



2018

Annual Report

Our vision

A community where everyone lives in a place they call home

Our mission

- ① To help people who are homeless, or at risk of being homeless, access housing and support appropriate to their needs;
- ② To work towards eliminating homelessness through advocacy, education and campaigning;
- ③ 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

An update from our Chairperson



Dear clients, staff and supporters,

Galway Simon's purpose is to help prevent homelessness and to support people to live in secure affordable housing, in a place they can call home.

We supported 550 households in 2018. Our efforts are being severely hampered by the lack of affordable housing. This problem has become exacerbated in recent years by the reliance on the private sector for the delivery of social and affordable housing, with rents increasing steadily beyond the means of many in our society.

We need to continue to put pressure on public bodies and elected politicians to deliver appropriate housing options. Otherwise too many families will be forced to continue living in emergency and temporary accommodation. Long term solutions must be provided for people if they are to have a hope of a better life.

I would like to extend my thanks both to our generous supporters and our statutory funders, without whom we would not have been able to sustain and expand our services in 2018. The wider community in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon continues to be very supportive, through both financial support and volunteering. We sincerely appreciate all the efforts you have made to help our clients in their time of need.

Over the course of 2018, the Board approved a number of initiatives that will enhance our services and lead to better outcomes for our clients. It was heartening to see some of these initiatives start to come to fruition during the year. And we look forward to the seeds sown with other plans bearing fruit during 2019 and in the years to come.

I would like to acknowledge the proactive and valued input of our volunteer Directors who give so generously of their time and expertise.

On behalf of the Board, I wish to commend the incredible team at Galway Simon who relentlessly work towards better outcomes for all who come to us for help. The team is always open to exploring ways we can do things differently and make our resources go further.

As we come to the end of our current 2016-2019 strategic plan, we will review the progress made over this period. Over the coming months, we will seek input from many stakeholders – clients, staff, volunteers, directors, supporters and funders – in the development of a new strategic plan to take us forward into the 2020s. Against the backdrop of several years of a deepening crisis, we will continue to develop our services for those who are experiencing homelessness, or the threat of homelessness, in our region.

Sincerely,

Maureen V. Lynch
Maureen Lynch
Chairperson

An update from our CEO

My first year as CEO of Galway Simon Community has been a period of significant lows and highs.

The housing and homelessness crisis continued to deepen throughout the year here in Galway and across the West of Ireland. With 3,547 households on the social housing waiting lists in Galway City and County, only 100 new social homes were built. In spite of Galway City being a Rent Pressure Zone with rent increases capped at 4% per annum, rents increased by 13% in the city and by 15% in the county in the year to the last quarter of 2018. Reports showed that there is virtually no accommodation available in Galway within the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) limits. And the numbers in emergency accommodation in the West of Ireland (Galway, Mayo and Roscommon) almost doubled again on the previous year to 505 in December 2018.

Against this depressing backdrop, more people than ever before in the forty years since this organisation was founded were unable to access secure and affordable housing in our region. And demand for our services continued to grow.

Tackling the problem

Our deeply committed team of skilled, experienced staff and loyal volunteers supported 550 households experiencing or at risk of homelessness in 2018. In the face of report after report demonstrating the worsening situation, and with ever increasing challenges in supporting clients to access or sustain affordable housing, our community provided a range of services that greatly enhanced the circumstances of those we work with.

Throughout the year, 140 people stayed in Galway Simon's emergency, high support, transitional and community based accommodation across the city



and county. Our Prevention Services worked with 410 households to help them to sustain the tenancy they had or to help them to find alternative housing, before they ended up in emergency accommodation. For clients with higher support needs, our multi-disciplinary team provided a range of health and well-being supports.



Karen accepts a certificate on behalf of Galway Simon at the Charity Impact Awards.

Expanding and improving in 2018

Over the course of the year, we continued to develop our services. We acquired some additional housing in order to provide homes for people who may otherwise be on the streets or in emergency or unstable temporary accommodation. We collaborated with other organisations to plan for a Community Detoxification Service which we will pilot across homeless services in Galway during 2019 and 2020. We tendered successfully, in partnership with COPE

Galway, for the delivery of Housing First Tenancy Sustainment Services over the next three years as part of the national roll out of Housing First. We piloted outreach prevention services in Tuam and Loughrea. And we continued to support North West Simon's services in Donegal, Leitrim and Sligo.

We also worked on a programme of continuous improvement of our services, in line with the draft National Quality Standard Framework.

In remembrance

Sadly, a number of our clients passed away during the year and their loss impacted deeply on others within our community. We remembered all those we have lost over the years at our annual remembrance service in November.

To all those who stood with us

As always, we could not have done all that we did during the year without the enormous support of the people of Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. We are extremely grateful to those who, in solidarity with people experiencing homelessness, supported events such as our 'Dip at Dawn' in June, the Music Marathon in July and our annual Sleep Out in five different locations in October. To those who swam, danced, ran, sang, slept out, played football, made tea, shook buckets, did yoga, climbed mountains, volunteered in our shops – or helped out in so many other ways on behalf of Galway Simon – our heartfelt thanks. Your creativity and generosity of spirit in supporting those who come to us for help is deeply appreciated.



Karen with participants of Sleep Out for Simon 2018 in Tully, Connemara.

Our sincere thanks also to our funders – the HSE, Galway City Council, Galway County Council, Túsla and others - without whom we would be unable to provide the range of services that we do.

In December I was very proud to represent Galway Simon Community at the Charity Impact Awards in the Mansion House in Dublin. In a room full of extraordinary people doing incredible work, it was really wonderful to take the stage with other short-listed large charities to receive our certificate and to hear Galway Simon Community's positive impact acknowledged and showcased at a national level.



The Galway Simon Music Project after their performance at the 'Knights Before Christmas' concert with President Michael D. Higgins and his wife, Sabina.

Later the same week, I attended a rehearsal of the Galway Simon Music Project in Shantalla Community Centre. For me, the rehearsals symbolise in a very powerful way the reason I was on stage in Dublin two nights earlier. It is the coming together of volunteers, clients, staff, donors and supporters to sing together, to enjoy the music and company, and to support our Community through a concert with the A Capella Knights, the highlight of this year's Music Project. We were deeply honoured to have President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina attend the concert. When the choir sang the lyrics '... and we will come back home, home again' from the Greatest Showman song 'From Now On', there was an extraordinary energy about the performance. And it brought many people to tears.

To all who support us in our work, thank you for enabling us to improve the circumstances of those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in our community.

Ní neart go chur le chéile.

Karen Golden
CEO

Our Services

Throughout 2018, we continued to focus on the delivery of prevention services, and to enhance and expand what we do for those at risk of homelessness.

We strongly believe the best response to the current crisis is to stop people becoming homeless in the first instance. To do that we are working hard to ensure we offer services that are responsive, have the flexibility to work with people where they are, and have the resources to meet their needs.

Recently, we have seen more and more women and families accessing services, and in response we have set up a dedicated service to respond to their needs.

With increasing numbers of young adults also slipping into homelessness, our dedicated youth service established in 2016 continued to support 18-25 year-olds throughout 2018.

We have begun to see demand for our services grow in the county. To respond to this need, we began to expand our service from our Bridge Resource Centre, in Ballinasloe and established pilots in Tuam and Loughrea in 2018, both of which showed a need for a dedicated service in these areas. We successfully resettled and supported the majority of those we worked with in the pilots, and continue to provide supports for those who need it.

Throughout 2018 we continued to deliver our temporary emergency service, supported housing, community housing and resettlement services. Our housing services offer a safe place to stay for many people who would be otherwise without a roof over their heads. As always, the focus within these services is to support our clients towards independent living where appropriate. This was particularly challenging in 2018 due to the lack of affordable housing. In spite of the lack of housing, our dedicated staff team were committed to finding as many solutions and positive outcomes as possible for those we support.

We continued to deliver specialist health and well-being services, including essential services such as dentistry, chiropody and GP clinics. Our



Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, Eoghan Murphy, visits Galway Simon Community's Temporary Emergency Service in April 2018.

Occupational Therapist carried out interventions with individual clients which allowed them to develop, recover, or maintain the meaningful activities, or occupations in their lives. Clients were also supported to access a range of group activities such as art therapy, pottery, gardening and yoga. These health related supports are vital to ensure that those we support make a lasting progression out of homelessness to lead an independent life in the community.

All of this was done while continuing to focus on quality improvement across all our services. We also started the process of acquiring more housing in order to ensure those who become homeless have options for move on. We successfully tendered, in partnership with COPE Galway, for the delivery of a Housing First programme for the city, and secured funding for a specialist community detox programme.

2018 was very demanding, however, our services continued to grow and change to meet the needs of those who need us.

We are driven to ensure we do the best for our clients and continue to address the needs of those accessing, or in need of our services.

Our Services in 2018

In the past year, our services continued to provide support and accommodation to those facing homelessness in Galway City and County. We worked with 676 cases across our services, which represented 550 unique households.

550

unique households were supported by our housing and prevention services.



Homelessness Prevention Services



410

unique households supported

132

families supported including 292 children

Housing Services

95

number of places in our housing on any one night



140

people provided with accommodation

Health and Wellbeing Services



474

health treatments provided through clinics

82

ongoing cases of occupational therapy support

Figures relate to unique households supported across all services. A unique household can refer to any given family or individual who accessed our services. A unique household may re-access our services if, for example, they require further support or their situation changes.

40 Years of Work...

1979: Simon Community is established in Galway

1983: First long-term house opens

1988: After years of campaigning, homelessness is addressed legally within the Housing Act 1988

1998: Galway Simon campaigns for urgent housing action plan due to alarming levels of homelessness

2006: Independent Living service opens

2011: Prevention Service opens

2016: Youth Service opens

1983: Fairgreen Men's Hostel opens

1987: The Simon Shop opens on Dominic Street

1997: Opening of our first Resettlement Project

2003: First long-term house for women opens

2009: Our first furniture shop in Shantalla opens

2012: Resource Centre Ballinasloe opens

2018: Dedicated Women & Family Service established

40 Years Campaigning: The #JourneyHome



Join our #JourneyHome campaign to end homelessness in the West of Ireland

It is with mixed feelings that Galway Simon is marking our fortieth anniversary this year. We would love nothing more than to be able to announce that we are winding down because the crisis of homelessness in the West has ended. Sadly, that goal appears to be nowhere in sight.

Galway Simon Community was established in 1979 by a group of NUIG students who refused to accept homelessness on the streets. Since then, with the help of our staff, volunteers and supporters, we have grown to become one of leading providers of homeless services and homelessness prevention services in the region.

Urgent action is needed

The housing and homelessness crisis in Galway is now worse than at any time in the forty years since Galway Simon Community was founded. Hundreds of adults in the West of Ireland are experiencing the trauma of homelessness on a daily basis; men, women, families, young adults and children who have had

to put their lives on hold while they face every day without a home to call their own.

More and more people are coming to us for help because they have lost, or are in danger of losing, their homes. We are working with increasing numbers of women, children and young people, especially over the past three years as the national crisis continues to worsen.

And so, we must keep doing what we have always done – we must continue helping as many people as possible to avoid or escape the nightmare of homelessness, to make the Journey Home.

Support someone on their Journey Home

We do not want to see another 40 years of this crisis and we are asking you to help us take action against homelessness now through our #JourneyHome campaign.

Join us and help someone on their Journey Home this year through campaigning or fundraising. Find out how you can make a real change today in your local community by visiting galwaysimon.ie/journey-home.

Volunteering

40 years ago Galway Simon Community was set up by a group of volunteers who refused to accept homelessness on the streets of Galway. Today, volunteers remain the life-blood of the organisation, and we would like to call special attention to their invaluable contribution as we mark our 40th year.

2018 saw volunteers support Galway Simon Community across our front line services and residential services, shops, office and at various fundraising events.

Our 10 full-time volunteers provided support to staff in our residential services. 6 of our full-time volunteers are funded by the European Solidarity Corps and came from Italy, Germany, Spain and Ireland. In 2018 we were delighted to see our full-time volunteers graduate from the DIT *Certificate in Volunteering*.

Part-time volunteers worked across the organisation at our two shops, fundraising events, in befriending roles, residential support and through other client activities. They played a critical role in the work we carried out throughout the year.



Mathworks volunteers at our Music Marathon in July.

We also hosted 8 internships from the USA in our services along with 5 summer internship placements and 18 students from NUI Galway, AIT, LIT, GMIT and Carlow IT.

We are extremely grateful for the support of those in our local community who so generously give their time to support Galway Simon Community.



In total,
269 people
volunteered
with us in
2018



We had 20 full-time
volunteers working in our
services.
They came from 4
different countries.

25 part-time volunteers
worked in our services
working alongside our full-
time staff.

183 people volunteered to
help out at our events in
2018.

We had 41 part-time
volunteers working with us
in our shops and office.

Fundraising



Sleep Out for Simon 2018. Over 200 people took part in sleep outs throughout the year to stand in solidarity with those experiencing homelessness, and raising over €100k.



Left: Shop Street in October. **Right:** Galway Fire Fighters sleep out across Galway City and County in April.

We would like to firstly extend our deepest thanks to the hundreds of supporters who continued to be at the heart of everything Galway Simon achieved this year. Everyone who supports Galway Simon – fundraisers, local businesses, donors, schools, volunteers, campaigners, groups – plays a crucial part in making sure that we can support those who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness and in need of our help.

Our truly exceptional supporters raised and donated over €1.5 million in 2018 through appeals, fundraising events, sponsorships and through our shops. Furthermore, we were grateful for the increased level of support of Trusts and Foundations which provided an additional €70,000 of funding for specific programmes around health & wellbeing, client involvement and homelessness prevention.

One of the significant ways they achieved this was through the overwhelming success of our October Sleep Out for Simon event which raised €84,402. A special thanks to our wonderful volunteer team leads, our event media partner Galway Bay FM and everyone who participated on the night. In addition to these vital funds, the event was a focal point to lift awareness around the need for Homelessness Prevention Services in our community.

Income was also boosted significantly again this year through the generosity of those who pledged a gift in their will to Galway Simon Community. This

fund of €297,617 raised through individual legacies in 2018 will enable us to extend our services well into the future and protect our independence to develop services as the need arises in our community.

As we also continued to strive as a best practice organisation with respect to transparency and governance, we complied again with the Charities Institute's 'Triple-Lock' Standard and with the Charities Regulator's Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising. With the new data protection legislation that came into force in May 2018, our privacy policy and processes for capturing communications consent preferences across e-mail, phone, SMS and post were also updated.

Without your compassion, we simply wouldn't be able to tackle the current crisis. On behalf of all the people that we work with, we would like to extend our deepest thanks for your continued commitment.

We raised €1,513,356
through
fundraising in
2018



Our Finances

Galway Simon Community has been very fortunate in recent years to be the beneficiary of significant gifts in our supporters' wills which has resulted in the organisation generating an operational surplus. A surplus of €190,357 generated in 2018 included one-off bequests of €297,617 (€546,830 in 2017). This income is being used to extend our services in 2019 which will allow us to support more people facing homelessness.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our supporters who have enabled us to extend our services to help more people facing homelessness locally, which we could not do without the support we received in 2018.

Statutory and grant income represented 59% of total income in 2018 (55% of total income in 2017). This included funds from the Health Services Executive (HSE), Galway City and County Councils, Túsla and other funding bodies.

The income from statutory sources and grants increased by 12%, primarily due to the receipt

of HSE funding to pay an increased sleepover premium to staff in residential services, in line with the relevant Labour Court recommendation; and additional HSE funding of €135,000 received in December 2018 to fund expanded GP and nursing clinics, a community detox pilot and supports for housing-led initiatives.

Our fundraising and charity shop income (excluding legacies and bequests) increased by 9% to €1,215,739 which reflects excellent performance by our staff and volunteer teams and much appreciated local support by Galway, Mayo and Roscommon supporters, donors and customers.

In addition to the vital funds raised through these and many other fundraising events throughout the year, the organisation continued to receive invaluable financial support from committed donors.

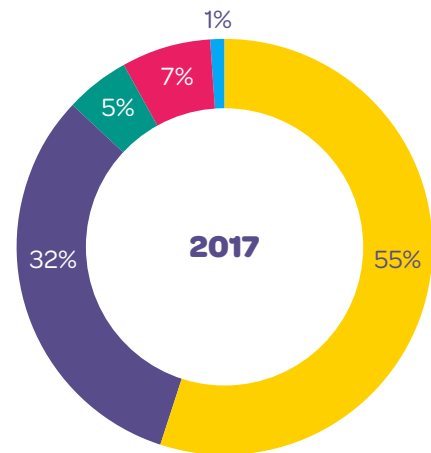
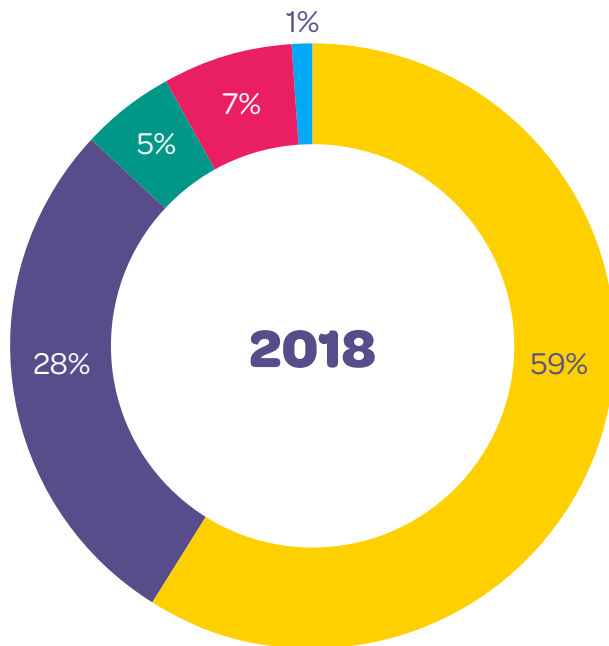
Total expenditure for 2018 was €5,282,393 which is a 12% increase compared to the previous year. This increase was primarily due to increased wage costs arising from development of services and full year effect of new appointments made in 2017.

Our full audited financial statements can be downloaded from our website galwaysimon.ie.

Financial Overview

	2018	2017
Income	€ 5,472,750	€ 5,218,880
Expenditure	€ 5,282,393	€ 4,690,569
Surplus/(deficit)	€ 190,357	€ 528,311
before Capital Assistance Scheme loan repayments relieved		

Our Income



■ Statutory and grant income

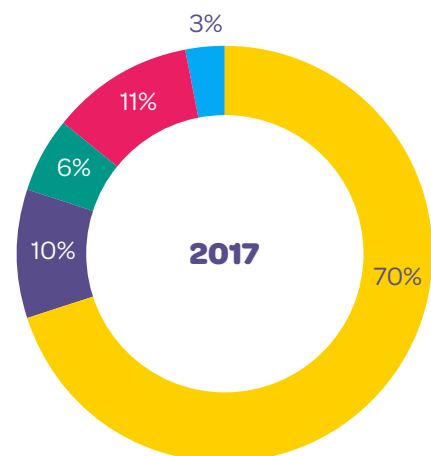
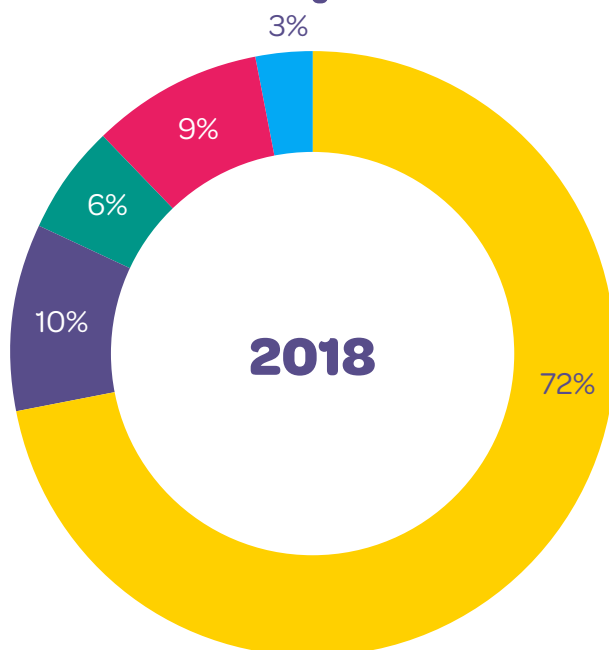
■ Fundraising, shop, and investment income

■ CE Scheme

■ Service Charges

■ Other income

Our Expenditure



■ Service provision

■ Fundraising and Shop

■ CE Scheme

■ Administration and support

■ Volunteering and training

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2018

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Designated Funds	Total 2018	Total 2017
	€	€	€	€	€
Income from					
Donations	453,189	17,841		471,030	437,573
Legacies	297,617			297,617	546,830
Other Fundraising Activities	640,086	104,623		744,709	674,453
Charitable Activities	375,558	3,543,590		3,919,148	3,513,264
Interest	7,667			7,667	10,209
Other Income	32,579			32,579	36,551
Total Income	1,806,696	3,666,054	-	5,472,750	5,218,880
Expenditure on					
Raising funds	557,881			557,881	543,013
Charitable Activities		4,367,100		4,367,100	3,840,521
Community Employment Scheme		357,412		357,412	307,035
Total Expenditure	557,881	4,724,512	-	5,282,393	4,690,569
Capital Assistance Scheme Loan repayments relieved	247,942			247,942	247,942
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers	1,496,757	(1,058,458)	-	438,299	776,253
Transfers between funds					
Transfer to/(from) unrestricted fund	(1,185,807)	1,185,807		-	
Transfer to/from designated funds	(225,811)		225,811	-	-
Net movement in funds	85,139	127,349	225,811	438,299	776,253
Reconciliation of funds					
Total Funds brought forward on 1st January 2018	4,653,545	240,474	673,316	5,567,335	4,791,082
Total funds carried forward	4,738,684	367,823	899,127	6,005,634	5,567,335

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2018

	2018	2017
	€	€
Fixed assets		
Tangible Assets	6,893,464	6,965,809
Current assets		
Debtors	273,256	305,341
Bank	3,584,100	3,093,976
Total current assets	3,857,356	3,399,317
Creditors - Amounts falling due within one year	(986,554)	(791,217)
Net current assets	2,870,802	2,608,101
Total assets less current liabilities	9,764,266	9,573,909
Creditors - Amounts falling due after more than one year	(3,758,632)	(4,006,574)
Net assets	6,005,634	5,567,335
Total funds of the charity		
Unrestricted funds	1,749,703	1,912,506
Restricted funds	367,823	240,474
Designated maintenance reserve	647,308	572,196
Designated strategic development reserve	251,819	101,120
CAS mortgage payments relieved fund	2,988,981	2,741,039
Total charity funds	6,005,634	5,567,335

Governance and Funding

At Galway Simon Community, we strive to be transparent and accountable at all times. We believe that our supporters should be informed not only about the work we do and its impact, but also about how we raise and spend our funds.

We are compliant with the Irish Charity Governance Code, the Charities Statement of Recommended Practices (SORP) and the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. We are also signed up to the Housing Agency's Governance Code.

For more information about how we are governed, visit our website galwaysimon.ie. The work we do is only possible thanks to all of our supporters including our main funders.

Statutory funders

Government bodies partially fund the running of our services.



Grant funders

We are grateful for the grants we receive from different organisations which fund specific projects.



Supporting organisations

We would like to acknowledge our supporting organisations who work with us to deliver high quality services to our clients.



Our Board

Maureen Lynch

Chairperson

Board meetings attended: 8/8

AGM attended: Yes

Sub-committee Meetings

Finance Committee: 4/4

Fundraising & Marketing Committee: 3/3



Michael Mackey

Resigned May 2018

Board meetings attended: 3/3

AGM attended: Yes

Sub-committee Meetings

Services and Quality Committee: 1/1



Pat O'Donnell

Resigned February 2018

Board meetings attended: n.a.

AGM attended: n.a.



Pat Dolan

Resigned November 2018

Board meetings attended: 2/5

AGM attended: No



Ann Walsh

Chair, Fundraising & Marketing Committee

Board meetings attended: 7/8

AGM attended: No

Sub-committee Meetings

Fundraising & Marketing Committee: 3/3



Henry Cleary

Board meetings attended: 3/8

AGM attended: No

Sub-committee Meetings

Finance Committee: 4/4



Síle Nic Niocaill

Board meetings attended: 6/8

AGM attended: Yes



Seamus Kilbane

Resigned February 2018

Board meetings attended: n.a.

AGM attended: n.a.



Gregory McLucas

Chair, Services & Quality Committee

Board meetings attended: 6/8

AGM attended: Yes

Sub-committee Meetings

Services and Quality Committee: 2/2



Stephen Mackey

Co-opted November 2018

Board meetings attended: 1/2

AGM attended: n.a.

Sub-committee Meetings

Finance Committee: 1/1



Edelle Lawson

Co-opted May 2018

Board meetings attended: 3/5

AGM attended: n.a.



Jolene Gacquin

Company Secretary

Board meetings attended: 5/8

AGM attended: Yes

Sub-committee Meetings

Finance Committee: 3/4



Looking Back on 2018



Participants of our 'Dip at Dawn' event salute the summer solstice followed by a dip at Ladies Beach, Satlhill, in June



Mathworks Galway employees volunteering at Galway Simon's Youth Service in June



The screening of 'Denis', the inspiring life story of a long-term client of Galway Simon, at the Town Hall Theatre.



Andrew and Ellen Taylor at the launch of the client 'Open Heart' art exhibition in April



Launch of our 'Preventing Family Homelessness' research and our 2017 Annual Report in September



Karen Golden, Marie Harrington, and Michael Mackey at our Volunteer Appreciation Evening in May



The Galway Simon Music Project performs at the 'Knights Before Christmas' concert to an audience of hundreds



Students at The Bish Secondary School join Cian Kelleher and Bons Secours to launch our Youth Advocacy Programme



Michael Coyne and friends at the Annual Coyne's Sleep Out in Kilkieran in December



Clients of Galway Simon enjoy a day out at Bartragh Island, Co Mayo, in July, sponsored by the Ballina Lions Club



Our 2017/2018 group of full-time volunteers graduate from DIT and receive the *Certificate in Volunteering*, in May



The Galway Ukulele Group performing as part of our 'Simon Music Marathon' in July



Registered Charity No. 20018962

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 @galwaysimon •  /galwaysimon

Galway Simon Community is operating to the Charities Institute 'Triple Lock' standards and is compliant with the Irish Charity Governance Code, the Charities Statement of Recommended Practices (SORP) and the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. We are also signed up to the Housing Agency's Governance Code.



Best Practice in Transparency and Accountability

