accommodation

As a response to the Pathways to Home model, Dublin Simon decided to change the nature of the service provided in our Transitional Housing Unit to increase the capacity of emergency accommodation in Dublin City. People were referred to accommodation here in 2009 from Harcourt St, the Rough Sleeper Team, Island House Emergency Shelter and the Resettlement team.

Dun Laoghaire Night Shelter

A drop in service was introduced to our Eblana Night Service in Dun Laoghaire. This is a joint initiative between the Local Drugs Task Force, Dublin Simon, DLRCC, the Community Addiction Team, HSE Outreach and Drop. Their main purpose is to give information to people with addiction issues so that they can link in with mainstream services; however the service is also open to people who are rough sleeping in the area to get information about local homeless services.

Statistics collected during the Nov / Dec Pilot phase show that 5 I individuals accessed the drop in service in the first 6 weeks. Of these 17 had housing issues, 41 experienced drug addiction issues and 13 had alcohol related addiction issues.

Lifeskills Training

Life-skills Training commenced in September with the aim of equipping staff with, firstly, an understanding of the positive role that life-skills and meaningful occupation can play in increasing a person's self esteem and personal capacity; and secondly, to be able to work with service users in addressing their identified life-skills and occupational needs on an individual or group basis.

This training covers adult basic education and the barriers to learning; key concepts in education including strengths-based and multi-sensory approaches and module development; specific learning difficulties; engagement, assessment and learning plans; and the inter-relationship between Care Planning and Lifeskills provision.



Service Development 2009

Fundraising and Communications

Fundraising initiatives throughout 2009 exceeded expectations and the Dublin Simon Community would like to thank all their supporters for their continued support through difficult times. Some of our main events and activities included:

- Direct Mail we were overwhelmed with the support from existing and new donors, a big thank you from Dublin Simon
- Church Gates we would like to thank all the churches who allowed us to collect or indeed arranged their own collections for Dublin Simon as this is a vital source of income for our services. We would also like to thank the many volunteers who collected at these churches, this money could not have been raised without our trusted bucket shakers!
- Fun Run approximately 2,000 participants donned their runners for the Fun Run making it one of the biggest turnouts over the past few years so thank you to everyone for coming along and joining in the fun.
- The Mini Marathon the Flora Mini Marathon took place on June 7th with 170 participants walking, jogging and running in aid of Dublin Simon Community
- Show Your True Colours teams hit the streets with banners, face paint, balloons and hairspray - all to help football fans show their true colours on match day! The challenge for teams was to see who could do the most makeovers around Croke Park whilst raising funds for Dublin Simon.
- Summer Solstice this mid-summer evening walk brought you through 1,000 years of Dublin history and was led by historian Pat Liddy. Run in conjunction with Friends of the Elderly this was a celebratory walk through Dublin.
- A 40th Anniversary sleep-out and Commemorative Event - these were also organised in 2009 welcoming past and founding volunteers, President Mary McAleese, Singer/ songwriter Luka Bloom and Bob Geldof.

- Open Challenges Hikes we had 3 hikers who took part in these challenges, two of whom climbed Kilimanjaro and one who took on Everest Base Camp in aid of Dublin Simon Community.
- Sing for Simon we had over 44 groups Singing for Simon throughout Dublin over the 24 days leading up to and around our finale 24 hour Carolathon on Grafton Street. A special thank you to all the well known musicians who gathered on Grafton street on Christmas Eve for a spontaneous busk in aid of Dublin Simon. An amazing Christmas Gift!
- House of Cards 2009 saw the 11th year
 of this campaign which is made possible by the
 continued support of the Irish Times it is greatly
 appreciated. Thanks also to Irish International
 BBDO for their time and creative genius. We
 would also like to thank all the Irish Companies
 whose support makes this appeal so successful.
- We would also like to extend a special thank you to all of our corporate partners for their support throughout 2009. Not only is the funding provided vital and appreciated but the gifts in kind and hours staff give by volunteering and organising events truly make a difference to what we do. We look forward to continuing working with you in 2010.
- The schools programme also continued to spread its wings over the year. With the support of two full-time volunteers, Dublin Simon made plenty of school visits. We would like to particularly thank all those schools that chose Dublin Simon; for fundraising musicals, sports tournaments and a myriad of activities in between that were organised throughout the year. We are continuing to develop the schools programme to raise further awareness of homelessness throughout schools in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow.



Stats at a Glance

Dublin Simon provided services to 2450 people during 2009. This varied from one service right through to six services in a few cases. These range between Rough Sleeper Assistance, Emergency Accommodation, Treatment Services, Supported Housing, Resettlement and Tenancy Sustainment. Below is a breakdown of the demographics of service users during 2009 and the number and type of service accessed.

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ACCESSING SERVICES	2450
Number of Individuals Accessed I Service	1970
Number of Individuals Accessed 2 Services	354
Number of Individuals Accessed 3 Services	84
Number of Individuals Accessed 4 Services	25
Number of Individuals Accessed 5 Services	14
Number of Individuals Accessed 6 Services	3

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ACCESSING SERVICE CATEGORIES	1970
Rough Sleeper Team Only	1421
Emergency Accommodation Only	168
Supported Housing (either low, medium, high) Only	53
Treatment Services (either Detox, Rehab or Aftercare) Only	56
Resettlement Only	82
Tenancy Sustainment Only	190

^{* 480} people accessed a multiple of the above services, the above represents people who accessed one service only.

2009 - AGE AND GENDER DEMOGRAPHICS	DSC All
	Actual
Number of Individuals Accessed Service	2450
MALE	80%
FEMALE	20%
> 25 Years	16%
26 - 35 Years	37%
36 - 45 Years	26%
46 - 55 Years	13%
56 - 65 Years	5%
> 65 Years	1%
UNKNOWN	2%



Dublin Simon Community would like to thank photographers **Niall O'Riordan** and **David Pierce** for giving their time and skills to take the photographs included in this Annual Review.



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