

South East



Annual Report 2020



Home is where one starts from.

T. S. Eliot

The View from the Chair

2020 was a difficult year for everyone, but perhaps most difficult for people experiencing homelessness. As the provider of essential services during the Covid-19 pandemic, we at South East Simon Community did all we could to ensure continuity of services. Our outreach service to rough sleepers continued throughout the year. In order to reduce pandemic-related risks, housing support, and advice and information services were delivered over the phone and via video calls during the periods of lockdown, with face-to-face interventions being used only when strictly necessary.

We worked closely with the HSE, local authorities and other agencies to manage the operational risks of Covid-19, accessing PPE for our staff and ensuring all measures relating to social distancing, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, etc were adhered to throughout the organisation. Sincere thanks to our statutory partners for their support and guidance throughout 2020.

Our fundraising efforts were impacted by the pandemic as it became impossible to organise community-based fundraising events. However, the generosity of the people and businesses of the South East really shone through and amazingly by year end we had increased our fundraising income when compared to 2020.

Despite all the challenges we continued to make good progress on ending homelessness for the people we serve. We expanded our Housing First service to support 26 tenancies by the end of 2020 compared to 17 the year before—all those supported had previously been long-term homeless with complex support needs in Waterford. The target of 30 Housing First tenancies was met by mid-2021.

We continued to provide advice and support to people in Waterford and Clonmel aimed at preventing homelessness and we provided social housing linked to our tenancy sustainment services support in Waterford, Kilkenny and Tipperary.

In November 2020, we finally completed our merger with Cork Simon Community. South East Simon is now a subsidiary of Cork Simon Community with both organisations sharing a single Board. My sincere thanks to all my colleagues on the Board of Cork and South East Simon for taking on these additional responsibilities. Special thanks also to all our staff for their hard work throughout 2020 in such difficult circumstances. Their response during the Covid Crisis has been exemplary. I would also extend sincere thanks to all those businesses who supported our work and to all of our generous supporters across the South East without whom we could not do all that we do.

Mary Ryan — Chair, South East Simon Community, 2014-2020.

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Vision

South East Simon Community's vision is that everyone can have a place to call home and any support they need to maintain their housing.

Mission

Our mission is to help people find a home and support people to keep their home.

Values

South East Simon Community's values are:

EQUALITY

We recognize and accept that people are equal and deliver our services in a way that reflects this brief.

JUSTICE

We treat all people fairly, being conscious of and upholding their human rights.

COMMITMENT

We are dedicated to the vision and our mission statement. We are determined to be effective in implementing our services to people homeless and at risk of homelessness throughout the South East.

HONESTY

We are open, transparent, and accountable in all areas of our work.

EFFECTIVENESS

We offer well researched, carefully planned services that meet the needs of our Service users in a real and meaningful way, assisting the people we work with in achieving their goals. We continuously audit the effectiveness of our interventions and have our services regularly evaluated.

RESPECT

South East Simon Community's work is underpinned by a mutual respect and trust between customers, staff and managers; we listen to and learn from our customers and staff, and recognise those staff that go the extra mile.

Facts & Figures

Some highlights from 2020 were as follows:

- We supported 53 people in tenancies in houses and apartments owned or managed by South East Simon across the region in 2020, including 12 new tenancies.
- 29 South East Simon tenants – all formerly homeless / at risk of homelessness, were supported to maintain their tenancies through our Homelessness Prevention Project.
- 112 people were supported through advice, information and advocacy services in Waterford and Clonmel.
- 32 people with complex needs and histories of long-term homelessness / sleeping rough were supported through intensive case management by the Housing First team in 2020.
- 16 people who had been sleeping rough were supported in accessing and moving on from emergency accommodation in 2020.
Of these:
 - *10 have been supported into Housing First properties.*
 - *2 were supported into a Transitional Programme with another AHB.*
 - *3 were awaiting a move into housing at year end.*
 - *1 had been imprisoned.*
- We distributed food packs directly to those who needed them in 2020 from our small Food Bank located at our offices in Waterford city.
- Our fundraising efforts raised just over €337,000 in voluntary donations and bequests.

South East Simon Community—a Brief Overview

Founded in 2004, South East Simon Community provides services to people experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness in the South East Region. At the end of 2020, South East Simon Community completed a merger with Cork Simon Community with a view to reducing overhead costs and ensuring effective services across our region.

We work to end homelessness by providing affordable housing linked to a range of support services that aim to ensure that people can maintain their tenancy and work on issues that may have underpinned their experience of homelessness.

Our Team works to a Housing-Led approach in tackling homelessness. This means supporting people to move out of homelessness as quickly as possible and into permanent, affordable housing with a tailored support package for as long as each person needs. We work closely with the HSE, the Local Authorities and other social service providers to ensure each person's needs can be met.

We work to prevent homelessness through our advice and information service, which assists people who require information to help maintain their housing. We support them or advocate on their behalf with statutory and voluntary agencies.

We work with people from the point at which they become homeless or may be sleeping on the streets and gradually support them to rebuild their lives. If a person has no home or is rough sleeping, we will work to help them to get into emergency accommodation or directly into housing, if available — the first step is always to provide them with some practical support; a hot drink, a sleeping bag and a meal.

We offer people access to affordable tenancies in our own housing stock or in other housing. We link those tenancies to supports that help people meet all the challenges that led them to becoming homeless in the first place.

Housing First

The Housing First philosophy embodies a commitment to housing as a social right. The aim of the Housing First approach is to minimise the number of steps and the amount of time a person must take from the point of becoming homeless to the point of being re-housed.

The key idea is to provide immediate or near-immediate re-housing without any requirement that homeless people show themselves to be 'housing ready' before they are re-housed. Support to sustain their housing and improve their health, well-being and social integration is provided to people in their own home, and use of that support is something over which people exercise considerable choice and control.

South East Simon's Housing First service in Waterford city was one of the first such services established in Ireland and has been in operation since 2013. The service seeks to end the need to sleep rough for long-term rough sleepers who have significant support needs, and who, over several years, have not or could not for whatever reason, engage with the range of available accommodation, social care or primary care services.

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF OUR HOUSING FIRST SERVICE ARE:

- Housing is a basic human right.
- Respect, warmth and compassion for all clients.
- Commitment to working with clients for as long as they need and desire.
- Harm reduction ethos.
- Recovery orientation.

This service provides tenancies in self-contained independent housing units for each participant, with the services of the Housing First team providing visiting support to the person in their home. Housing for this service comes from our own housing stock, from units leased from Waterford City and County Council for this service and from other Approved Housing Bodies.

This project prioritises for housing those people who are long-term homeless and have complex needs - including addiction, mental ill-health intellectual disabilities and / or challenging behaviour. We work closely with the HSE, Waterford City and County Council and the LUB project to ensure that clients have the clinical, housing and integration supports they need to maintain their tenancy and to transform their lives.

Homeless Prevention Service

This service is for people who have made the move from homelessness to a home of their own, aiming to sustain their tenancy; it also supports those who are at risk of becoming homeless. The people supported tend to have extensive but less intensive support needs than those supported by our Housing First Service — the goal however is the same: to help people maintain their homes and manage their tenancies successfully. It is a key element of our Homeless Prevention Strategy.

We provided practical support through an individual personalised plan. Some of the supports provided were:

- Supporting Service Users to maintain their tenancy. Assisting Service Users to manage their money.
- Linking Service Users with other services (for example, training, unemployment, addiction and mental health services).
- Advocating on their behalf.
- Assisting Service Users to find solutions to the problems they may be facing.
- Identifying education, training and employment opportunities – encouraging meaningful use of time.

The aim of the service is to empower our Service Users to break the cycle of homelessness and to live full and independent lives within their own homes.

Rough Sleeper Supports

South East Simon aims to provide direct support to people in our area who are sleeping rough. Our team, working with HSE staff, meet with people seeking support; we provide them with information on emergency accommodation in their local area and assist them to access necessary services.

In Waterford, we jointly operate a street outreach service with the HSE aimed at engaging with rough sleepers in the city.

We arrange food and bedding to people in need of immediate help. We distribute food packs directly to those who need them from our small Food Bank located at our offices in Waterford city. We provide case management support to individuals staying at Waterford's 'Rough Sleeper Units'. Our HSE partners ensure that the immediate health needs of rough sleepers in Waterford are addressed.

South East Simon works in partnership with other voluntary and statutory services to ensure that no one has to sleep rough.

Rough sleepers, especially those with complex support needs, are prioritised for access to our Housing First Service, thus providing a direct and effective pathway from the streets to a home of their own.

South East Simon Community Fundraising

Everyone at South East Simon Community is extremely grateful for the kind-hearted and very generous support we received during the very difficult year of 2020. Individuals, families, community groups, schools and businesses from Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny, Carlow and South Tipperary all gave extremely generously, whether in response to our appeal letters, through their companies, and via various fundraising events held before the pandemic took hold in March.

We would also like to thank our fantastic team for their hard work and commitment throughout the year. The support of all our donors, both long-standing and new, meant we could be there for people who found themselves homeless in the South East Region in 2020.

Financial Statement

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES For the financial year ended 31 December 2020

| | Restricted funds | Unrestricted funds | Designated building fund | Restricted building fund | Total 2020 | Total 2019 |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | € | € | € | € | € | € |
| Income from: | | | | | | |
| Donations | 1,921 | 314,944 | - | - | 316,865 | 233,825 |
| Legacies | - | 20,000 | - | - | 20,000 | - |
| Charitable activities | 266,141 | 168,847 | - | - | 434,988 | 286,356 |
| Interest and investment income | - | 6 | - | - | 6 | 3 |
| Total income | <u>268,062</u> | <u>503,797</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>771,859</u> | <u>520,184</u> |
| Expenditure on: | | | | | | |
| Charitable activities | 240,116 | 425,252 | - | - | 665,368 | 643,794 |
| Raising funds | 3,068 | 137,546 | - | - | 140,614 | 105,385 |
| Total expenditure | <u>243,184</u> | <u>562,798</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>805,982</u> | <u>749,179</u> |
| Capital Assistance Scheme repayments relieved | - | 149,543 | - | - | 149,543 | 139,376 |
| Net (expenditure)/income | <u>24,878</u> | <u>90,542</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>115,420</u> | <u>(89,619)</u> |
| Capital contribution received | - | - | 300,000 | - | 300,000 | - |
| Transfer from restricted building fund | - | 1,350 | - | (1,350) | - | - |
| Transfer from unrestricted fund | - | 20,000 | (20,000) | - | - | - |
| Net movement in funds | <u>24,878</u> | <u>111,892</u> | <u>280,000</u> | <u>(1,350)</u> | <u>415,420</u> | <u>(89,619)</u> |
| Reconciliation of funds | | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | <u>89,120</u> | <u>(58,902)</u> | <u>20,000</u> | <u>22,950</u> | <u>73,168</u> | <u>162,787</u> |
| Total funds carried forward | <u>113,998</u> | <u>52,990</u> | <u>300,000</u> | <u>21,600</u> | <u>488,588</u> | <u>73,168</u> |

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. There are no other items to be included in the statement of comprehensive income. Income and net income/(expenditure) arose solely from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet

BALANCE SHEET As at 31 December 2020

| | 2020 € | 2019 € |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Fixed assets | | |
| Tangible assets | <u>3,097,362</u> | <u>2,940,398</u> |
| Current assets | | |
| Debtors | 15,295 | 24,962 |
| Cash at bank | <u>692,879</u> | <u>137,399</u> |
| | 708,174 | 162,361 |
| Creditors - Amounts falling due within one year | <u>(576,748)</u> | <u>(414,341)</u> |
| Net current assets | <u>131,426</u> | <u>(251,980)</u> |
| Total assets less current liabilities | 3,228,788 | 2,688,418 |
| Creditors - Amounts falling due after more than one year | <u>(2,740,200)</u> | <u>(2,615,250)</u> |
| | <u>488,588</u> | <u>73,168</u> |
| Total funds of the charity | | |
| Unrestricted funds | 52,990 | (58,902) |
| Restricted funds | 113,998 | 89,120 |
| Designated building fund | 300,000 | 20,000 |
| Restricted capital funds | <u>21,600</u> | <u>22,950</u> |
| Total charity funds | <u>488,588</u> | <u>73,168</u> |



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