

Midlands Simon Community



Introduction

The Midlands Simon Community was established in 2004 and aims to support individuals, couples and families from the counties of Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath, and the wider Midlands Region to move out of homelessness and into a permanent home.

People We Work With

While the main priority of our work is to assist our Service Users to move out of homelessness, we also work very closely to help them overcome the many other difficulties they face such as loneliness, isolation, poverty, and health and welfare issues.

We also campaign and advocate to provide a much needed voice for those on the margins of our society. In short, it is our aim to help all our Service Users to rebuild their lives, and move out of homelessness into a permanent home.

Since Midlands Simon Community established its first service in 2005, over 500 people have been referred to the organisation in our first 4 years. It is estimated that over 300 people will experience homelessness in the Midlands each year.

Range of Services

In September 2005, Midlands Simon launched its first Regional Settlement Service. The Regional Settlement Service is unique and innovative, it has achieved a genuine and effective partnership between the Department of the Environment, the Local Authorities in Laois, Longford, Offaly, and Westmeath, the Health Service Executive (HSE) and Midlands Simon.

The service supports individuals, couples and families to move out of homelessness and into a home of their own by:

- Helping people to source accommodation.
- Assisting people to move into their new home.
- Supporting people to maintain their new home.

The Service also supports Service Users by enabling them to overcome the many challenges often faced by people experiencing homelessness. This could include assisting people in their return to employment and education, as well as providing a voice for, and advocating on behalf of, the most vulnerable in our community.

By consistently providing excellent value for money, a quality service that is person centred and focused on supporting people to move out of homelessness, the Regional Settlement Service has been acknowledged as a model of best practice in the sector.



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Emergency Accommodation Service

Midlands Simon Community has now opened its first emergency accommodation service, which was officially opened by Minister Michael Finneran T.D., Minister for Housing, Urban Renewal and Developing Areas.

The Emergency Accommodation Service provides a vital first point of contact with Midlands Simon Community for people who are experiencing homelessness. The self contained and modern units are located in Athlone. The service, which has been running since December 2008 is operating at almost 100% capacity since January 2009. It is a unique and excellent example of inter-agency working.

Volunteering and Community Support

Midlands Simon Community is a volunteer centred organisation, and has volunteers at all levels of our work.

In fact we simply could not survive without the wonderful support of all those in our community.

They believe as we do, that everyone can play a part and make a real and lasting difference in the lives of others.

Volunteers make a significant difference to Midlands Simon Community by:

- Supporting the Emergency Accommodation service
- Working in the Regional Settlement Service, assisting and supporting Service Users in many various ways.
- Working in the "Simon Shop", in Athlone.
- Helping and supporting the "Simon Shop" to source goods and stock.
- In each county we have a "Friends of Simon" group who play a vital role by assisting with all types of fundraising, campaigning and raising awareness of the work of Midlands Simon.
- Midlands Simon also work closely with the wider community and in partnership with various groups, schools and businesses to help end homelessness and build a better community.

See the 'How you Can Help' insert in this pack for further ideas

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