



Dublin
Simon
Community

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2023

Serving Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow, Meath, Louth, Cavan and Monaghan



When I entered Dublin Simon's Longfields accommodation, I immediately felt settled, as the place was very quiet, and had wonderful staff. Having peace of mind allowed me to start focusing on myself – now I go to the gym and do yoga classes, which helped me to improve my health. The staff at Longfields are also helping me to find a home.



Salama

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VISION

Making Home a Reality

MISSION

As a community we support people to exit homelessness, access and retain homes, and rebuild lives by delivering housing, health and wellbeing services.



VALUES

COMMUNITY & INCLUSION:

We provide those associated with Dublin Simon Community a sense of involvement, inclusion and belonging.

RESPECT & EMPOWERMENT:

We are committed to showing respect to each other and creating an environment where staff and the people who use our services are empowered to improve their lives.

EXCELLENCE & INNOVATION:

We provide services to best standards that are cost-effective and we are constantly pioneering new and innovative delivery mechanisms for service provision.

ACCOUNTABILITY & INTEGRITY:

We operate with transparency so that we are accountable for actions, individually and collectively, while being equitable and fair in all our dealings.

CEO MESSAGE

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2023



I am immensely proud to address you as the CEO of Dublin Simon Community, where our work is transforming lives every day. Through our dedicated teams, we're helping individuals find hope, regain dignity, and rebuild their lives in the face of Ireland's housing and homelessness crises.



2023 was a year that tested us all, yet our response was not just measured by numbers but by the very real impact we had on people's lives. While the ongoing housing shortage presented serious challenges, what stands out to me are the stories of courage and recovery. Yes, our services reached 11% more people this year, with a total of 6,061 adults and children supported, but behind every number is a story—of someone excited about their future.

I am deeply proud of the unwavering commitment, creativity, and innovation demonstrated by everyone at Dublin Simon Community. Despite the challenges of 2023, our focus remained steadfast on our primary mission: preventing and ending homelessness for individuals and families across Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare, Meath, Louth, Cavan, and Monaghan. Each day, our dedicated teams empower people to rebuild their lives and secure safe, stable homes.

The true measure of our success lies in the inspiring stories of our clients. Take, for example, one individual who shared about the first moment they felt our services were making a difference in their outlook on life, "I knew that I would never go back to addiction again. So, I made a college application and was offered a place in Dublin Simon high-support housing. By next year, I will have a full qualification in social care, and I hope to start a two-year diploma after that. It feels important for me to have freedom in my life – choice offers people dignity." Stories like these highlight the profound impact our support can have on personal growth and long-term stability.

We are also proud of our exceptional staff and volunteers. As one client expressed, "Our nurses are the finest group of professional staff. They are very attentive and will go with you to appointments. This is home to me thanks to them." Their dedication ensures that our clients receive the compassionate and comprehensive care they deserve.

Our staff and clients deserve the highest-quality facilities and so our new 100-bed Usher's Island medical and treatment facility, set to open later in 2024, exemplifies our commitment to expanding our capacity and enhancing the quality of care we provide. This facility will offer life-changing support to those facing severe physical and addiction challenges.

One of these stories is of Seán, whose life changed when he sought help at our San Remo facility. He rebuilt his confidence, learned to read and write, and three years later, Seán now holds the keys to his forever home. Moments like these show the true power of what we do.

Beyond housing, we're empowering individuals with opportunities to grow and thrive – not just survive. One client reflecting on their journey through our services, observes, "The peace of mind I found here allowed me to focus on myself and improve my health, the staff are helping me to find a home." For others, like a participant in our Client Development program, the impact goes even deeper: "The minute I met the team, I knew I would come out a brand-new woman."

Our vision is to make homelessness a thing of the past, and we cannot do this alone. As we celebrate 55 years of service in 2024, we know that every step forward is because of the support of our funders, donors, partners, volunteers, staff, and clients. Your support is the foundation of our success and the reason we can continue to make a meaningful difference. Together, we look forward to writing the next chapter of thousands of individuals and families in the coming year, and to closing the door on homelessness for good.

Thank you for being part of this journey of transformation with us.

Catherine Kenny

CEO, Dublin Simon Community



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

6,061

People and families supported across all services



6,706

Interventions made by our Outreach team with people sleeping rough



954

Adults and children were supported by our settlement services in 2023



511

People stayed in Dublin Simon's short-term emergency accommodation



923

people received medical, residential treatment, detox, and recovery services across 2023.

Made home a reality for

1,687
people



2,106

Adults and children supported by our tenancy sustainment teams settlement, prevention, shared housing, outreach in counties, people living in high-support accommodation

REPORT 2023



46,669

Hours invested in keyworking with clients



286

Client Development
well-being, education and employability programmes.



42,000

Hours contributed by volunteers working alongside our professional staff across the organisation

2,022

Hours of one-to-one counselling and crisis **suicide** intervention was provided by Dublin Simon's Sure Steps Counselling service.



1,915

Primary Care
nursing interventions for 2023.

344,925

Nutritious meals served to clients throughout the year



952

People living in long term accommodation with Dublin Simon Community



190

People living in medium and high **support housing** with access to key working and supports needed to rebuild their lives.



733

Adults and children had homes in long-term independent housing



757

Units in Dublin Simon Community accommodation stock

CHAIRPERSON'S OVERVIEW



2023 represented Dublin Simon's 54th year in service to the most vulnerable, and it's heartening to reflect on the incredible transformations we've facilitated over the past twelve months. Our journey is defined not just by the milestones we've achieved, but by the impact we have made in the lives we've touched, and the hope we've restored in people reaching out for our help.





By the end of 2023, we had made home a reality for almost 1,700 people through tenancy sustainment services, long term supported accommodation and independent housing. In addition, through the guidance of our Clinical and Therapeutic Governance Committee, combined with our unwavering commitment to financial governance, we are on the cusp of realising one of our most significant achievements—the near-completion of our 100-bed Usher’s Island health and addiction care facility. Set to be Ireland’s first dedicated health and addiction care facility for people experiencing homelessness, this 100-bed facility is crucial as we continue to tackle the growing homelessness crisis in Dublin.

The Usher’s Island facility represents a beacon of hope in the current landscape allowing us to make an even greater impact and continue our mission of supporting people through their health and addiction treatment journeys and making home a reality for all. In addition, when fully-funded its services will not only reduce the strain on Ireland’s public hospitals but will also double our current capacity to treat those struggling with addiction. It will offer a wide range of services, including detox, addiction recovery, and step-up-step-down intermediate care. With 1,200 to 1,400 people expected to use the facility annually, Usher’s Island will save millions in healthcare costs while improving the lives of those experiencing homelessness.

Sustainability remains a key focus for us as we move forward. Our leadership has ensured that financial sustainability is maintained through

responsible stewardship of resources, ensuring that we can continue to expand services while adapting to the ever-changing landscape of homelessness. By pursuing long-term solutions like Usher’s Island, we not only address immediate needs but also lay the foundation for sustainable growth and care in the future.

Our leadership team’s dedication to driving innovation and compassion has also been pivotal in steering our course through 2023. Through clear governance, strategic partnerships, and a shared vision, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to ending homelessness. Our focus on sustainability extends beyond financial stability—it includes investing in services that provide long-lasting health and social outcomes for the people we support.

Exciting times lie ahead for our organisation and I want to thank everyone who has been an integral part of our story, including our funders, donors, partners, volunteers, staff, and clients. Your commitment has allowed us to continue our mission of supporting the most vulnerable in our society. Together, we can build on this foundation, close the door on homelessness for many more people, and move forward with hope and determination in the year ahead.

Barry McKimm

Chairperson of Dublin Simon Community

01 RESPONDING TO CRISIS



Throughout 2023, we continued to respond to the escalating homelessness crisis by providing emergency response in the form of street outreach, emergency accommodation, and homelessness prevention services.



OUTREACH



Our Outreach team made 6,706 contacts with clients sleeping rough on the streets of Dublin City and County. This represented an increase of 5% year on year, as the team continued to work on increasingly complex cases involving building relationships with clients, assessing individual needs, and supporting clients into appropriate accommodation. 1,682 of the total contacts were unique individuals, an increase of 34% the previous year.

The team's focus remained on addressing barriers to accessing emergency accommodation through advocacy, signposting, keyworking, and supporting people to access emergency accommodation.



EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION



December 2023 saw Ireland break grim new ground with 13,318 people in emergency accommodation nationally, and a Dublin total of 9,774 hovering close to the national figure from just less than two years prior. The number of adults and children living in emergency accommodation in Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare, Meath, Louth, Cavan, and Monaghan reached 10,605.

During 2023, we provided short-term accommodation for 783 people. In total we had 63 positive move-ons from our emergency services (an increase of 85% from the previous year), including Outreach. 41% of clients staying in one of our emergency accommodation services had been there longer than six months due to having no long-term accommodation to move on to.

484 unique individuals accessed our supported temporary accommodation (six -month) across Dublin and Wicklow locations in 2023, representing a 7% increase in clients accessing our six-month services from 2022. The male to female ratio of those who accessed the six-month beds was around 3:1 and 15% of clients were couples.

Our volunteer-led Soup and Breakfast Run teams made a total of 14,260 contacts on the streets, averaging around 39 contacts per day.





TENANT INFORMATION & SUPPORT SERVICE

Our Tenant Information & Support Service continued to prevent homelessness by providing information, support, referrals and advocacy for tenants in crisis. Our Tenancy Sustainment rate increased from 79% to 96% in 2023.

02 DEVELOPING & SUPPORTING OUR CLIENTS

For almost 55 years, Dublin Simon Community has been responding to the evolving needs of the vulnerable homeless population by providing wraparound support services which target personal barriers to exiting homelessness from physical to mental health needs, education and employability.



CLINICAL GOVERNANCE & THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

In 2023, 923 people accessed Dublin Simon's medical, clinical treatment, detox, recovery and aftercare services, compared with 934 the previous year. We continued to provide addiction recovery and blood borne virus services and provide non-residential addiction-specific in-reach homeless action teams and Aftercare services. Of our other healthcare services, Step Up Step Down ensured they maintained an increased bed capacity during 2023 to support and accommodate clients going in or coming out of hospitals. In addition, our Primary Care Support Service continued to operate across our long-term and emergency accommodation services to improve healthcare for those clients in their accommodation.

Our Sure Steps Day Counselling Service and Out of Hours Suicide Prevention Service continued to operate for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The team provided 2,022 hours of counselling, addressing higher cases of non-scheduled client interventions, including crisis phone calls and phone check-ins for both referred and one-off clients.

923 unique individuals were assessed by health and addiction treatment services, of which we supported 44 unique clients to move on into long-term accommodation.

Throughout 2023, we carried out a number of research projects related to Clinical Governance & Therapeutic Services in order to illuminate challenges and promote best practice both within our own services and across the sector.

These included the following:

- **The Lived Experience of Adherence to HIV Medication in the Context of Homelessness and Addiction.**
- **A Systematic Review of the Challenges Experienced by General Nurses working within the Addiction Services.**
- **The Recovery Journey: A Mixed Methods Enquiry of the Challenges and Enablers of the Recovery Pathway.**



CLIENT DEVELOPMENT

Throughout 2023, our Client Development Team focused on supporting clients to be confident and develop skills that would improve the quality of their daily lives, both as individuals and as contributing members of society. Our Employability Pathways programme, open to clients, includes both internal and external opportunities. Notably our shops and warehouse provide a range of work placements for clients to develop their professional skills and experience.

During the year, 286 unique clients were engaged in client development activities, including one-to-one tuition sessions and meaningful group activities, to develop their self-esteem, confidence and skills during their journey out of homelessness.

In addition, 20 new individuals accessed volunteering and educational grants to access 3rd level education.

03 LONG-TERM ACCOMMODATION AND HOUSING

At Dublin Simon Community, our vision is to make home a reality.

One of the essential ways we do this is by providing secure, accessible and sustainable homes for individuals and families that are suited to their needs.

In 2023, 952 people were living in long-term accommodation with us, a 6% decrease on 2022.



LONG TERM SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

In 2023, there were 190 adults living in our Supported accommodation services. Our high-support long term accommodation services, Riversdale House, Oak House, and Chester House provided 24/7 care and support to individuals with high physical and mental health support needs.

Our medium-support long term accommodation services; Canal Road, Dorset Street, Sean McDermott Street and Maple Apartments provided a lower level of support to people ready to grow their independent living skills. Our tenancy sustainment rate for medium supported accommodation was 100% (as it was in 2022), demonstrating the value and efficacy of medium supported accommodation as a service.



INDEPENDENT HOUSING

As an Approved Housing Body, we address the need for social housing by working with donors to purchase or build properties which we turn into independent, forever homes for our clients and residents. In 2023, there were 733 adults and children living in our independent houses, an increase of 3% year-on-year, as we continued to grow our housing stock with the support of donors and funders.

PROPERTY

The Property Team at Dublin Simon Community worked closely with Local Authorities, partner agencies, Government Departments, donors, funders and developers to acquire new properties and sites to help us end homelessness for more people in 2023. Our property portfolio stands at 757 units and we continue to maintain and upgrade our properties in line with regulatory and best practice standards. Significant progress was made on several projects, including our 100-bed residential facility at Usher's Island, due to open in late 2024.

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Throughout 2023, our Support to Live Independently (SLI) and regional settlement teams continued to support singles, families, and couples in making the transition from emergency or short-term accommodation into a home of their own. The team empowered these individuals to develop the skills and knowledge they need to sustain their new homes and prevent the risk of re-entering homelessness.

In total 315 unique adults and 200 children across Dublin, Cavan, Kildare, Louth, Meath and Wicklow and Monaghan were supported to prevent them from becoming homeless or to move out of insecure or inadequate housing into a tenancy. 509 adults and 445 children were supported to move from homelessness into a tenancy across these counties of intervention.

04 SUPPORTING SERVICES

Behind our frontline services, our Policy & Advocacy, Volunteering, HR, Fundraising, Quality and Finance teams continued to work hard, supporting frontline staff to continue ending homelessness for people and families in 2023.



RESEARCH & ADVOCACY

Throughout 2023, our Research & Advocacy team continued to demonstrate the frontline experience of the organisation and submitted a suite of associated recommendations through submissions to Government. These included, but were not limited to;

- The Citizens Assembly on Drugs (written submission and CEO presentation to the Assembly)
- Pre-Budget Submission 2024
- Review of the Private Rental Sector.

Collaboration with political representatives and stakeholders in the DRHE and HSE continued during the year, with particular focus on the urgent requirement to secure additional funding due to the cost of living, inflation, and staff salary adjustments.

The organisation held its first Research Symposium in March 2023 in collaboration with some of our valued network of academics in Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, and Dublin City University. A number of completed and ongoing studies were highlighted, as follows:

- The Lived Experience of Adherence to HIV Medication in the Context of Homelessness and Addiction: A Systematic Review of the Challenges Experienced by General Nurses working within the Addiction Services.
- Co-Designing a Mental Health Support with Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness
- Suicidality and Self-Harm incidents amongst Dublin Simon Community Clients: An Analysis of the Frontline Service Response
- The Recovery Pathway: Mapping Outcomes and Existing Processes of the Dublin Simon Community.

Finally, the Housing Agency funded project on the opportunities and challenges of vacant above-the-shop units (VATSUs) for residential use was completed by year end, with a report published in early 2024.



VOLUNTEERING

Since 1969, our volunteers have been the beating heart of Dublin Simon Community and assist our professional staff to deliver vital services to people who are homeless. In 2023, our 40 full-time and around 150 part-time volunteers contributed over 42,000 hours alongside our professional staff, notably to the Soup Run and to fundraising events. This represented a 19% increase on the previous year.

Without this vital support, the delivery of our life-saving services would not be possible.

It is important to note that a number of our full-time volunteers come to Dublin Simon Community through the European Solidarity Corps - an EU funded program allowing young people aged between 18 and 30 to volunteer in different European locations. Volunteers and staff operate within the EU 'Quality Label' standards.

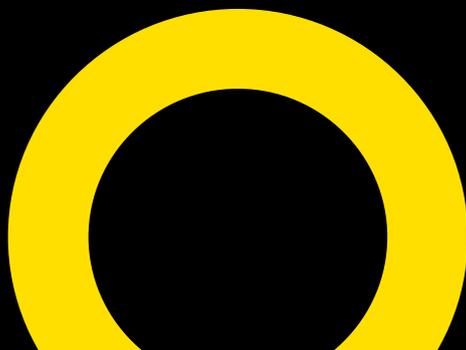
HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources Team plays a crucial role in fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment, helping to ensure staff are well-equipped to handle the challenges they face. Over 2023, the Human Resource Function implemented effective recruitment strategies, focused on culture, communications, and wellbeing to maintain our culture of empathy and support. By prioritising the well-being of employees and working to reduce turnover, Human Resources aims to ensure that the organisation can maintain a stable and motivated workforce.

Working with homeless individuals, particularly those with complex multifaceted needs, requires teams of highly skilled, qualified, and compassionate professionals. The Human Resources Function within Dublin Simon Community serves the organisation by attracting, retaining, and developing experienced professionals who are driven by a strong desire to make a positive impact on society through their working lives.

Our work is challenging. Frontline staff face crisis management on a daily and nightly basis often in emotionally taxing situations, our management and support service staff working tirelessly to stretch every resource and maximize the impact of every donation or funding stream, working hard to ensure that even limited funds can achieve remarkable results, making a significant difference in the lives of the clients we serve.

Without our dedicated workforce, we would be unable to provide any support to our clients. By investing in our people, the organisation can enhance its capacity to provide high-quality services to those in need, ultimately making a greater impact in the clients with our community.





FUNDRAISING & COMMUNICATIONS

Dublin Simon Community continued to strengthen awareness of the charity, its work, and solutions to ending homelessness, particularly through online and regional media.

Public perception of us and our work was extremely positive and we scored a trust rating of 73% in the spring wave of The Irish Charity Engagement Monitor, tracking well above the public trust rating for the charity sector generally, which stood at 59% for the same period.

We also secured a consistently high profile and regular national and regional media coverage of our housing and health initiatives with particular focus on client development and their voice. A case in point was the UnfAlr City AI campaign, released in March 2023, which achieved unprecedented organic and media attention globally as well as multiple awards.

Our Christmas 2022 campaign on the growing phenomenon of older people falling into homelessness went on to win an award as one of the top five most socially responsible campaigns worldwide in January 2023.

We also continued with our flagship Christmas events like “Carolathon” and “The Busk”; delivered the successful ‘Christmas isn’t Christmas, when you’re Homeless’ appeal; and worked closely with frontline services to bring Christmas cheer to the capital’s streets and raise essential funds for people experiencing homelessness.

QUALITY, RISK AND COMPLIANCE

Throughout 2023, the Quality, Risk & Compliance team at Dublin Simon Community continued to support our services by reviewing and analysing data and reporting trends, while ensuring sound compliance with all GDPR regulations and internal policies, procedures and guidelines.

One of the major projects conducted throughout 2023 by our Quality, Risk & Compliance Team was an evaluation of 360 Salesforce CRM system roll-out and implementation, which is still ongoing.



GOVERNANCE & FINANCE



GOVERNANCE

Dublin Simon has been an advocate for rigorous statutory regulation of governance and fundraising in registered Charities and Approved Housing bodies. We are proud of our track record of governance and signed up to a compliant with the full range of best practice codes in the Irish Charity sector including:

- Standards issued by the Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority (AHBRA).
- The Charities Governance Code issued by the Charity Regulatory Office (CRO).
- Company codes, governance and legal considerations as issued by the Company Registration Office (CRO).
- Membership of Charities Institute Ireland.

Dublin Simon Community is governed by an elected Board of Directors as per its Constitution. The Board is responsible for providing leadership, setting strategy and ensuring control and oversight.

The Charity has a comprehensive process for reporting information to the Board. Regular information includes key performance and risk indicators for all aspects of the organisation. The Board of Directors retain overall responsibility for the strategic development of the Charity in close liaison with senior management.

FINANCE



In 2023, our Finance Team supported all teams; processing funds and donations and ensuring financial compliance across the organisation.

With their support through cost-saving and other initiatives, we retained our donation balance of 90:10; meaning that for every €1 donated to Dublin Simon Community, €0.90 went directly towards our frontline services, while €0.10 went into supporting these services.

A major project within Dublin Simon Community which was administered by the Finance Department in 2023 was the implementation of a new online Prepaid card system (Soldo) which replaced our existing physical petty cash processes. This has now been rolled out organisation wide, and has freed up precious time for our service managers which would otherwise have been spent organising receipts and paperwork and can now be spent managing our client's needs.

For more detailed information, including our audited accounts, please visit the Financial Governance section of the Dublin Simon Community website.



**THANK YOU TO
ALL OUR STAFF,
VOLUNTEERS,
PARTNERS AND
DONORS FOR YOUR
SUPPORT IN 2023**





The minute I met the Client Development team, I knew I would be a brand new woman coming out of their service. Before, I couldn't even laugh, but now I am laughing and am just delighted with everything. I can't believe how great I came along.



Roseann
Client Development Women's Group



The Client Development team provide a free weekly class, which I find very beneficial. It keeps my body and mind in good condition!! It really helps to keep my mind calm and has taught me how to actually manage myself during times of stress. Thanks Simon!



Client Development - Yoga Class



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