



Galway
Simon
Community

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Everyone deserves a place to call **home**

OUR VISION

A community where everyone lives in a place they call home.

OUR MISSION

- To help people who are homeless, or at risk of being homeless, access housing and support appropriate to their needs;
- To work towards eliminating homelessness through advocacy, education and campaigning;
- To combat homelessness by collaborating with statutory and voluntary agencies, friends, supporters and the wider community.

OUR VALUES

Responsiveness

Equality

Support

Partnership

Empowerment

Community

Transparency

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



2015 will be remembered as the year when the situation for homeless people in Ireland was constantly at crisis level. All year long, we were bombarded with statistics of the increasing numbers of individuals and families who found themselves without a place they could call home.

For the last 5 years, there has been an over-reliance on the private rented sector to provide for people who have a social housing need. The past year saw economic recovery leaving more and more people facing rapidly rising rents, properties that were previously rented being brought to the market under pressure from mortgage lenders, and a social welfare system of rent supplement that kept on resisting constant calls for rises since 2013. This significant drop in the availability of secure affordable accommodation meant that demand for services like Galway Simon Community's increased significantly.

Behind every statistic lies a human story of disruption and despair. Our newspapers and televisions were filled with stories of children being raised in hotel rooms and tourist hostels away from friends and schools. People have become trapped in emergency and transitional accommodation because of the lack of move on options available, causing homeless services to become clogged up. The increased presence of people having to sleep rough in our towns and cities is another constant reminder of this crisis.

Although a Housing First approach was adopted in the policy environment, the response to the crisis did not reflect this; it was restricted to a scramble to provide short-term

emergency beds and modular homes that will not provide a lasting solution for the people in need of those beds. Getting people off the street seemed to be the only focus of the government's response.

In Galway Simon Community, we responded to the increase in demand by providing more services than ever. We dealt with 366 individuals and families, a rise of 98 people since 2014. We had 226 new referrals, 142 of which were to our Outreach Service and 84 to our housing services. We worked with 32 families throughout the year who had a total of 100 children, a significant increase from 2014 where we worked with 5 families. The cost of this extra work was funded from our reserves and continuing assistance from our supporters and it was delivered through the hard work of all our staff and volunteers.

We know what needs to be done. While we are happy to contribute to information that defines the homeless crisis, we will continue to balance that by increasing our contribution to the solutions required by our clients.

I now look forward to delivering a new Strategic Plan for the next 3 years whose central objective is the delivery of necessary services to an increased number of people. Statistics only give us the cold numbers; we measure our success by seeing the difference our support makes in the quality of peoples' lives.

Bill Griffin
CEO

WHAT WE ACHIEVED IN 2015

In 2015, the number of people and families entering into homelessness reached crisis levels. Waiting lists for social housing continued to rise, short term accommodation became long term and our accommodation operated at full capacity. Serious housing shortages, rapidly growing rents and issues with rent supplement continued to push people and families into homelessness and a despairing future.

Galway Simon Community are doing everything possible to address this major crisis. In 2015, we:

- Provided a service to 366 individuals, including families; an increase of 27% from 2014.
- Partnered with Clúid Housing and COPE Galway in securing €2.1 million of Capital Assistance (CAS) funding for the purchase of 16 apartments which will free up places in resettlement and emergency services to allow people to move on to independent living.
- Completed an agreement with Cork Simon Community, allowing us to work co-operatively on the implementation of a 3-year relationship fundraising strategy; a model they have followed for 10 years.
- Completed a consultation exercise with clients, volunteers, staff and the HSE as our main funder for their input into our Strategic Plan for 2016-2019 which was approved by the Board of Directors in January 2016.
- Welcomed 2 new Board members with skills and experience that were decided to be necessary to complement the existing areas of expertise on the Board. We now have 10 Board members.
- Worked – and are continuing to work – to reach an agreement with Donegal County Council and Clúid Housing on behalf of North West Simon Community



for the renovation of a property in Letterkenny.

- Completed the purchase of two houses in Carrick-on-Shannon through Capital Assistance funding on behalf of North West Simon Community.
- Agreed to coordinate the introduction of National Standards for Homeless Services on behalf of the 8 Simon Communities in Ireland (SCI).
- Our prevention services were expanded to keep more people from entering the cycle of homelessness. We continued to develop our health, education and specialist services to help people address and overcome what led to them becoming homeless.

I would like to thank our staff and volunteers for their commitment and hard work in 2015. Their efforts underpin our success in helping our clients make positive change in their lives. I also thank our funders, the HSE, Galway City and County Councils, and the members of the public whose support allows Galway Simon Community to continue to develop the variety and quality of services we offer.

As I step down as chairperson, I offer my personal gratitude to the community for the support, patience and courtesy afforded to me over the last five and a half years. In that time, the community has gone from strength to strength and I know it will continue to do so. Finally, I wish Maureen Lynch every success as she takes over the role of chairperson and I am confident that she will do an excellent job.

Le gach dea guí,

Seamus Kilbane
Chairperson, 2010-2015

INTRODUCING OUR NEW CHAIRPERSON



I feel a sense of urgency stepping into the position of Chair of the Galway Simon Board. The housing and homeless crisis in Ireland has increased enormously in the past year alone causing many more families and young people to become homeless. The need for homeless support services has never been greater than today. I see this role as an opportunity to volunteer my management skills to help Galway Simon Community face the increasing demand for its services by expanding what we do, extending our outreach and streamlining access to housing and support services. I am grateful that I have a talented and committed Board to work with on providing the best service we can for those who need our help.

The Board has worked with the Galway Simon management team to develop our Strategic Plan for the years 2016 to 2019, having consulted with our staff, clients and volunteers for their input. As part of this process, we simplified and focused our Vision and Mission statements to explain what we do and what we are striving to achieve. Details about our Strategic plan will be outlined further in this report.

Our Vision is a community where everyone lives in a place they call home. This is ultimately what Galway Simon is working to achieve. While this is a simple statement, it is far from simple to attain. Each person we help is an individual with unique personal needs that need to be catered to. Our services help people to address these needs so that ultimately they can enjoy stable, independent living. Without ongoing support, many people fall back into the cycle of

homelessness and this is what we want to prevent from happening. Our task is more complex than 'just' a roof over people's heads. Here is where the advocacy and education of the wider community comes in. We also need to work with government agencies to stress the importance of coordinating cross-departmental services for people.

Our Values underpin what we stand for and how we go about our work, and they all hinge around the primary value of respect. Very often, people experiencing homelessness have lost their self-esteem and feel disrespected by society. We believe strongly in the dignity of the individual and do our best to help them build back their lives so they can enjoy a peaceful and safe living environment and find their place in the community.

I encourage you to read the details of our Strategic Plan in this report and think about how you might want to help us achieve this. We need to work together as a wider community to really make an impact on the homelessness crisis. I ask for your support as we undertake this next phase of our journey towards creating a community where everyone lives in a place they call home.

Thank you for your support,

Maureen Lynch
Chairperson

IMPROVING LIVES STRATEGIC PLAN

2016-2019

Introduction

The demand for Galway Simon Community's services has increased every year for the last 3 years with a rise of 27% in 2015.

Our Strategic Plan 2016-2019 aims to further develop our services in terms of quantity and quality, responding to the needs of people asking for our support and becoming more accountable to the people who fund us.

The overall measure of our work is the effect we have in helping people make the changes they want in their lives.

Strategic Areas



1 Developing Our Services

Our aim is to ensure that people move to permanent homes and have the support necessary to enable them to live in their local communities.

To achieve this, we will:

- Restructure our Resettlement and Outreach Services in line with a Housing First ethos and approach. This will help an additional 100 individuals or families from becoming homeless or remaining in homeless services long term;
- Develop and implement a care-and-case management model across all our services that achieves better access for clients with complex needs to the supports they require;
- Establish a specialist youth service that allows young people to access housing, education and training services that prevents them becoming long term users of homeless services; and
- Implement the Client Involvement Strategy that will allow increased opportunities for our clients to inform service development and delivery.

2 Quality and Transparency

Our aim is to ensure we provide services in line with best-practice standards, while also being accountable to our supporters.

To achieve this, we will:

- Be compliant with a suite of standards relevant to the way we work. These are:
 - **The Governance Code**; how our Board of Directors govern us;
 - **National Service Standards for Homeless Services**; how we deliver our services to clients;
 - **Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)**; how we manage our finances;
 - **Guiding Principles for Fundraising**; how we raise our funds;
 - **Voluntary Code for Approved Housing bodies**; how we manage our tenants and properties;
 - **Excellence Though People**; how we manage and develop our staff; and
 - **Investing in Volunteers**; how we look after our volunteers.
- Redesign our website to let the public know what we do, how we spend our funds and how they can help us in our work with people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

3 Simon in the Community

Our aim is to improve awareness of Galway Simon Community and the work we do, and influence policy in the homelessness sector.

To achieve this, we will:

- Develop and implement a Marketing Communications Strategy that will, on a planned basis, inform all of our supporters and stakeholders of the work that we do and the various ways in which they can help us;
- Increase recruitment and retention rates of our donors and inform them of how their donations are used;
- Seek representation on local, regional and, through our work with the Simon Communities of Ireland, national fora to influence policy and decision making in the homeless sector;
- Align our management of volunteers in line with the Investing in Volunteers standard;
- Seek volunteer input for the delivery of our Strategic Plan.

4 Financing our Future

Our aim is to increase our income to allow us to develop the services required by our clients.

To achieve this, we will:

- Increase income from fundraising by 10% per annum;
- Increase income from our charity shops by 5% per annum;
- Increase statutory income by submission of annual claims for underfunded services;
- Renew focus on grant applications to cover one off service development costs;
- Implement Cost improvement programmes of 2% in 2017, 1.5% in 2018 and 1% in 2019.

PUTTING PARTNERSHIP INTO PRACTICE

In an environment of ever-increasing demand, there is always the question as to whether those of us involved in service provision are making the best use of our budgets and not duplicating services. One of the stated values of Galway Simon Community is Partnership. Here are some examples of how we have put this into practice:

In January 2015, we signed an agreement with North West Simon in which we agreed to take responsibility for the day-to-day running of their services. Client, Finance and HR services are now provided at no extra cost which has resulted in reduced running costs for North West Simon.

In 2015, we submitted a joint application with Clúid Housing and another homeless agency, COPE Galway, for Capital Assistance Funding. Together, we secured €2.1 million to purchase apartments that will free up places in our own services, allow people to move out of emergency services and free up places for people requiring short term support. Clúid will provide housing management services while Galway Simon Community and COPE will provide client care and support services.

We are working with Clúid Housing and Donegal County Council to renovate a block of 12 apartments in Letterkenny

which will offer accommodation with support to people on the Donegal Housing List. This partnership of housing, care and support expertise will offer good quality housing with supports that will help sustain people in a place they can call home.

We are working with TúsIa to explore the possibility of setting up a young person's service in Donegal which would work with 18 to 25 year olds. This would mirror the service in Galway which is being established with the help of TúsIa, Galway City Council, Vincent De Paul and Galway Diocesan Youth Service.

No one organisation has all the resources needed to make a major difference in providing the increased number and variety of supports required by the homeless population.

Some would have us competing with each other for the same resource and, by doing so, actually wasting the scarce resource. Some would have centralised services that lose the ability to provide local solutions to local needs.

Galway Simon Community knows from practical experience that partnership improves the quantity and quality of services on offer and we will continue to explore possibilities to work with others into the future.

OUR SERVICES

The demand for our services continues to grow. Last year, Galway Simon Community worked with 366 people, which was an increase of 27% from 2014. We provided 97 people with advice and short-term support, 156 people with specialist tenancy sustainment and resettlement services and we housed 113 people throughout the year.

It was an extremely busy year with an average of 18 to 19 enquiries being made each month, a 47% increase on 2014. The increase in enquiries, and service activity, was reflective of the worsening crisis in Galway where the shortage of housing kept people trapped in homeless services for longer, and forced others to access homeless services as there was nowhere else to go. We also saw an increasing number of families accessing our services as rent increases and the shortage of housing created greater difficulties for them accessing or maintaining their homes. In 2014, we worked with 5 families in total and this rose to 32 in 2015, which included 100 children.

Despite these challenges, our services were focused on meeting demand while maintaining quality. In order to achieve this we:

- Provided additional resources to our Community Outreach Team;
- Entered into partnership with Clúid Housing and COPE Galway to purchase 16 apartments and free up capacity in homeless services;
- Hired our first staff member for our specialist Youth Service to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of young people entering homelessness;
- Reviewed our referral process to improve access to our services;
- Implemented a programme of audit and evaluation against sector standards; and
- Initiated the implementation of our Client Involvement Strategy to ensure those who use our services inform their development and delivery.



2015

IN NUMBERS

REFERRALS

226 REFERRALS MADE TO SERVICES

142 TO OUTREACH

84 TO HOUSING



HOUSING

113 PEOPLE HOUSED

40 OF THEM WERE NEW TO OUR SERVICES



OUTREACH

227 HOUSEHOLDS WORKED WITH

71 WERE PROVIDED WITH ADVICE AND INFORMATION

156 WERE OFFERED TENANCY OR RESETTLEMENT SUPPORT

32 FAMILIES WORKED WITH

INCLUDING 100 CHILDREN



RESOURCE CENTRE BALLINASLOE

26 PEOPLE SUPPORTED



OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING TEAM

81 PEOPLE ACCESSED ADDICTION COUNSELLING

62 PEOPLE ATTENDED RELAPSE PREVENTION GROUPS

261 PEOPLE ACCESSED CHIROPODY

142 PEOPLE ACCESSED DENTAL CARE SERVICE



VOLUNTEERING

2015 was no exception when it came to the commitment of our volunteers. Over the course of the year, volunteers worked alongside our qualified staff to help maintain and enhance the services we provide. Our full-time volunteer programme was a huge success and included four EVS volunteers. Our part-time volunteers gave their time in a variety of roles; shops, befriending,

residential, skill sharing and fundraising. Our volunteers demonstrate what community is all about.

The support and commitment provided by our volunteers make a huge difference in the lives of those they engage with. Thank you to each and every one of you who volunteered with us in 2015.



FULL-TIME 11 VOLUNTEERS

FROM 5 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES
WORKING IN OUR 5 RESIDENTIAL HOUSES



PART-TIME 76 VOLUNTEERS

25 SERVICE VOLUNTEERS
38 SHOP VOLUNTEERS
11 PEER SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS
2 OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

154 PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED AT OUR EVENTS



FUNDRAISING

In 2015 our donors continued to provide a bedrock of support which was vital for us to continue responding to the needs of the people we work with. We were touched by the generosity of those who held events on our behalf, including sleep outs, school fundraisers and concerts and those who supported our flagship fundraisers like the Kick Asphalt Run and our Christmas food and gift appeals. Our

postal appeals, regular giving programme and the income received through tax relief on donations were also critical in helping us to respond to the current homeless crisis. We continue to be grateful for the solidarity and generosity of our local communities in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon and sincerely hope you will continue your involvement and support into the future.



EVENTS

45 EVENTS ORGANISED

€ 106,004 RAISED

€ 13,999 WAS THE HIGHEST AMOUNT RAISED IN A SINGLE EVENT



DONATIONS

2975 PEOPLE DONATED TO US IN 2015

184 MONTHLY DONORS

136 COMPANIES DONATED

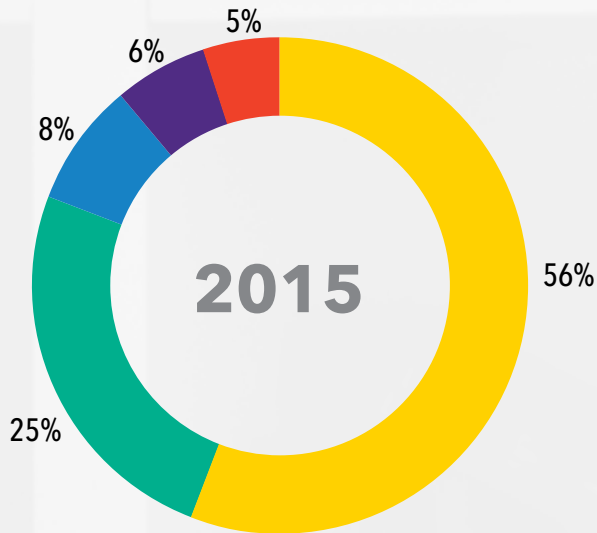
€198,547 RAISED THROUGH POSTAL APPEALS

€ 12,000 WAS THE HIGHEST AMOUNT DONATED

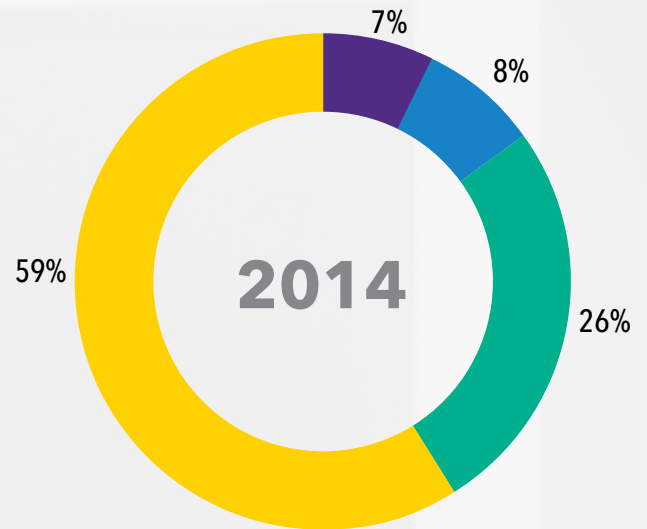
€ 431,320 RAISED THROUGH DONATIONS IN TOTAL



OUR INCOME



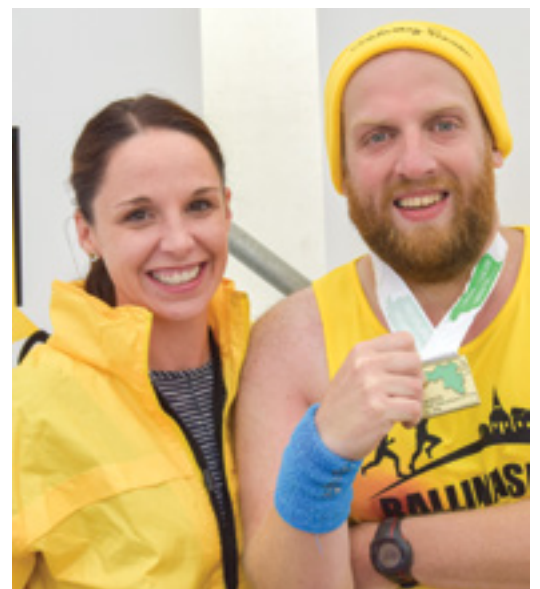
- Statutory Funding – 56%
- Fundraising, shops and investment income – 25%
- Services charges – 8%
- Community Employment Scheme – 6%
- Other income – 5%



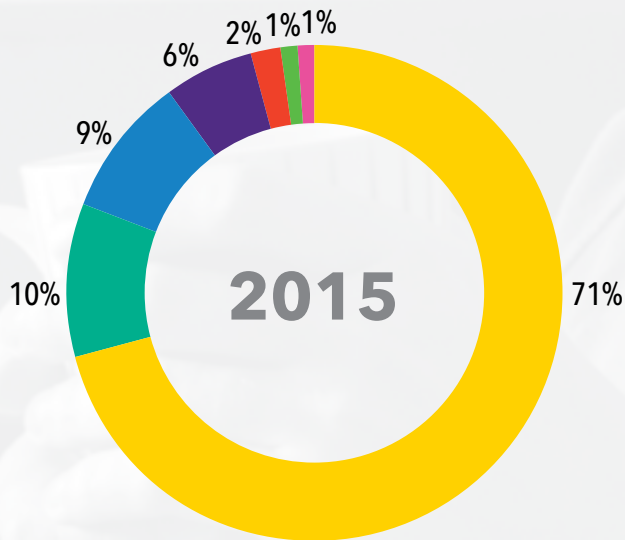
- Statutory Funding – 59%
- Fundraising, shops and investment income – 26%
- Services charges – 8%
- Community Employment Scheme – 7%

THANK YOU

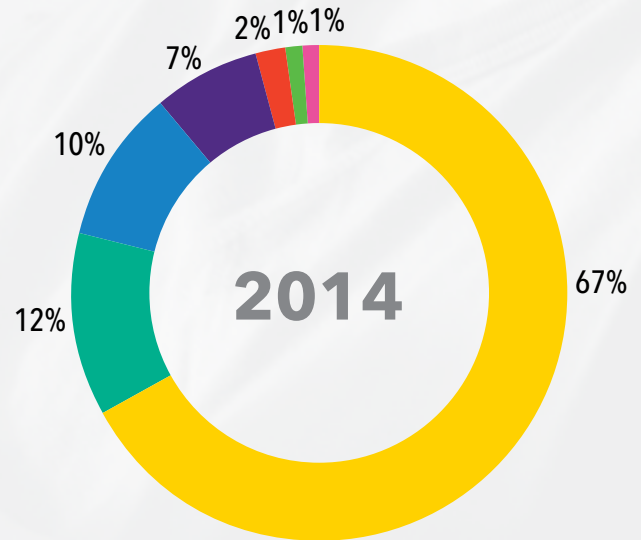
We would like to thank each and every one of you who supported our work in 2015 through donations and volunteering. It is only with your support that we are able to continue providing services to those in our community who are experiencing homelessness.



OUR EXPENDITURE



- Service provision – 71%
- Fundraising and shops – 10%
- Administration and support – 9%
- Community Employment Scheme – 6%
- Volunteering – 2%
- Advocacy and Governance – 1%
- Training – 1%



- Service provision – 67%
- Fundraising and shops – 12%
- Administration and support – 10%
- Community Employment Scheme – 7%
- Volunteering – 2%
- Advocacy and Governance – 1%
- Training – 1%

OVERVIEW 2015

€ 4,023,430 TOTAL INCOME

€ 4,048,615 TOTAL EXPENDITURE

€ 25,185 DEFICIT AT THE END OF 2015

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2015

*Extracted from 2015 Financial Statements

Income & Expenditure	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Total Funds 2015	Total Funds 2014
	€	€	€	€	€
Income and endowments					
Donations & legacies	8,134	509,015		517,150	516,902
Activities for generating funds		415,531		415,531	407,669
Investment income		27,863		27,863	40,285
Income from charitable activities					
Grants	2,287,363			2,287,363	2,287,103
Community employment scheme	230,599			230,599	252,079
Rental income		331,370		331,370	312,316
Other Income		213,554		213,554	5,179
Total Income	2,526,096	1,497,334	-	4,023,430	3,821,533
Expenditure					
Costs of raising funds		452,151		452,151	486,236
Provision of homeless services	3,327,157			3,327,157	2,987,046
Community employment scheme	269,307			269,307	290,168
Net income and expenditure before transfers	(1,070,368)	(1,045,183)		(25,185)	58,083
Transfers between funds					
Transfer to restricted fund deficit	1,070,368	(1,070,368)		-	-
Transfer to/from designated funds		231,008	(231,008)	-	-
Net income /(expenditure) before transfers recognised gains & losses	-	205,823	(231,008)	(25,185)	58,083
Other recognised gains & losses					
Net movement in funds	-	453,765	(231,008)	222,757	306,024
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	-	3,149,227	1,061,262	4,210,489	3,904,465
Total funds carried forward	-	3,602,992	830,254	4,433,246	4,210,489

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2015

	2015	2014
	€	€
Fixed assets		
Properties	7,054,286	6,952,028
Other tangible assets	13,112	18,148
Total fixed assets	7,067,398	6,970,176
Current assets		
Debtors	223,163	223,555
Bank	2,440,738	2,466,120
Total current assets	2,663,901	2,689,675
Liabilities		
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	722,036	570,398
Net current assets	1,941,865	2,119,277
Total assets less current liabilities	9,009,263	9,089,453
Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)	4,502,458	4,750,400
Net assets	4,506,805	4,339,053
Funds of the charity		
Capital grants	64,191	55,709
Capital reserve	9,368	72,855
Unrestricted fund	1,357,837	1,152,014
Designated maintenance reserve	556,789	520,000
Designated strategic development reserve	273,465	541,262
CAS mortgage payments relieved fund	2,245,155	1,997,213
Total charity funds	4,506,805	4,339,053

MEET OUR BOARD



Maureen Lynch, Chairperson

Joined Board: 2012

Maureen's expertises lie in the field of HR Management. She has a Masters in Counselling, BA in Psychology, HDip in Personal & Executive Coaching and is also a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development (CIPD).



Ann Walsh

Joined Board: 2014

Ann lectures in Marketing at NUI Galway and is Programme Director for the award winning MSc Marketing Practice. Ann worked in a variety of Marketing management roles in local and multinational companies, as well as being self employed as a free-lance Marketer.



Gregory Mc Lucas

Joined Board: 2015

Gregory specialises in different aspects of the law and has been working as an In-House Legal Advisor since 2012. He holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelors of Law from NUI Galway and a Post Graduate Diploma in Employment Law from UCD.



Henry Cleary

Joined Board: 2014

Henry is a Chartered Accountant and is a member of the Executive Committee of Barclays Bank Ireland PLC. A graduate of Dublin City University, he is also a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and a Member of the Securities and Investment Institute.



Jolene Gacquin

Joined Board: 2015

Jolene is a qualified Chartered Secretary. She holds an honours degree in Corporate Law and an honours LLB, both from NUI Galway as well as a distinction in Corporate Governance from the Smurfit School of Business.



Michael Mackey

Joined Board: 2008

Michael was first introduced to Galway Simon in 2007 when he himself was experiencing homelessness. He went onto become an ambassador for homeless people in Ireland and Europe, where he is involved in groups such as HOPE and FEANTSA.



Michelle Ruane

Joined Board: 2013

Michelle has a QCI qualification in Care of the Elderly and is currently undergoing a Bachelor of Arts in Youth and Family Studies at NUI Galway. Michelle is also an experienced guest speaker for schools, universities and outreach programmes.



Pat O'Donnell

Joined Board: 2014

Pat is the Founding Partner and Director of Principal Connections. A member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, Pat has an Honours Degree in Law from NUI Galway and a Master's Degree in Commercial Law from University College Dublin.



Seamus Kilbane

Joined Board: 2006

Seamus is a Finance Professional with over 20 years of experience. A graduate of the National University of Ireland, Galway, he is a Chartered Accountant with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland having trained with the professional services firm PricewaterhouseCoopers.



Síle Nic Niocaill

Joined Board: 2011

Síle has been involved in Galway Simon for the last 15 years as both a client and advocate. She is involved in the Simon Circle and the Simon Action Group where she acts as a representative for Galway Simon clients. Síle also gives a voice to clients and brings this to the board.

ATTENDANCE

Galway Simon Community has been entered on the Register of organisations that are compliant with the Governance Code

MEMBER	MEETINGS AVAILABLE	MEETINGS ATTENDED	AGM
Maureen Lynch	6	4	✓
Ann Walsh	6	4	✓
Gregory Mc Lucas	2	2	
Henry Cleary	6	6	✓
Jolene Gacquin	2	2	✓
Michael Mackey	6	5	✓
Michelle Ruane	6	5	✓
Pat O'Donnell	6	5	✓
Seamus Kilbane	6	5	✓
Síle Nic Niocaill	6	6	✓

HOW WE HELP

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

Community Support

This service works with men, women and families to prevent them from becoming homeless. They do this by helping people remain in their own home or to find a new home, and to continue to live as part of their local community

Ballinasloe Resource Centre

A drop-in service that offers people advice and practical support with a variety of issues including personal challenges, addiction and health issues.

HOUSING

Moving On

This service works with men who want to move on to a more independent lifestyle in their own home. We work with them to help develop the skills to move on from our services and create links to supports that prevent re-entry into homeless services.

Independent Living

We have several apartments which give people the opportunity to live independently within the community. This housing option is provided to people who do not require support to live on their own.

Community Housing

This service has several houses and small apartments which give people the opportunity to work towards living independently again in the future. The service provides a shared housing solution with access to staff support on a regular basis.

Long-term Housing

This service is for people who have multiple needs, have a history of regular contact with homeless services or require support to live independently. This service is made up of 4 houses which cater to single men and women.

Youth Homeless Service

This service works with young adults, aged 18-25, to prevent them from falling into the cycle of homelessness. We work with them to develop their skills so that they can live independently. This service will provide individual apartments with regular staff support.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Health and Wellbeing Team

We have a team which provides specialist support to people in areas including physical and mental health, addiction, life skills and access to training, education and employment.



Registered Charity No. 20018962

 @galwaysimon  /galwaysimon

Unit 18 Tuam Road Centre, Tuam Road, Galway.

091 381828

info@galwaysimon.ie

www.galwaysimon.ie