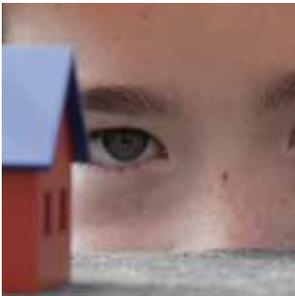
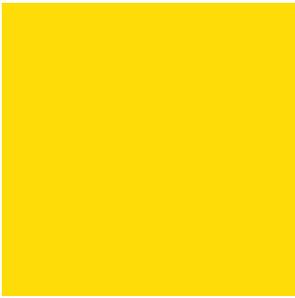
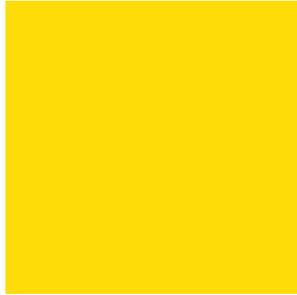


# Believe in People



**Simon Communities of Ireland**  
Annual Review 2010 & Calendar 2012

proudly supported by



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### **Calendar photography**

Jason Clarke Photography & thank you to all communities for submitting photos.

### **With thanks**

Service Users, Staff and Volunteers of the local Simon Communities.

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Charity Number: 8273.

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## Word from our Chair



Dr Mary Lee Rhodes

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### **A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON 2010**

Dr Mary Lee Rhodes

The environment in which Simon operates has provided many challenges in recent times with a financial and political crisis leading to an early election in March and a major shift in the Irish political landscape. Nevertheless, over the course of 2010 a wide range of activities and events have taken place throughout the country, building on the success of 2009.

In the policy area, we were successful in getting all parties to sign-up to our pre-election 'Simon pledge' on homelessness and we have continued to work to make our voice heard in government policy and relevant voluntary and statutory circles. We have been meeting with representatives from the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG) as well as engaging with the new Government.

In the areas of fundraising, we have focused almost exclusively on the corporate side in 2010, with the full support of the Board, and we are very grateful to all our funders who gave us tremendous support throughout the year. These include CRH, Denny, EBS and the RIAI (Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland),

We wish to also thank our statutory funders who supported our work over the course of this busy year. In particular, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Department of Community, Rural and Gealteacht Affairs, and Léargas.

The full-time volunteering programme continues to run well and provides all of the full-time volunteers requested by the local communities that use this service. These volunteers are provided with comprehensive induction training and ongoing support. In addition, the EVS funding application was successful in 2010 with a grant of €39,209 received to support five Full Time Volunteers each committing to placements from 9-12 months. I have been struck by the intrinsic values of individual commitment, community and contribution to a wider civil society that is embodied in the work of the volunteers. The continued development of the CPD Certificate in Volunteering in partnership with DIT – which is unique in Ireland – celebrates and helps to embed these values, while providing a tangible benefit to our fulltime volunteers that no other organization provides.

Our best practice service remains busy where the core work included service delivery policy development, developing and delivering training, auditing, organizing and delivering seminars and workshops on practice issues and researching and disseminating good practice initiatives. The Simon Involvement and Action Group (which had its 6th anniversary this year) empowers service users, and the new initiative in facilitation skills training for service users is an excellent outgrowth of this work. The Outcomes Star Systems for measuring the progress of services users in their journey towards independence is a significant tool for key-workers; training on the system has been provided to most of the Simon communities to date. This broad set of activities, represents the work required to promote the Simon values of respect and equality as we endeavor to work in partnership with the people who use our services in order to provide the best possible service to them.

I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to my fellow members of the Board of the Simon Communities of Ireland; their continued support, commitment and guidance have been invaluable. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the hard work of all the staff in the Simon Communities of Ireland Office and the eight local Simon Communities. It is their spirit and commitment that is at the root of everything we do.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the people who use the services of the Simon communities all around the country; that so many people turn to Simon at a vulnerable time in their lives confirms the need to continue to provide high quality services and, to campaign for the right policies and structures to tackle homelessness in Ireland. With the launch of the recent Housing Policy Statement by Minister Penrose we will be focusing on what is promised by and required from the new government, as well as on the support we need from Irish society in general – particularly given the increased hardship on the most vulnerable among us in the current economic climate.

Simon is an extraordinary movement that has stepped up to meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in Ireland without judgment, fear or favour. In doing so, it has brought together people from all over Ireland – and the world - to recognize and reaffirm their shared humanity. No wonder Simon is one of the most recognized and loved charities in Ireland. The desire is there – the decisions need to be made, the plans laid. Let's just do it!

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## Word from our Sponsor



Jim Farrell

### **A MESSAGE FROM JIM FARRELL, ROADSTONE WOOD GROUP**

*2010 marked the completion of the third year of CRH's partnership with the Simon Communities of Ireland. In July 2010, we were delighted to confirm that CRH employees had raised over €906,658 through their efforts for Simon in the third year of the partnership.*

Each CRH employee was key to ensuring the success of this worthy project. The three main characteristics of the Safety Challenge - shelter, safety and the local community - naturally align themselves with CRH's businesses in Ireland and have helped ensure this project's success.

Health and safety management is a daily management priority in every CRH company and location around the world – extending to some 75,000 people at 3,600 operating locations in 35 countries in 2010.

### **CELEBRATING SIMON'S PARTNERSHIP WITH CRH**

In July 2010, the Simon Communities of Ireland celebrated the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth year of its partnership with CRH. CRH has continued to show its strong commitment to supporting Simon in delivering much-needed services to those experiencing and at risk of homelessness on the island of Ireland.

The CRH Simon Safety Challenge is an all-island initiative that assists Simon's important work of tackling homelessness north and south of the border. For every accident free quarter (3 months) achieved at any CRH company location across the island of Ireland, a sum of money is donated to the Simon Community operating in that region. Company locations that achieve a full accident free year donate an additional 25% bonus payment on top of the four combined quarterly donations.

Simon Communities in Cork, Dublin, Dundalk, Galway, Midlands, Mid West, North West, South East and Simon Community Northern Ireland all benefit from this Challenge. The CRH Simon Safety Challenge generated €906,658 in 2009- 2010. This extremely significant donation made a real difference to the lives of people who are experiencing homelessness.

We are happy to have played our part in assisting the good work carried out by the Simon Communities of Ireland in 2010.

#### **Jim Farrell,**

Managing Director, Roadstone Wood,  
CRH/Simon Safety Challenge Spokesperson.

## Word from our CEO



Patrick Quinn, Acting CEO

### **HOMLESSNESS IS BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH**

Patrick Quinn, Acting CEO, Simon Communities of Ireland

*There can be no question that 2010 has proven to be another difficult and trying year for our country. Times remain challenging and experience has taught us in the Simon Community that structural issues such as poverty and social exclusion are the root causes of homelessness. Each year the Simon Communities across the country deliver support and services to between 4,500 and 5,000 people who experience – or are at risk of – homelessness. People who access Simon services often experience many related needs which include; poverty and social inclusion, mental and physical ill health issues, problem drug and alcohol use and fractured family relations.*

In November 2010, we met with members of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health & Children to present the findings of our first ever National Health Snapshot Study of people using Simon Services, undertaken in July 2010. We presented the reality for people using Simon Services and projects throughout the country reporting that 56% experience at least one diagnosed physical health condition, 52% experience at least one diagnosed mental health condition, and 28% of people experience both a diagnosed physical and a diagnosed mental health condition. Fifty six people in this study had attempted suicide in the prior six months alone. In addition, 66% reported using alcohol while 38% reported using drugs. We are talking about people who are very sick and very vulnerable. The high levels of health care needs amongst people who are homeless in this study clearly demonstrates that

access to both mainstream and specialist health services is critical in helping people overcome homelessness.

While housing is an important part of the solution, homelessness is about more than having a roof over your head, or a set of keys. To tackle long term homelessness and to support people to move out of homelessness, the provision of accommodation with appropriate housing, health and social care support based on need is critical. In addition, we must have a lasting impact on those living on the margins of society - a whole new generation who are now at risk of homelessness.

In many cases Simon has become the last hope for people and this safety net is needed now more than ever. We anticipate that this situation will only get worse; more people are at risk of homelessness, more people will become homeless and more people will turn to the Simon Communities for support. It is critical that we do not turn the clock back on the progress that we have achieved in addressing homelessness in recent years. It is essential that budget lines for homelessness are maintained, at the very least, at current levels.

At this point in time, we are only too aware of the effects funding cuts have had on vulnerable people and it is our fear that further cuts may have an irreparable impact on the provision of housing, care and support for the thousands of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness across the country. As we look towards 2012, all of the major economic indicators reveal little evidence that the economy is going to return to robust growth any time soon. We are acutely aware of the pressures that the current economic crisis places on our new government and the fact that difficult decisions must be made, but they must be the right decisions.

Homelessness is bad for your health and we as a society have a responsibility to meet all of these needs and to support people to become healthier, to become happier and to leave the cycle of homelessness behind. It is very reassuring that we achieved cross party support, prior to the recent General Election, when the five main political parties in the State; Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil, Sinn Féin, the Labour Party and the Green Party signed the Simon Election Pledge, pledging that if elected to Government that they would ensure that tackling homelessness would be a top priority. Reflecting this, homelessness has been identified as a priority in the new Programme for Government. It is now time to match rhetoric with action. It is our hope that 2012 will be a time for political change, public optimism and for social growth and development, a time when we might make a lasting impact on the lives of those experiencing and at risk of homelessness in Ireland.

*What the Simon  
Communities  
did in 2010*

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*During 2010 the eight local Simon  
Communities continued to provide high  
quality services to a large number of  
people across Ireland including:*

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**4,564  
adults who  
were homeless  
or at the risk of  
homelessness.**

**A residential  
medical detoxification  
programme in Dublin for  
up to 11 people, a 12 bed  
rehabilitation programme  
and a 6 place aftercare  
programme.**

**169 units  
of long-term  
supported  
accommodation.**

**141 units  
of emergency  
accommodation  
for people  
experiencing  
homelessness.**

**64 units  
of transitional  
accommodation where  
focused programmes  
of support are delivered  
supporting people to move  
out of homelessness  
and break the cycle of  
homelessness.**

**Over 1,846  
volunteers gave  
support to their local  
Simon Communities,  
including the  
recruitment of over 101  
full-time volunteers  
during 2010.**

**7 Simon  
shops around  
Ireland generate  
much needed  
income for Simon  
Community  
services.**

## *What the local Simon Communities Do: The Range of Services*

*Outlined below is the range of services available to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness across the Simon Communities throughout the country.*

**Day-Time Support** – The Simon Communities day time services offer support, food and a comfortable, friendly environment for people experiencing homelessness (and also in some instances to former residents) during the day, when they often have no other place to go or no one else to turn to. They also provide access to healthcare; education and training opportunities; counselling and support; resettlement information and advice; referral to the appropriate services; and social events. A Day and Outreach Team operate in Cork to ensure people can take that first step to getting the most appropriate help and support they need to begin their journey out of homelessness. For those sleeping rough, living in squats or other insecure housing, direct access to a team of doctors, nurses and counsellors is offered. Day Centres currently operate in Dundalk and Galway Simon. In Dundalk, services also include daily support through social activities such as garden projects and computer training.

**Soup Runs** – Operating 365 days a year, the Simon Community soup runs provide much needed sustenance and friendship for those living on the streets and in squats. The soup runs offer hot, nourishing food, blankets, a friendly smile and provide a vital link to the Outreach Teams. The soup run and outreach teams are often the first contact people have with services for people who are homeless. In addition, South East Simon celebrates the first year of its Food Distribution Service, started in the Waterford city in 2009.

**Outreach/Rough Sleeping Teams** – The Simon Communities work with people who are sleeping rough and in some cases those living in squats to ensure they have access to the care and support they need and to facilitate access to accommodation and other appropriate services. A Day and Outreach Team in Cork, a Rough Sleeper Team in Dublin and an Emergency Outreach Service in the South East all provide day and night support throughout these cities and regions. In addition, the Dublin Simon Rough Sleepers Team offers a Backpack Needle Exchange and Information Service and piloted a Mobile Health Clinic during 2010. Galway Simon Community participates in providing a Winter Initiative for people who would otherwise sleep rough.

**Emergency Shelter** – The Simon Communities operate a number of emergency shelters around the country that meet the short-term accommodation needs of people experiencing homelessness. This often serves as a point of contact for people. While staying in Emergency Accommodation services users are assisted to access additional appropriate services and supports as required e.g. health, social welfare etc. Emergency shelters are provided in Cork, Dublin the Midlands and Dundalk constituencies. Throughout 2010, the Emergency Shelter in Cork was full every night. Each resident participated in a comprehensive assessment of their individual needs resulting in a tailored care plan being agreed and reviewed on a regular basis. The Midlands Simon Community, who opened a new six bed Emergency Accommodation Service in Athlone in 2009 are currently planning the opening of a second emergency shelter. Dublin Simon continued the provision of two emergency shelters – a one night only shelter and a second 24/7 shelter where all service users were key-worked and helped to move on to further appropriate accommodation where available. The third Dublin Simon shelter in Dun Laoghaire closed down in October, in line with the reconfiguration of services in Dublin.

**Specialist Treatment Services** – Specialist drug and alcohol treatment services offer short focused and longer-term residential rehabilitation programmes. Dublin delivers a 21-day residential medical detoxification programme for up to 12 people. In addition, Dublin provides a rehabilitation programme which runs for a three-month period and an Aftercare Programme, both residential and non residential. In the South, Cork Simon hosts the HSE Adult Homeless Multi-Disciplinary Team. The team consists of doctors, nurses, a psychiatrist and psychologist, and counsellors providing specialist physical and mental healthcare for people who are homeless. In addition, Cork Simon has a Youth Homeless Drug Prevention Project. In the West, Galway has a team consisting of nurses, both general and mental health, a chiroprapist and a Substance Misuse Counsellor. This team provides a service at all homeless services locations in the city including follow on services to people discharged from hospitals, home nursing care, life skills programmes, counselling, relapse prevention programmes, education and awareness programmes.

## *What the local Simon Communities Do: The Range of Services (continued)*

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**Transitional Accommodation Programmes** – The transitional accommodation services delivered in the local Simon Communities last between 6 months and 2 years, with the aim of supporting people to ‘move on’ to more permanent housing and supported and/or independent-living in the longer-term. Residential transitional programmes currently operate in Cork, Dublin and Galway. Currently, Cork has 12 transitional housing places for people who need the highest level of care and support, and also places in transitional flats for people who need medium to high levels of support as they prepare to move on to more permanent housing and supported independent living. During 2010, Galway saw the number of transitional accommodation places rise in their region from 20 to 23 offering shared supported accommodation with peripatetic support, while Dublin Simon provided up to 19 beds in transitional accommodation.

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**Long-Term Supported Housing** – The Simon Communities long-term supported accommodation services provide a safe, friendly and comfortable environment for those who are unable to live independently in the short or medium term. Many of those residing in long term supported housing have a range of complex needs – mental and physical ill-health, problem drug and alcohol use, fractured family relations, education and training needs, poverty and exclusion. Long-term supported housing projects are currently operated by Cork, Dublin, Galway, the North West and the South East Simon Communities. In addition, Dundalk Simon runs a unique, long-term supported housing project catering for people with learning disabilities at risk of becoming homeless. Galway Simon continue to provide 24/7 staff cover for people with complex needs while North West Simon had 20 apartments occupied on a full time basis in Letterkenny in 2010. Cork continued to provide four high support houses for people with multiple health and related needs requiring around the clock care and support. In 2010, the Government, in tandem with Cork City and County Council and HSE, gave Cork Simon the go ahead for the development of a further three high support beds at one of Cork Simon’s existing high- support houses. Dublin provide 44 high support beds across two projects and 19 low support apartments for people who have moved out of homelessness and require very little additional support.

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**Resettlement and Housing Plus** – The Simon Communities offer support services to assist people to access and move onto appropriate accommodation that meets their needs. In addition, these services support people in the longer-term helping to prevent homelessness re-occurring. Cork’s Housing Plus project, Dublin’s resettlement service and Galway and Dundalk Simon’s tenancy sustainment services all provide ongoing practical and emotional supports that are needs based for people who have progressed into independent living whether that be in private rented accommodations, in local authority housing or in housing provided by various voluntary housing associations. Galway has a residential resettlement project in addition to their tenancy sustainment service. This service expanded in 2010 to accommodate 10 people. The Midlands Simon Regional Settlement Service targets those experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath. The South East provides tenancy support and resettlement services in South Tipperary, Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford.

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**Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment** – The Simon Communities offer prevention and tenancy sustainment services for people identified as being at risk of homelessness to address their particular issues and to ensure that homelessness is avoided. Dublin, in conjunction with Dublin City Council, delivers an early intervention project in the form of tenancy sustainment to prevent people from becoming homeless. In 2010, Dublin’s tenancy sustainment and resettlement services were combined to provide Support to Live Independently (SLI) service which will provide visiting support to approximately 100 people. Dundalk provide an outreach prevention service (A.S.S.E.R.T) which was established in 2007 thanks to funding secured from the DoEHLG and has central emphasis on preventing people from becoming homeless. South East Simon run a prevention and tenancy sustainment service throughout their region. Cork Simon’s Housing Plus project also has a preventative role working closely with other agencies in Cork to identify and support at-risk households. North West Simon provide a Tenancy Sustainment and Support Service throughout counties Donegal, Leitrim and Sligo working with over 50 individuals or families on a weekly basis. Furthermore, in conjunction with the North Leitrim’s Men’s Group, North West Simon provide life skills and housing support programme for 40 single, isolated rural men in Co. Leitrim through funding from PEACE III. This life skills programme has also been rolled out to those already in housing but who need additional supports in order to maintain their tenancy. Mid West Simon have 8 units providing housing with supports for people who have moved on from other services in Limerick City. Galway Simon provide a person specific tenancy sustainment programme to individuals who have moved on from their services in addition to providing tenancy sustainment programme for individuals referred by other agencies.

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## *What the local Simon Communities Do: The Range of Services (continued)*

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**Education, Training and Employment Services** – The Simon Communities operate projects and deliver supports to facilitate access to education, training and employment opportunities for people experiencing homelessness. Mid West Simon, Galway Simon Community, North West Simon and South East Simon all undertake school visits and take on Social Care students, educating more than an estimated 1000 students in 2010 alone. Mid West Simon also provides an annual lecture to UL medical school. In 2010, Mid West Simon began work on creating a rolling life skills training programme for the people who use their services. Cork provides a range of training programmes and activities designed to build the skills and confidence necessary to support people in their move back to employment and to training and education courses to enhance employment prospects. In 2010, with the help of funding from Pobal, Cork established an Employment, Training and Education Project that facilitates and supports people who are homeless to access education, training, work experience and employment opportunities. Also in 2010, following the success of a CE scheme position, Cork Simon appointed an Activities Co-ordinator creating social and recreational activities tailored to individual needs, for those hard to reach as part of harm reduction programmes. Galway offer a range of such activities including a work experience programme in the Galway Simon Community shop. Dundalk provides services to residents such as computer training, gardening projects, art classes, health & safety, health education and confidence building. In Dublin, a Learning and Development Programme continues throughout the services which addresses the educational, training, employment and developmental needs of services users. Educational talks in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow schools continued during the year. Midlands Simon now also employs a Life Skills Co-ordinator who provides support with Life Skills on a range of issues to service users.

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**Simon Housing** – Housing has been acquired around the country for people who are ready to progress out of homelessness and into independent living. The number of housing units in each Community area are; Cork (118 beds), Dundalk (25 beds), Galway (9 shared housing units providing accommodations for 24 people with complex needs and 23 people needing peripatetic support and 12 individual apartments), Midwest (8 units), North West (27 apartments), Midlands (14 units) and South East (21 units).

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**Service User Participation** – Service User Participation continued to be an important focus during 2010 building on the work of the Simon Involvement and Action Group (SIAG), which was established in 2005. To mark the 5th anniversary of SIAG, the group produced two bumper issues of Simon Voices, a news letter written exclusively for people who have or are experiencing homelessness by people who have or are experiencing homelessness. As part of its work on Human Rights, Dundalk Simon Community has developed a Service User Participation Policy with each project now implementing its own plan to ensure service users have input into decision making at all levels within the community. In 2010 Dublin Simon progressed steadily into their three year Strategy for Service User Participation with an ever growing group meeting once a month and planning different events and activities such as 'Speak Out' where service users take to the floor and discuss issues affecting them. Further initiatives will be developed into 2011, including volunteer opportunities, Saturday socials, and a spokesperson role.

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'Political Parties Pledge to Tackle Homelessness. Pictured after signing the Simon Election pledge at Cork Simon Community on February 18th 2011 were Fine Gael leader Enda Kenny with Cork candidates from left, Jonathan O'Brien and Chris O'Leary, Sinn Fein, Dan Boyle, Green Party, Ciaran Lynch, Labour and Simon Coveney, Fine Gael. All of the main parties including Fianna Fail signed up to the pledge'.

**The National Office performs a coordinating and support role in relation to:**

- **Best Practice and Training** in service delivery and working with people who are homeless;
- **Full Time volunteering** recruitment, promoting excellence and providing accredited training.

- **Policy and Campaigning** work in the areas of housing/homeless policy and the wider poverty and social inclusion agenda;
- Managing **National Fundraising** opportunities in particular National and All Island Corporate Partnerships.

## *Best Practice and Training Coordinator*

*The work of the Best Practice and Training Coordinator focuses on supporting the Communities to deliver the best possible service to people who use Simon services. The core work includes service delivery policy development; developing and delivering training; auditing, organizing and delivering seminars and workshops on practice issues; and researching and disseminating good practice initiatives*

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A major area of this work is supporting Service User Participation. Some highlights of 2010 include the 5th anniversary of the national user group Simon Involvement and Action Group (SIAG). During the year the group produced two bumper issues of Simon Voices, a newsletter written exclusively for people who have or are experiencing homelessness by people who have or are experiencing homelessness. The group has also attracted a number of new members who brought renewed vigour to the meetings. In September a national seminar for staff was held, looking at Participation which was a great opportunity for sharing learning and good practice in this area. Training on Participation has also been delivered to staff in various Communities.

Supporting one of the Communities in their continuing development as a Human Rights Based Approach Organisation has been another exciting part of the work. This approach has also captured the imagination of SIAG and members are exchanging practices and information on this topic at the monthly meetings.

Also, in 2010 there was again a major focus on measuring outcomes for service users, with training being delivered to a number of staff in different communities, and a growing understanding of what happens to people who receive a service from us as they bring about changes in their own lives.

An additional function performed by this department is the coordination of all Garda vetting of relevant staff on behalf of the local Communities.

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## *Full Time Volunteers*

*In 2010, the Simon Communities welcomed more than 60 Full Time Volunteers, all living and working in our communities and assisting in the delivery of a wide range of services. All the volunteers attended our induction training held in Dublin. We hosted 6 separate training weeks giving all the volunteers the opportunity to meet each other and learn not only about the work they would be doing, but also about each of the eight local Simon Communities across the country*

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During the year we welcomed volunteers from Brazil, Canada, Columbia, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Spain, UK, USA and Ireland.

We also hosted five Full Time Volunteers from the European Voluntary Service (EVS). A programme sponsored by the European Union giving young people the opportunity to volunteer for up to one year internationally on projects run by approved organisations. We welcome the support we have received from this programme and aim to continue involving EVS volunteers in our communities.

This year we also saw 54 volunteers graduate from our accredited Full Time Volunteers Certificate programme in partnership with the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). The programme developed significantly in 2010 and we acknowledge the great work that both the DIT staff and the staff of the local Simon Communities have put into this throughout the year. The DIT also provided accredited training to our staff and we now have trained tutors available to deliver the certificate in the local communities.

We look forward to working with more Full Time Volunteers and welcome the fresh thinking and diversity they bring to our work.

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## Campaigning

*It is widely acknowledged that structural issues such as poverty and social exclusion lie at the root of homelessness therefore it is only by addressing both the causes and the consequences that homelessness can be tackled effectively. Housing is an important part of the solution, but homelessness is about more than housing; it is also about physical and mental health, it is about drug and alcohol use and it is often about many related needs (complex needs). The solutions must be appropriate and targeted, inclusive of public health and social care interventions. We seek to influence the approach of Government and key policy and decision makers via our campaigning activities.*

The Simon Communities of Ireland are represented in all major national policy fora and at key stakeholder meetings including Homeless Forum, the National Homeless Consultative Committee (NHCC) and the Data Subgroup of the NHCC. We lobby key stakeholders involved in shaping national homeless policy and other policy areas which impact on the lives of people who are homeless e.g. health policy, and drug and alcohol policy. We support these activities by making submissions where appropriate opportunities arise. In addition, we perform a monitoring role in terms of the implementation of government policy and bring attention to deficits and time delays between policy development and implementation.

Agreed policy positions are developed across the Simon Communities in relation to all aspects of homelessness, enabling us to communicate common campaign messages to exert maximum influence and to improve awareness of homelessness around Ireland. We work to ensure that the voices of service users, staff and volunteers are reflected in all the policy positions developed. To this end we have internal mechanisms which involve representatives from the local Simon Communities and the National Office. In addition, we also participate in a range of partnerships and networks with other organisations that share our aims e.g. MakeRoom Alliance - together with St Vincent de Paul, Focus Ireland and Threshold; Community Platform; the European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN) and FEANTSA - the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless. We are committed to evidence based policy making and base our campaigning on the most reliable evidence available.

## Campaigning (continued)

### **Key SCI Campaigning Moments 2010**

There were a number key campaigning moments during 2010 which warrant mention here:

**Key stakeholder meetings:** Over the course of 2010 meetings were attended with key stake holders and decision makers including; Mr Michael Finneran, TD Minister for Housing, Urban Renewal and Developing Areas and his officials, the Health Service Executive and members of the opposition.

**Research Funding:** We secured funding through the Age and Opportunity Get Vocal Programme to undertake a piece of research looking at the needs of older people who are homeless as they age, and are faced with issues of serious ill health.

**National Drug Strategy:** We were invited to input into a research process and to make a presentation to the Drug Advisory Group in relation to the development of the new National Substance Misuse Strategy.

**MakeRoom:** We continued to work with our partners in the MakeRoom Alliance over the course of this year focusing on the Homeless Strategy and Implementation Plan and together we participated in a Political Briefing session in Spring 2010.

**National Health Snapshot Study:** This year we undertook our first ever National Health Snapshot Study this included almost 800 people who were using Simon services around the country during the week in question. Findings indicated that 56% of people are experiencing at least one diagnosed physical health condition, 52% experiencing at least one diagnosed mental health condition, 28% of people are experiencing both. People reported alcohol use (66%), drug use (38%), self harm (15%) and attempted suicide (23%).

**Simon Week 2010:** In October 2010 our annual week of campaigning and awareness raising – Simon Week – took place. The week was kindly supported by Denny and involved a wide range of activities and events taking place nationally and at local level. Simon Week aims to raise awareness of homelessness and the ongoing work of the Simon Communities. This was a collective multimedia campaign incorporating press, radio ads, website activity, high profile media engagement and we achieved a sustained media presence over the course of the week. This was a hugely successful initiative upon which Simon Week 2011 will build.

**Simon Week Political Briefing:** As part of Simon Week 2010 a successful political briefing event was held with all of the eight local Simon Communities in attendance. Almost 60 members of both house of the Oireachtas attended and were updated on the issue of homelessness, the work of the Simon Communities around Ireland and the findings of the National Health Snapshot Study.

**Oireachtas Committee Meetings:** A Simon delegation led by the SCI office met with the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children on the 16th of November 2010.

**Pre Election Work:** Towards the end of the year we made submissions to all of the main parties political manifestos asking all parties to honor the existing commitments in relation to homelessness.

Visit the publications sections of our website [www.simon.ie](http://www.simon.ie) to view the range of publications and submissions from 2010.

## DENNY



Simon is delighted to have been selected in 2009 as Denny's charity partner of choice spanning 3 years. As well as raising funds, the Denny/Simon initiative seeks to increase general awareness of Simon's work, as well as increasing the awareness of homelessness to specific audiences. Denny is supporting Tenancy Sustainment services in each of the eight Simon Communities in the Republic of Ireland and the Simon Community Northern Ireland. Denny were also the official supporter of Simon week 2010 – Simon's annual awareness campaign which took place in October.

## FUNDRAISING DEPARTMENT 2010

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who supported us in 2010 and continue to do so, particularly in this difficult financial climate. Simon can only continue to make such a difference to the lives of those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness with the generosity and support of individuals and companies throughout Ireland.

## OUR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

Throughout 2010 the Simon Communities of Ireland conducted a number of appeals asking individuals to help in whatever way they could to support the work of Simon. Without the continuing generosity of our committed supporters and regular givers we would not be in a position to continue our work.

## OUR CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

We very much rely on the assistance of corporate supporters and partners in a wide range of areas. The Simon Communities of Ireland would like to sincerely thank each business that donated to us in 2010. We hope this wonderful support can continue in the future as we work through the challenges we face today.

## NATIONAL CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

### CRH



Simon is extremely grateful to CRH Ireland for its ongoing strategic CSR support. Once again we would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone in the company for making this partnership so successful and in turn generating the massive sum of €906,658 in year three of the initiative.



## EBS



In 2010 EBS joined forces with the Simon Communities of Ireland to support 20 of our full time volunteers on their unique training programme. The announcement built on a six year partnership between EBS and Simon Communities of Ireland.

The Simon Full Time Volunteer Training Programme supported by EBS, welcomes volunteers from all over the world who come to live and work in Simon Communities around Ireland for a minimum period of six months. Over the course of the six months the Simon volunteers are given the opportunity to achieve a third level certificate during their placement. This is a unique prospect for volunteers as Simon are the only Irish organisation that provides this option. The certificate is CPD (Continued Professional Development) at level 6 (Fetac & Hetac). This programme has been developed in partnership with DIT and is now entering its third year.

Since commencement of its CSR programme Positive Impact in 2004, EBS has established a strong and proactive working relationship with the Simon Communities of Ireland.

## RIAI SIMON OPEN DOOR 2010



In March 2010, the RIAI and the Simon Communities of Ireland launched the sixth annual nationwide Simon Open Door campaign, due to the phenomenal success of the campaign since it was launched in 2004, the initiative spanned an entire weekend for the first time in 2010 and raised over €50,000. We would like to thank every single participant and architect who took part and made the campaign so successful. The Simon Communities of Ireland would also like to extend a most sincere thank you to the RIAI for their continued support for this important annual initiative. For more information on RIAI Simon Open Door please visit [www.simonopendoor.ie](http://www.simonopendoor.ie)

# Financial Overview

## INCOME

Fundraising	€ 3,204,600
Grants	€ 397,743
<b>Total</b>	<b>€ 3,602,343</b>

## EXPENDITURE

Staffing	€ 721,939
Programmes	€ 524,804
Office	€ 81,068
Fundraising	€ 87,047
Local Simons	€ 2,382,486
<b>Total</b>	<b>€ 3,797,344</b>

## SURPLUS / DEFICIT

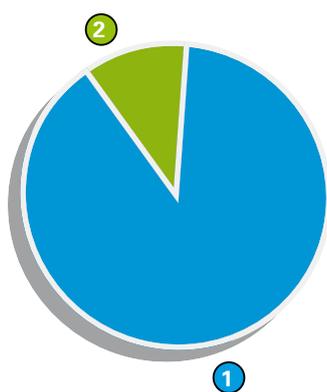
(€ 195,001)

In 2010, Simon Communities of Ireland generated just over €3.6 million of income. The vast majority of our funding (88.9%) is sourced from donations or contributions from the general public or our corporate partners. Our public funding remains essential as it supports a number of key activities delivered by the office.

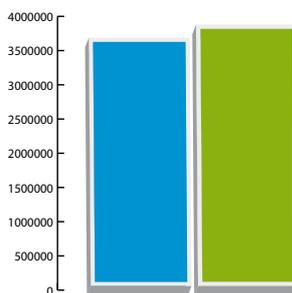
The cost of the work of the Simon Communities of Ireland national office in 2010 was just under €3.8 million. The €87,047 spent of fundraising is justified by the significant sums raised as noted above. Included in expenditure is €2,382,486 which was distributed to our local Communities to help with their operational costs.

We would like to thank everyone – corporate, statutory and individual supporters – who contributed to Simon. We continue to strive to give the best possible value-for-money and make a lasting difference to the lives of the people with whom we work.

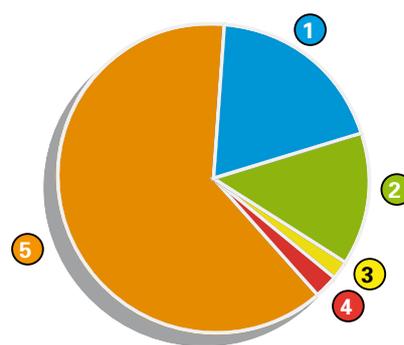
Full audited accounts are available on request from the Simon Communities of Ireland office.



Income:	€
1. Fundraising:	3,204,600
2. Grants:	397,743
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,602,343</b>



Deficit: € 195,001



Expenditure:	€
1. Staffing	721,939
2. Programmes	524,804
3. Office	81,068
4. Fundraising	87,047
5. Local Simons	2,382,486
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,797,344</b>



Dublin Simon Community launch their Annual 'Sing for Simon' Campaign where groups and choirs Sing for Simon throughout the festive season raising much needed funds to help end homelessness.

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**Simon Communities of Ireland**  
 28/30 Exchequer Street  
 Dublin 2  
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 F: 01 671 1098  
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 W: www.simon.ie





Launching the Simon Full Time Volunteer Programme supported by EBS are Aidan Power, Head of Marketing EBS and Noeleen O'Callaghan, Full Time Volunteer Coordinator.

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Tricia Burke, Marketing Manager Denny and full time volunteers Herman Rodriguez Rosado and Ciara O'Connor attend the launch of Simon Week 2010 at the Port of Cork, Cork City.

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While we've made many changes over the past 40 years, like upgrading from a pram to a van, many aspects of Cork Simon have remained the same. As we mark our 40th Anniversary this year, we continue to work in solidarity with men and women who are homeless, to value voluntarism and to believe in people.

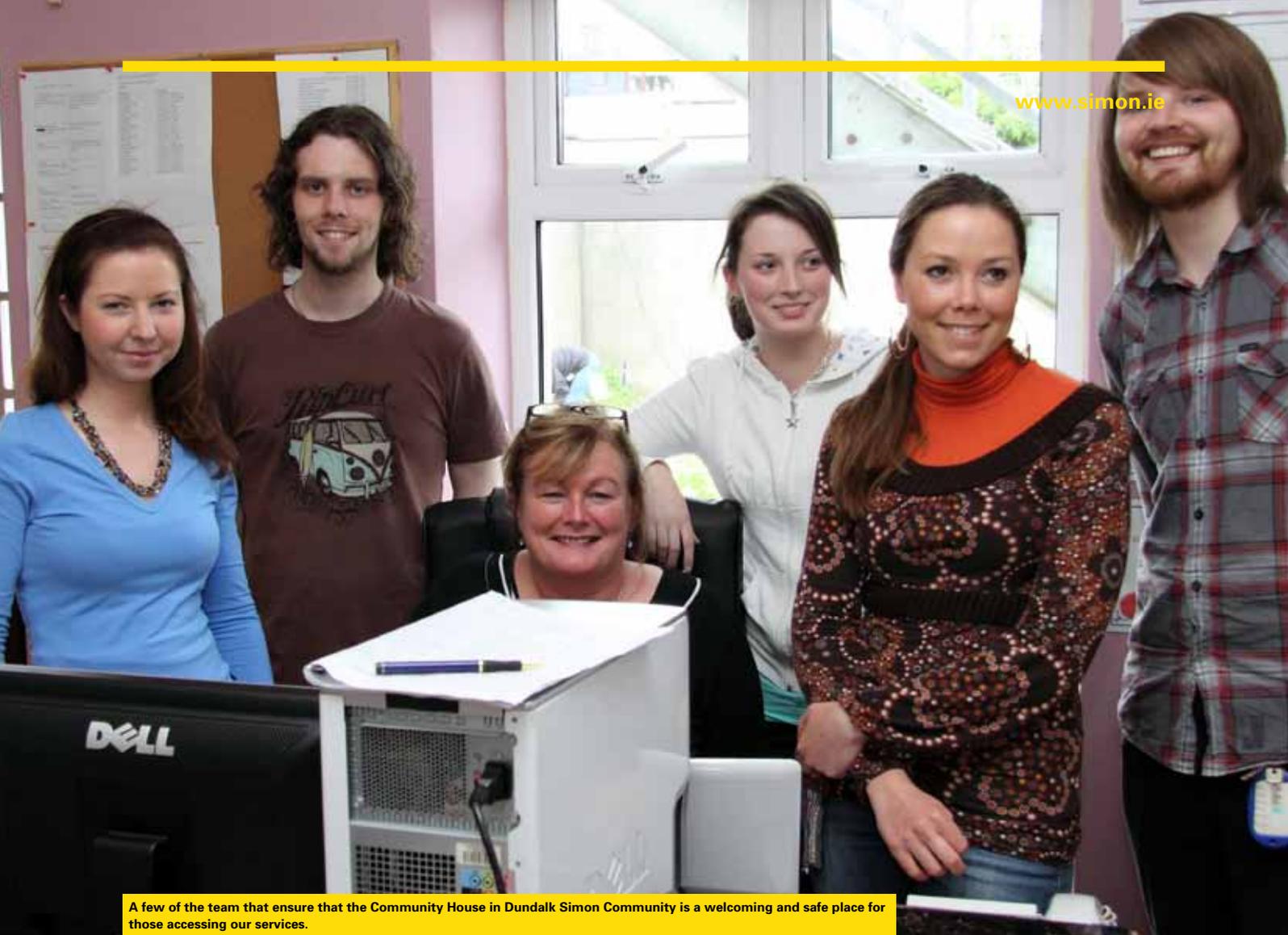
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A few of the team that ensure that the Community House in Dundalk Simon Community is a welcoming and safe place for those accessing our services.

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proudly supported by





The 2010 announcement that CRH donated €906,658 to Simon.

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Galway Simon Volunteers putting homelessness on the run!

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"Elvis: One Night In Vegas" in aid of the Midlands Simon Community.

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The fabulous girls from St Mary's NewRoss LCVF donating proceeds from Glow Café an initiative they ran on behalf of South East Simon.

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Lunching Open Door are SCI Chairperson Dr Mary Lee Rhodes and RIAI architect Dermot Bannon.

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Sligo 10k Run/Walk with eager North West Simon Supporters.

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Sarah Birchett CEO, Mid West Simon Community meets with Minister Michael Noonan, TD Limerick City.

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The Simon Communities of Ireland and Simon Community Northern Ireland wish to thank CRH's companies and employees who participate in the CRH Simon Safety Challenge. The impact of CRH's support on many of the most vulnerable people in Ireland throughout dozens of Simon projects and initiatives has truly been extraordinary.

### CRH Simon Safety Challenge

In 2007, CRH launched its first ever national flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative across the island of Ireland. The CRH Simon Safety Challenge, in partnership with Simon, was designed to embody CRH's commitment to CSR and its impact on specific aspects of its business including health & safety, community & social and employee development. The all island nature of the Challenge fulfilled a key objective, given the wide reaching presence of Simon throughout the country, with eight local communities based in Cork, Dublin, Dundalk, Galway, Midlands, MidWest, North West and the South East, as well as the Simon Community Northern Ireland.

Over the first three years of the partnership both organisations have worked hard to achieve their ambitious goals of zero accidents on CRH sites and the further development of homeless services in Ireland. The total contribution from CRH to the Simon Communities around Ireland in the first three years of the CRH Simon Safety Challenge was €2.5 million, with year one generating €777,022, year two generating €842,355 and year three raising €906,658 for the Simon Communities. The significant increase in funding made available to Simon via the initiative in the second year marked an improvement in the health and safety statistics at CRH locations around the country.

### Sample of Projects Supported by CRH

- **Midlands Simon Community: (Operating in Laois, Longford, Offaly, and Westmeath)** Funds from CRH led to the opening of the first emergency accommodation service in 2008, located in Athlone. The service is made up of self-contained, modern living units and has worked with 52 people experiencing homelessness, who stay on average 51 days.
- **Simon Community Northern Ireland:** Monies raised from the CRH Simon Safety Challenge enabled the refurbishment of a new fifteen-bed emergency accommodation unit at Bonds Hill in Derry. Bonds Hill has provided support to over 100 vulnerable adults and young people since it opened. Funds have also supported several homeless projects throughout Northern Ireland.

- **North West Simon Community (Operating in Donegal, Leitrim and Sligo):** Funds from the CRH Simon Safety Challenge have enabled North West Simon Community to launch a tenancy sustainment service for Co. Donegal. As a result, 27 people have been prevented from becoming homeless during the first two years of the initiative.

### Communication

CRH, the Simon Communities of Ireland and the Simon Community Northern Ireland have also worked together to profile the initiative through a public relations campaign.

This has helped to keep homelessness on the public agenda and has highlighted the importance and value of large corporate supporters like CRH to Simon. During the launch of the Simon Communities of Ireland's 2008 annual report in December 2009, which was also supported by CRH, the then Minister Michael Finneran reminded us of the importance of statutory, voluntary and corporate partners working together. The leadership shown by CRH in the CRH Simon Safety Challenge was noted during his speech as one of great significance within corporate Ireland.

### Conclusion

The contribution and continued commitment of CRH to this initiative has been remarkable considering the major challenges facing the construction industry today. The Challenge positively engages and motivates CRH's workforce to support the initiative and also contributes toward reducing accidents in the workplace at CRH locations. The CRH companies taking part in the challenge include the building materials providers: Roadstone Wood, Northstone, Aerobord, Clogrennane and Premier Periclase as well as Ireland's largest cement producer, Irish Cement Ltd.

### CRH Simon Safety Challenge - An Award Winning Partnership

- Northstone NI, Best Enterprise Award - 2010 Belfast Telegraph "Making the Difference Awards".
- 2010 - Chambers Ireland President's Awards for Corporate Social Responsibility - CRH Ireland was successful in winning the "Responsible Employer - Large Indigenous Company" award for its work with Simon on the CRH Simon Safety Challenge.
- 2010 - Northstone was awarded the Business in the Community Northern Ireland - "Regional Recognition Award" in the Local Community Impact Category
- 2009 - Chambers Ireland President's Awards for Corporate Social Responsibility - CRH Ireland were awarded the overall winner in the "Responsible Employer" category for its work with Simon on the CRH Simon Safety Challenge.
- 2009 - The CRH Simon Safety Challenge was awarded the "Fundraising Campaign of the Year" award at the National Fundraising Awards.
- 2008 - PRII Excellence Award - CRH and Drury Communications were successful in winning an Excellence Award for the CRH Simon Safety Challenge in the category "Corporate Communications - Corporate Social Responsibility".

## How you can Help

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### **MAKING A DONATION TO THE SIMON COMMUNITIES OF IRELAND**

The crucial work that Simon does is only possible through the generosity of the general public and our corporate supporters. If you too would like to help in the fight to tackle homelessness in Ireland there are a number of ways that you can help Simon including:

**Donate Online** – by logging onto [www.simon.ie](http://www.simon.ie)

**Send us a donation by Post** - Donations can be sent to Simon Communities of Ireland, St Andrew's House, 28-30 Exchequer Street, Dublin 2. (Please do not send cash in the post).

**Call our fundraising team and donate over the phone by Credit/Laser Card** - Please call our fundraising team on (01) 671 1606 with your credit or laser card details and your transaction will be handled in the strictest confidence.

**Remember us with a Gift in Your Will** - Leave Simon a Legacy - For further details on how to name the Simon Communities of Ireland as a beneficiary in your will contact the Fundraising Team as above.

#### **How could your company support the work of Simon?**

The Simon Communities of Ireland are proud of our national and all island corporate partnerships and there are endless ways that an organisation can support Simon. You can contact the fundraising department on (01) 671 1606 to discuss tailoring projects and initiatives to match your company's interests and objectives.

**Tax Effective Giving** - If you are a PAYE taxpayer, did you know that a donation of at least €250.00 could be worth an extra 72% to us? Simon can claim tax back on donations over €250.00 under current government legislation and the scheme is completely confidential. Donations from companies or self assessed tax payers also qualify the donor for tax relief.

### **VOLUNTEER**

Simon welcomes both part-time and full-time volunteers. Part-time volunteers work in various roles like on the soup run, fundraising, shop workers, committee members and as befrienders. To volunteer on a part-time basis please contact your local Simon Community.

Full-time volunteers must be aged over 18 and commit to a full-time placement for at least 6 months working alongside our paid staff in a variety of projects across our communities. We provide accommodation, supervision, training and a small living allowance. This opportunity facilitates development of many skills both on a practical and professional level and is an ideal opportunity to gain valuable work experience.

We also offer our full-time volunteers the opportunity of gaining a third level qualification as all our full-time volunteers now take part in our certificate programme in partnership with the DIT so you not only assist us in our work but you gain a practical qualification.

If you want to find out more or get involved, contact our Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteering@simoncommunity.com](mailto:volunteering@simoncommunity.com)

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### **CAMPAIGNING**

We in the Simon Communities of Ireland seek to affect social and economic change in Ireland to ensure that the causes of homelessness are addressed and ensure that there are effective responses in place all around the Country.

While housing is an important part of the solution, homelessness is about more than not having a roof over your head, or a set of keys. It can mean having many related needs which include; poverty and social exclusion, mental and physical ill health, problem drug and alcohol use and fractured family relations. Such needs are often interconnected therefore it is important to respond to all these needs simultaneously.

Through our advocacy work we seek to ensure that the voices of these people are heard and that their needs are addressed by national and local Government, and by policy makers. We work to ensure that politicians, civil servants and other public officials are aware of the needs of people who are homeless and that this is reflected in the legislation and policies that they develop.

#### ***But we also need your help***

We ask that you get involved in activities to help influence Government policy on homelessness. You can do this in a number of ways: you can highlight the issue of homelessness by writing to Government Ministers or your local TD's, you can phone a radio talk show, write to a newspaper, or you can discuss the subject with friends, family and colleagues.

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## Contact us

### **Simon Communities of Ireland**

St Andrews House  
28-30 Exchequer Street  
Dublin 2

**Phone:** 01-6711606

**Email:** [info@simoncommunity.com](mailto:info@simoncommunity.com)

**Website:** [www.simon.ie](http://www.simon.ie)

### **Fundraising Department**

Email: [fundraising@simoncommunity.com](mailto:fundraising@simoncommunity.com)

### **Volunteer Coordinator**

Email: [volunteering@simoncommunity.com](mailto:volunteering@simoncommunity.com)