



Galway
Simon
Community



Supporter Update 2018



Thank you!

Since taking up post as the new CEO of Galway Simon earlier this year, I have been truly taken aback by the outstanding dedication and commitment shown by our supporters and staff in helping people to leave homelessness behind for good. It has made a deep impression on me.

Even in the hugely challenging environment we are currently operating in, we continue to be relentlessly committed to helping all those who turn to us in need of help. Now more than ever, we see our Homelessness Prevention Services being critical as early intervention is key to helping keep people in their own homes. If we can prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place, the outcomes are much better in that the trauma of emergency accommodation is avoided, and this ultimately reduces the human and economic costs associated with homelessness.

Thanks to your support, we are currently extending these Homeless Prevention Services in County Galway. We also have imminent plans to provide additional homes including new transitional housing units for our Youth Service and for our Housing First initiative, which supports rough sleepers to transition into a home of their own, while also providing the wraparound supports needed to maintain this home.

None of this would be possible without your generosity and solidarity, and I hope you feel proud as I am to be a part of Galway Simon, an organisation that has been a cornerstone in our community for almost 40 years.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Golden

CEO, Galway Simon Community

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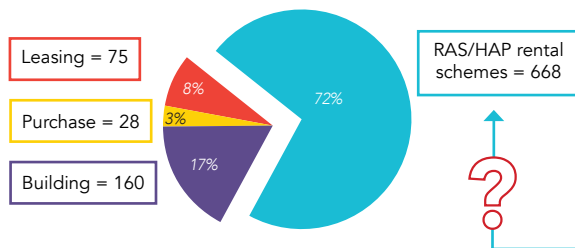
The Big Picture

A Look at Homelessness in the West

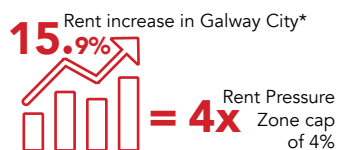
Without a doubt, the lack of social and affordable housing is the single biggest challenge that we are facing right now in trying to help people to leave homelessness behind them for good.

Social Housing Targets for 2018

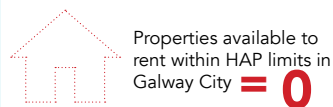
By the end of 2018, local authorities in Galway hope to deliver 931 housing units, of which 72% are expected to come from a private rental market, which is widely considered to be under pressure.



Private Rental Market Out of Reach for Many



The last four *Simon Communities 'Locked Out of the Market'* studies have shown:



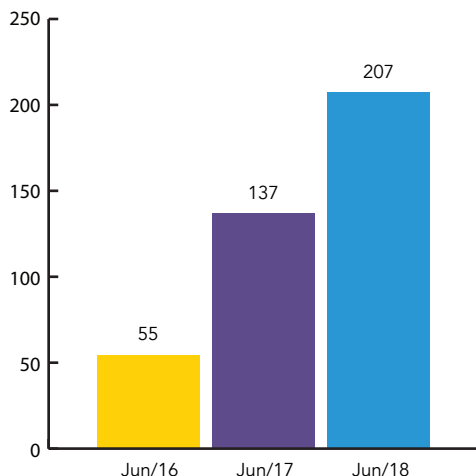
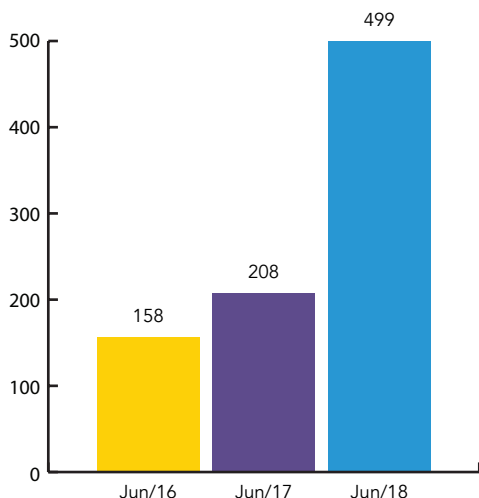
Source: Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

*Source: Daft.ie Q2 Rental Report

Emergency Accommodation in the West of Ireland

Number of homeless people overall

Number of homeless children



Source: Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government



Developments you helped us achieve this year

1

Preventing Homelessness in Rural Communities

Over the last few months, you have helped us to extend our Homelessness Prevention Services into Galway County, as we continue to see a rise in rural homelessness. Coupled with our Bridge Resource Centre in Ballinasloe, we have piloted prevention services in Tuam and Loughrea this year. Through this initiative, we provide support to individuals and families who are at risk of homelessness in more rural areas.

2

Dedicated Women & Family Service

Over the past few years, an increasing number of women and families have needed our help. Back in 2014, we supported 4 families and by 2017 that figure had shot up to 114 families with 281 children. In response to this, we established our 'Women and Family Service' to meet the needs of the changing demographic of those turning to us for support and to provide a service appropriate to their needs.

3

New Housing

The decrease in the supply of affordable properties within the private rental sector in Galway is a serious concern. This, coupled with the fact that there is virtually no new social housing properties being built, means that the current housing supply is inadequate to meet the demand from the local community. With this in mind, and with the help of our funders, we are in the process of acquiring additional housing for those experiencing homelessness in our community.

4

Temporary Emergency Service

Due to the increasing number of people requiring emergency beds in Galway, we have been running a temporary emergency service, which provides accommodation to 10 men experiencing homelessness. While staying at this service, the men are also supported in their search to secure longer-term accommodation. Our aim with this service is to reduce the number of people sleeping rough in Galway City.

Your Support in Numbers

From January to July 2018, we have already helped **399 unique households** across our homelessness prevention and housing services. Without your support, this would not be possible.

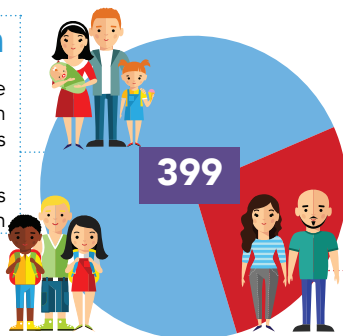
Impact Areas

January - July 2018

Prevention

277 unique households were supported to prevent them from becoming homeless

Including **74** families with **187** children



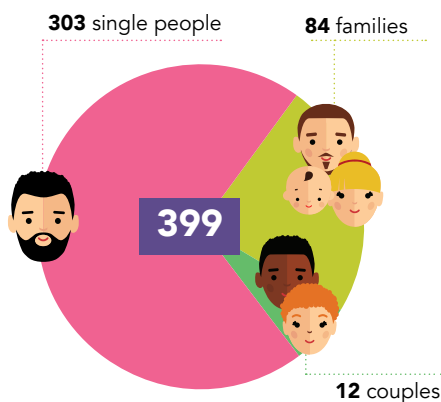
Housing

122 people were accommodated in our services

19 of these successfully moved onto their own accommodation

Who You Have Helped

January - July 2018



Prevention and Housing

399 unique households were supported

Of these, **178** were new to our services

We have helped **215** unique households move on from our services

25% 50% 75% 100%

You Change Lives



Youth Service

Youth homelessness has been on the rise in Galway for a number of years now and this is something we see directly through the demand for our services. In 2016, we set up a dedicated Youth Service to respond to this need and already this year we have housed 15 young people experiencing homelessness and supported others who are at risk of homelessness. Our early intervention prevents these young people from becoming entrenched in homelessness.

Paul was one of the young people who moved into our apartments when they opened. He came to us for help after he was placed into Aftercare following his foster care placement.

"After living in permanent foster care for several years, I was placed into the Youth Service apartments because I was at risk of being homeless. I didn't know how to manage money, I didn't have those skills. Galway Simon's help has been somewhat substantial in me becoming the person that I am today"

Paul

Women & Family Service

Ciara and her young child came to Galway Simon for help after she had been forced to leave her home due to an abusive relationship. She found herself and her young son temporarily living in her sister's small one-bedroom apartment. She had no place else to go and she was struggling financially.

"Only for Simon I would have been lost. Anna [Galway Simon] helped me to start saving for a deposit for a place of my own. Whenever we hit a setback, she'd bring me back up. She isn't just like a key worker, she's a good friend as well."

Ciara

Every day we see the effects that early intervention and prevention has on those that we work with. Our focus on prevention can mean the difference between an individual or family staying in the home that they have or uprooting their entire life and entering emergency accommodation, not knowing when they'll come out. If we can prevent someone from becoming homeless in the first place, we can in turn reduce the trauma for them of having to access emergency homeless services.



Bridge Resource Centre, Ballinasloe

We provide a safe place to stay for many homeless people across the city and county. Padraig has been a client of our Bridge Resource Centre in Ballinasloe since we opened our doors. He spent many years sleeping rough in a cold, damp shed and he dealt with some serious health issues along the way. But he eventually accepted the help he needed and he moved into one of our supported houses. After a lot of hard work and support, he was able to work his way towards independence and he now lives in a place of his own.

"I think about that shed now and it's frightening. How did I survive it? It was this cold, filthy little room with rats running around... My life is so different now. I've got keys to my own front door. I never enjoyed my life before. So now I'm doing everything I can to enjoy it. And I can keep my head up now when I'm walking around. It's a different life... They got me on the right road. They gave me a chance to live."

Padraig

Health & Wellbeing

"I've had a lot of mental health problems in the past...and I've got an addictive personality, but for the first time in my life, I've learnt here how to use it to work for me... I feel optimistic about my future and I have some goals for myself – to stay clean, to get a job and to have a place of my own, a home... I'm thankful for anyone who supports Galway Simon. You help people like me get on a good road."

Conor

Health-related supports are a vital contributor in helping people turn their lives round. Conor was supported by our Health & Wellbeing Team to help him on his road to recovery and to ensure that he could leave homelessness behind him for good. The team provides specialist support to people like Conor every day in areas including physical and mental health, addiction, relapse prevention, life skills and access to training, education and employment.

The Simon Years

*By Malcolm McLachlan,
recently retired
from Galway Simon
Community*



It's the summer of 2002 and I begin working with Galway Simon Community. Then sporting a nearly full head of hair and a relatively flat stomach! However, these would not be the only changes that would occur over the sixteen years that I worked with Galway Simon Community.

Back then, the "raison d'être" of Galway Simon was to provide a long term; or if you like a "Home For Life" for a group of men who had complex needs. Now, fast forward to 2018 and the thinking is all about independence, moving on, housing first etc. In that regard one of my most memorable moments came in recent years when a client moved from one of our services into a flat of his own. I called to the flat and asked if I could come in.

A realisation came to me at that moment that this man had never been asked that question before, as he never had anywhere to call his own until then. A truly satisfying experience.

In recent years, despite the odds being stacked against it, Galway Simon got through an unprecedented recession and not only maintained services, but in some cases expanded them, all this was possible due to the hard work and dedication of its staff team.

The resilience of the staff team won through and as a result Galway Simon continues to deliver much needed services to clients in need. I feel proud to have been a member of this staff team and leave with lots of great memories of my time there.

Over the years, I have worked closely with the volunteers who contribute so much to the organisation. Being involved with the development of the "Certificate in Volunteering" with the D.I.T gave me great personal satisfaction. Also being present when the first group of graduates received their certificates from President Mary McAleese, not forgetting the French volunteer who attempted to greet the President in the traditional French way with a kiss to each cheek and found himself surrounded by security men! Working with the volunteers has been hugely rewarding over the years and I'm very glad to have had that opportunity.

These are a just few reflections of the time I spent with Galway Simon. On one of my last days, I was happy to accompany clients on a trip to Bartragh Island. I leave now having had a satisfying and fulfilling career with the organisation.

Malcolm

A Summer Trip to

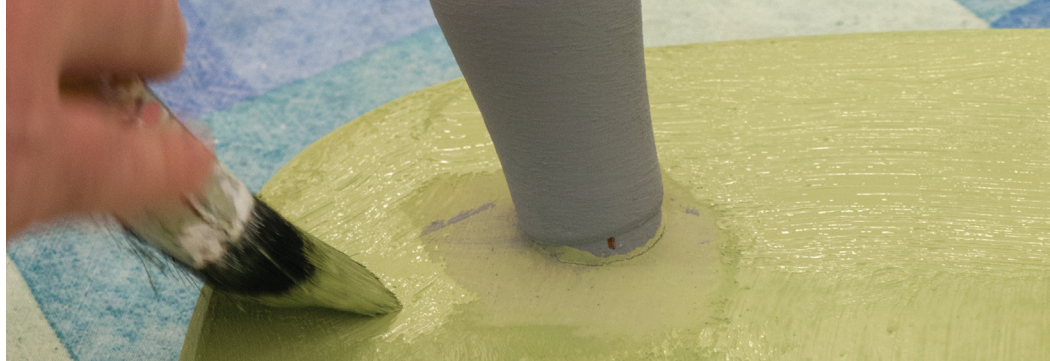
Bartragh Island

From time to time, we are lucky to be able to organise a trip or day out for some of our clients in our services. Social activities can have a huge impact on those we support. This summer, a group of our clients and staff had the privilege of heading off to Mayo for a boat trip to the lovely Bartragh Island, all thanks to our amazing supporters in the Ballina Lions Club who facilitated the day.



Help us to retrace our history!

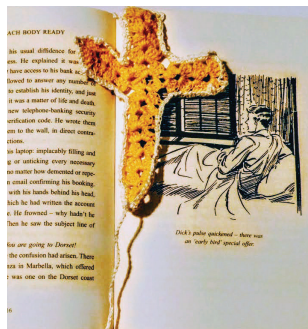
Can you believe, we will be 40 years preventing homelessness next year? As an organisation that has been at the heart of our community for almost four decades, we're sure that some of our supporters have memories of Galway Simon in days gone by. If you think you could help us to retrace our history, we would love to hear from you. Get in touch with Meaghan on 091 381828.



Client Corner: Art Therapy

Homelessness is a very traumatic experience and because of the complex range of factors contributing to it, we deliver a wide range of services to respond to the needs of each client. Many of the people who turn to us for support experience social isolation and anxiety, and this can have a hugely negative effect on their ability to journey out of homelessness for good.

From photography to knitting and pottery, your support has helped us organise a programme of activities this year that has helped our clients regain confidence and restore the dignity that they deserve.





The River

By Dennis Connolly

Dark brown is the river
Golden is the sand
It flows on forever
With trees on either side
Green leaves are floating
The castle of the foam
The boats of mine are boating
Waiting for you to come home

This poem was written and submitted by long-time client and friend of
Galway Simon Community, Dennis Connolly.



Supporter Spotlight

From organising clothes collections to coffee mornings and events, we have many amazing supporters who organise wonderful, fun and unique fundraisers which enable us to make a difference in many peoples' lives. Here are some examples of this.



Dermot, Salthill

Achill Marathon Runner

"I think in today's society it's complete madness that people are homeless and finding it hard to find somewhere to call home for the night. Regardless of a person's situation everybody should have the fundamental right to shelter and security and Galway Simon help to provide this."



Jimmy, Bohermore

'Eat Clean on a Budget' Fundraiser

"I've had a lot of help from Galway Simon Community; I've been through their services but I'm in a much better place now and I'm able to give back. Every year, I run a different fundraiser and last year I wanted to try something more unique."



Nicola, Galway City

Galway Women Unite Campaign

"Having seen homelessness first hand on the streets of Galway it prompted me to do something. I approached two friends, also professional singers, and Galway Women Unite was born. Thanks to the generous support of Galway businesses, we were able to launch our single and raise much needed funds for Galway Simon Community."



The Power of Youth Advocacy

There are many ways to encourage social change in our local communities and as we work towards eliminating homelessness for good, we recognise advocacy, youth education and campaigning as powerful vehicles to achieve this.

Young people in particular have the potential to be powerful catalysts for social change and with this in mind, Galway Simon Community developed a Youth Advocacy Programme in 2016. Since its launch, we have had the privilege of starting a conversation about homelessness with over 1,500 secondary school students across Galway & Mayo. Students find these talks eye opening and, more often than not, they express their shock at the level of 'hidden homelessness' right on their doorstep.

"I was aware there were homeless people in Galway but I wasn't aware of how radical [the homeless problem] was."

Cillian, St Enda's College

This year, we are delighted to be partnering again with Bon Secours Hospital in Galway who are generously funding the 2018 programme, meaning that we can provide these educational talks at no cost to the local school.

"Supporting Galway Simon Community's Youth Advocacy Programme is important to us, as it will help inform and form young people's attitudes to those who are struggling. Young people bring energy, vibrancy and ideals to society. This energy will be invaluable as society seeks to tackle this serious social issue. We do hope that it will indeed cultivate a sense of solidarity with those who find themselves homeless, and we wish all those involved in the project well."

Donal O'Neill, Director of Pastoral Care in Bon Secours Hospital

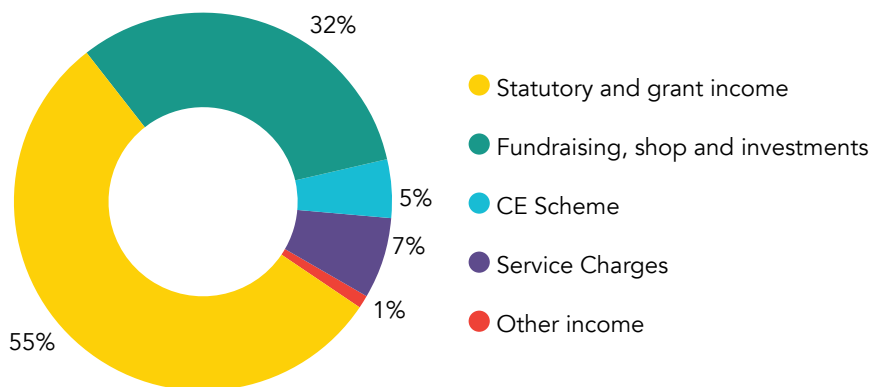
The programme opens again this September in Galway and Mayo. If you would like to request a visit to your local school, please contact Deirdre Treacy on 091 381828 or email deirdre.treacy@galwaysimon.ie.

Our Commitment to Transparency

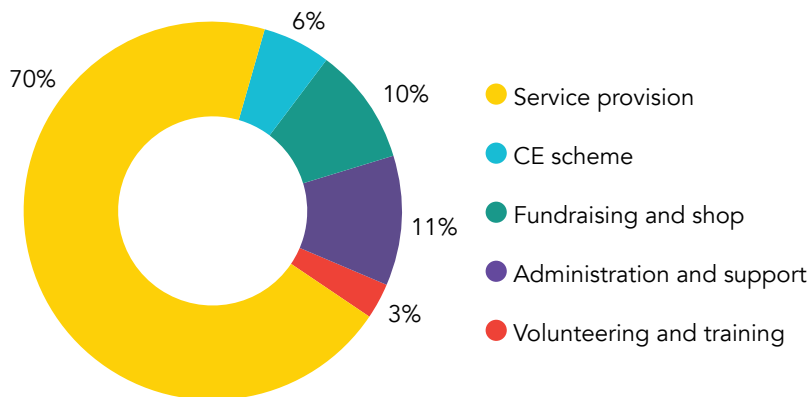
Our clients and supporters are always at the heart of everything we do.

We continue to place focus on achieving best practice standards across our organisation, and being accountable and transparent in the work that we do. Demonstrating the impact that you have through your support is truly important to us. If you would like to know more about any aspect of our work, or have feedback you would like to share with us, please get in touch.

2017 Income



2017 Expenditure



Governance

We are compliant with the Irish Charity Voluntary Governance Code, the Statement of Recommended Practices (SORP) and the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. For more information about how we are governed, visit our website galwaysimon.ie.

Ways to Get Involved

Regular Giving

Regular giving provides Galway Simon with a reliable source of funding which is essential in allowing us to plan forward and meet the growing need for our services. Setting up a monthly gift is easy and can be done online at galwaysimon.ie/donate-now or contact us on 091 381828.

Corporate Giving

Whether your business is small or large, we can tailor a partnership that is mutually beneficial and that will accommodate you and your staff. From once off fundraising initiatives to year-long charity partnerships, you can choose a level of involvement that's right for your business.

Tax Efficient Giving

If you have donated €250 or more to Galway Simon in a given year, with a few moments of your time we could claim a 45% tax refund from Revenue to support more people facing homelessness. Get in touch to find out how to make the most of your donation.

Attend or Support an Event

Annual Church Gate Collections
Sat 22nd & Sun 23rd September
Galway City & County

Sleep Out for Simon
Fri 5th October
Shop Street, Loughrea, Tuam,
Corinthians R.F.C., Rossaveal

"An Extraordinary Journey from
the Sahara to the Antarctic"
Fundraising Book Launch
Thu 15th November
Galway City

Sing for Simon
Throughout the month of December
in Galway City & County

Knights before Christmas Concert
Sat 15th December
Galway Cathedral

Volunteer

Giving as little as one hour a week of your time can make a huge difference to the work we do. For information on all the different ways to volunteer visit galwaysimon.ie/volunteering or get in touch on 091 381828.

Schools and Colleges

Our Youth Advocacy programme is now open. If you would like a member of Galway Simon to visit to your local school or youth group, please contact Deirdre Treacy on 091 381828 or email deirdre.treacy@galwaysimon.ie.

Leave a Legacy

A gift in your will, big or small, will help Galway Simon to be there for people facing homelessness in the future.

Visit galwaysimon.ie for more information on our events or ways to get involved.



Registered Charity No. 20018962

 @galwaysimon

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Galway Simon Community is operating to the Charities Institute 'Triple Lock' standards and is compliant with the Irish Charity Voluntary Governance Code, the Statement of Recommended Practices (SORP) and the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising.