



A VOICE FOR CHANGE

Impact Report 2023

DEPAUL

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CHAIRPERSON WELCOME

I'm proud to present this year's Impact Report as the Chairperson of Depaul's Board of Trustees. Throughout 2023, the Depaul team showed dedication, resilience, and innovation in the face of unprecedented needs and the changing face of homelessness across the island of Ireland.

The professionalism and passion of our staff is a driving force for our organisation, enabling us to change and save lives every day. At the outset of this year's report, I want to pay tribute to their tireless work over the last 12 months.

Our shared vision and mission to end homelessness remains steadfast. Despite record levels of homelessness and a severe housing crisis, we believe that, through cross-sectoral partnership, there is a way for everyone to have a place to call home, a stake in their community, and support that will empower them to realise their potential.

Our values continued to be our guiding light throughout 2023. We particularly focused on **taking a wider role in civil society**. Alongside colleagues across the homeless sector, we called for a response to record levels of homelessness, campaigned for fair and adequate pay and benefits for frontline staff with The Wheel, and supported Service Users and people with lived experience of homelessness to make a submission to The Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use.

We put our **words into action** as we expanded and developed our accommodation and community-based services to meet the growing needs of people impacted by homelessness, including the most vulnerable. In October, we welcomed residents to Ireland's first-ever accommodation service for Victims of Trafficking, Rosa's Place, providing a safe and supported home environment to ten women.

Our belief in **rights and responsibilities** means that we must empower those we serve to accept the responsibility of sharing their experience so that we can safeguard full access to their rights. This year, I'm particularly proud of how we have taken the lead through our Homeless Health Peer Advocate Programme, Service User Health Forums, and our Peer Advocacy Forum, An Glór Mór.

We also launched Depaul's Graduate Programme, enabling us to attract new skills and talent and offering a unique opportunity to **celebrate the potential of people**, who we hope will become future sector leaders.

Throughout the year, our Board focused on maintaining and enhancing the strong governance so that Depaul can continue to expand its work and impact sustainably. We also embarked on a comprehensive consultation process to develop an ambitious new strategy that will see Depaul continue to lead the way home for individuals and families.

I am grateful for the leadership of our Chief Executive, David Carroll, and our Executive Leadership Team, whose expertise and direction have steered Depaul through testing times. Thank you to our Board and Committee members, our staff, volunteers, donors and all of our statutory and corporate partners for your unwavering support. I look forward to working with you in the year ahead, as we continue to focus on strengthening the voice of those affected by, or at risk of, homelessness.

John Murphy
Chairperson of the Depaul Board
of Trustees



A WORD FROM OUR CEO

Grounded in our Vision, Mission and Values, Depaul’s work in 2023 was guided by the highest standards of governance, management and service delivery. I remain privileged to lead and support our committed and professional teams, who met head on the challenges of the changing landscape and increasing complexity of homelessness.

2023 saw a month-by-month increase in homelessness that has put unprecedented pressure on society’s most vulnerable households and our services across the island of Ireland. Families and individuals trapped in the cycle of homelessness felt at risk of losing the agency and voice vital to enabling them to reach their potential and escape homelessness. **That’s why I’m proud that in 2023, Depaul supported 46% more people compared to the previous year.**

Our challenges today have changed since our foundation in the Republic of Ireland in 2002 and Northern Ireland in 2005. Recently, we have seen how the ongoing homelessness crisis has been exacerbated by international conflict, the cost of living crisis and, increasingly, climate change. There has not only been an increase in demand, we have also seen changing patterns in employment, technological development, economic management and inward migration, all of which affect the way we approach and undertake our work. Amid political polarisation and wider pressure on the NGO sector, it is becoming more challenging to play our part in ending homelessness.

In 2023, I tried to understand how, as a society, we can tolerate almost **8,000 children in homelessness across the island of Ireland**. We stand proud in calling for a radical response to record levels of homelessness, but have yet to see a difference on the ground. Our temporary accommodation is full, there are waiting lists for our services, and the challenges and complexities that our service users face are increasing.

There is a fraught environment for people who are homeless, those in direct provision and those who have to sleep rough. One of the most poignant points of the year was after the Dublin riots in November, when we sent a message of solidarity to our colleagues who may face threats simply going to and from work. **Depaul is committed to creating a society where not only homelessness but also racism has no place.**

Amid clear and present challenges, in 2023 we were proud to achieve significant advancements in our strategic objectives. We initiated our Graduate Programme in response to the sector-wide recruitment and retention challenge. We provided life-saving supports in the face of the Nitrazene overdose crisis throughout Dublin services. We collaborated with The Passage on research into Human Trafficking and Homelessness and established Ireland’s first accommodation service for trafficked women. We launched research into Mental Health and Homelessness in Northern Ireland in collaboration with Simon Community NI and we expanded our Homeless Health Peer Advocates Programme into Derry. We addressed pay issues and offset strike action as part of a consortium of charities with The Wheel. We increased our advocacy around the changing face of homelessness through media engagement and our Peer Advocacy Forum, An Glór Mór. This is a vital voice to which Depaul is proud to provide a platform, where voices are amplified and used to effect

the necessary change that will offer everyone across the island of Ireland the right to a home.

As we look to the future, our focus is firmly on engaging with our stakeholders to map our next steps over the next three years for our new Strategic Plan. This will stay true to our Vision, Mission, and Values, making a bold and assertive statement about the part that we wish to play as leaders in our society. I look forward to working with our Board and Committee members, staff, volunteers, funders, statutory and corporate partners, and our donors to continue our work to end homelessness and change lives.

David Carroll
Chief Executive of Depaul

DEPAUL INTERNATIONAL

Depaul in Ireland and Northern Ireland is not alone in our efforts to protect the most marginalised. We are proud to be part of a global effort to combat homelessness and to protect and support those on the margins of society.

The Depaul family is spread far and wide and its work is felt in communities and cities across Ireland, the UK, France, Ukraine, Slovakia, Croatia and USA. All subsidiaries are supported by Depaul International as the parent organisation. The Depaul Group works in strategic partnership with two key international organisations: Famvin Homeless Alliance (FHA) and the Ruff Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH).

Levels of homelessness continued to grow in nearly every country in 2023, and our teams responded to these challenges while keeping dignity, compassion and care at the heart of our work. Across the globe, Depaul supported nearly 125,000 people in 2023, with more reached globally through our partners.

Taking inspiration from the spirit and values of Saint Vincent de Paul, a major social reformer in 17th century France, Depaul operates with a collective set of values. Treating people where they are at in life and free of any judgement. The services provided in each of these countries range from providing safe shelter and accommodation, helping people to access education and employment, ensuring people have the social services they require and access to food and vital health services.



OUR VISION

is of a society in which everyone, across the world, has a place to call home and a stake in their community.



OUR MISSION

is to end homelessness and change the lives of those affected by it.



OUR VALUES

- We celebrate the potential of people.
- We put our words into action.
- We aim to take a wider role in civil society.
- We believe in rights and responsibilities.

DEPAUL SERVICES



2023 in numbers



10,936
PEOPLE

8,445 adults and
2,491 children
supported in 2023,
a **46% increase from 2022**

726
SERVICE
USERS

moved out of
homelessness and
into suitable long-term
accommodation

1,415
FAMILIES

helped through Depaul's
services, an **85% increase**
from 2022

155
VOLUNTEERS

dedicated over 17,000 hours to
making a difference to the lives
of our service users

18
BABIES

were born in
Depaul services

162
LIVES

were saved by
Depaul staff through
the administration
of Naloxone

1,299
SERVICE
USERS

reported concerns or
support needs related
to their mental health

RESPONDING AND ADAPTING TO CHANGING NEEDS

In 2023, homelessness level records were broken again and again. Throughout the year, there was also an increased need for support for people seeking International Protection. Despite these challenges, Depaul continued to provide solutions, services and care to people across the island of Ireland. Every single day our devoted team provided lifesaving and life-changing interventions to vulnerable individuals and families. Depaul faced the challenges that the movement of people has had on the housing system head-on. **We strongly believe that new communities are welcome and must be integrated into our society.**

Issues around accommodating refugees continued to dominate much of the national agenda in 2023. Cosán Nua has been working with people living in Direct Provision since 2019. Its significant expansion in 2023 enabled us to work across nine different counties. Our response to growing international challenges through the expansion of Cosán Nua has helped us to prevent homelessness and support even more people in their search for suitable homes, their desire to establish roots in communities and their need to access education and health services. During a year like no other, **Depaul supported 7,770 individuals through this vital service, helping 340 people to exit direct provision.**

As our service users continued to face a lack of move-on options due to the housing crisis, our specialist Resettlement Support Service was on hand to offer support and guidance, focussing on those whose resettlement needs require a higher level of support than their key workers or support workers can provide.

In 2023, Depaul supported a total of 10,936 services users – 8,445 adults and 2,491 children – in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. This is an **increase of over 46% compared to 2022**, reflecting the urgent response required.

A tremendous **40,012 key working sessions** took place, more than double the number carried out in 2022. This year our frontline colleagues delivered outstanding care and intensive interventions to adults and children across our accommodation and community-based services and we can't thank them enough.

TAKING OUR LEADERSHIP FROM LIVED EXPERIENCE

Learning and taking a lead from the lived experience of those we serve is, we believe, at the heart of finding workable and lasting solutions to the complex challenges faced by people impacted by or at risk of homelessness. In 2023, we sought to embed learnings from lived experience into our strategy planning and service development, with a view to ensuring that a trauma-informed approach could be adopted that will better support and empower people to take the next step in their journey out of homelessness.

Homeless Health Peer Advocates (HHPA)

Depaul is leading on the Homeless Health Peer Advocacy Programme in the Republic of Ireland. This vital leadership-in-health programme trains and supports people who have experienced homelessness themselves to provide assistance to homeless people who are accessing healthcare services. The service helps people to make appointments, supports people to better understand their health needs and advocates for people when needed. We want to empower our service users when they use health services and give them the skills and support they need to access healthcare independently.

Our peer-led approach is the heart of this programme and a key factor to its success. The peer advocates bring invaluable first-hand knowledge of homelessness, creating a unique and empathetic support system that resonates with those they assist.

In 2023, 150 hospital appointments were supported through the HHPA programme.

The support from our Health Peers during these trying times made a massive difference to the lives of our service users and we couldn't be prouder of their work.

It is safe to say that every service user we have supported has experienced some form of trauma in their lives. Implementing **trauma-informed care** practices helps our teams to lead the way and engage with service users more effectively, thereby offering the potential to improve the likelihood of positive outcomes.

The provision of emergency beds is a complex task and we work with people no matter what their issues are. Low threshold work is at the core of our service approach. Drug use amongst people who are homeless is a particular challenge. It can be difficult for service users to stay off drugs when experiencing homelessness. A safe, supportive and informed environment can help individuals in treatment for substance use disorder explore their trauma, its effects, and how to overcome it alongside their recovery. Ongoing training in the area of trauma-informed care has been rolled out to our newly acquired regional services, in addition to our Dublin based services as well as services in Northern Ireland.

Depaul recognises the need for longer term support for individuals with complex health needs and supports a housing led philosophy in dealing with complex lives in particular those who suffer from addictions and co-morbidity. The Housing First model is grounded in the idea that harm reduction is an effective approach to tackle problematic drug and alcohol use. Housing First recognises the importance of this support.




STAFF SPOTLIGHT SINEAD FLYNN, HEALTH PEER ADVOCATE

As a member of Depaul's Homeless Health Peer Advocacy Programme (HHPA), my role involves helping those who are homeless to navigate healthcare services so that they can get the care they need. Being homeless can be a huge barrier to accessing healthcare. And as someone with lived experience of homelessness, I know how daunting it can be to access healthcare and how important it is to have someone who can advocate for you.

Recently, I accompanied one of our service users to an appointment at the Mater University Hospital. I collected him from the hostel that he's staying in and we took a taxi to the Mater. I stayed at the hospital until the gentleman was checked in for his medical procedure. Once he had gone down to theatre, I left my phone number with the hospital and asked them to call me when he was ready to be picked up.

When I got the call from the Mater, I headed back to the hospital. The nurse gave me a handover in terms of how the procedure went, and she briefed me on the aftercare needed: Medications that need to be collected from the pharmacy and advice on his diet, which required foods to be liquidised for a while. Peers don't deal with medication, but we do give handovers to residential services on prescribed medication. When I got back to the residential service, I gave a handover to the staff.

Being a peer advocate has allowed me to give back to my community. We help out with accessing all aspects of health care. While some of those we support can advocate for themselves, others need us to talk to nurses and doctors on their behalf. We're currently expanding into Cork with the support of the Inclusion Health Programme at the Mercy University Hospital and our HSE funders. Depaul's Dublin HHPA programme supported 150 healthcare appointments and 46 referrals in 2023.



PIONEERING RESEARCH FOR SERVICE INNOVATION

Depaul showed its dedication to research and innovation in 2023 by partnering with The Passage on ground-breaking research that shows a resounding link between homelessness and victims of human trafficking in Ireland.

Having previously carried out this research in London, The Passage embarked on a new project with Depaul to examine the situation in Dublin. This research revealed that there are many missed opportunities to identify victims and provide them with the support that they are entitled not only as a human right, but also that will reduce their suffering and increase their opportunities for justice.

As part of their list of recommendations, The Passage suggested developing specialist accommodation options for victims of human trafficking that are safe, suitable and trauma informed. Depaul has played a key part in creating solutions to these challenges by piloting a specialised unit capable of responding to the needs of survivors of sexual exploitation.

Rosa's Place is Ireland's first-ever dedicated service for women who have experienced trafficking. It welcomed its first residents in October 2023 and provides a safe and supported home environment to ten women.

Depaul also partnered with Simon Community NI to proactively address growing concerns about the increase in the presentation of mental health issues among the people we support. In 2023, we conducted a study that investigated the mental health issues of people experiencing homelessness in Northern Ireland who are supported by Simon Community NI and Depaul.

This study showed that people who are experiencing homelessness and are supported by the Homeless Provider Sector have mental health needs that are different to that of the general population. These high rates of mental health issues are affected by family and relationship breakdown, drug and alcohol addiction, trauma, adverse childhood experiences, bereavement and wider factors such as poverty. There is an urgent need for greater and meaningful statutory support that would enable the voluntary sector to continue providing essential services and life-changing support.

The concerning results of this essential research in Northern Ireland and the rise in mental health needs in services across the country highlighted an urgent need to undertake similar research in the Republic of Ireland. In 2024, we embark on this research to provide a comprehensive all-island picture of the challenge, enabling us to develop our services to better support people and advocate for additional supports.

Northern Ireland Mental Health Champion
Professor Siobhan O'Neill commented:

“It is essential that people can access the right support at the right time ... There needs to be a specific action plan for people experiencing homelessness within the Mental Health Strategy. Support within the Department of Health should also be streamlined to provide timely interventions for people experiencing homelessness with additional issues. Referral pathways also need to be improved to enable swift access, with person-centred and trauma-informed care at the heart of service delivery.”

2023 TIMELINE

JANUARY

Depaul's **Mental Health & Homelessness Research Launch (NI)**, in conjunction with Simon Community NI, highlighted how almost 70% of people experiencing homelessness had a diagnosed mental health condition.



MARCH

Our **Emerging Leaders Presentation Day** saw programme participants showcase projects, as we showcase organisational commitment to preparing, supporting and developing staff as they advance through their careers.

MAY

Depaul's Homeless Health Peer Advocacy Team presented at the **Irish Street Medicine Symposium** on challenges and opportunities around healthcare and homelessness.



JULY

Depaul's People and Organisation Team won **Best Employee Development Programme** in the Irish News Workplace Employment Awards 2023.



SEPTEMBER

Stella Maris unveiled a beautiful mural, capturing service user's hopes and aspirations, and the culmination of a collaborative community art project.

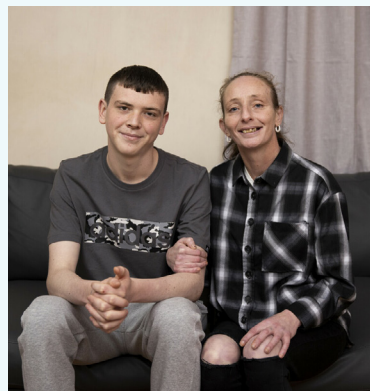
NOVEMBER

Depaul's **Christmas Appeal 2023: 'All I Want for Christmas'** launched, to highlight the need for additional support for individuals and families facing another Christmas in Emergency Homeless Accommodation.



FEBRUARY

Advocating for an Extension of the Eviction Ban was prioritised to protect tenancies and people at risk of homelessness.



APRIL

We launched **Depaul's Sleep Out 2023**, raising vital funds and engaging communities and companies who share our belief that homelessness has no place in our society.

JUNE

Our **Cosán Nua Expansion** was launched, so we can provide even more support to migrant populations within homelessness, direct provision and the community.



AUGUST

We marked **10 years of impact for Depaul Northern Ireland's Housing First Model**, one of the most successful housing initiatives to date in eradicating homelessness.

OCTOBER

Depaul **collaborated with The Wheel on Section 39/10 negotiations**, representing the Dublin Homeless Network, to publish an open letter to An Taoiseach requesting his intervention to address the threat of indefinite strike action by voluntary health and social care staff.



DECEMBER

Our **Community Befriending Programme** launched their **2023 Impact Report**, illustrating the essential preventative work of Staff and Volunteers to show our service users that they have a place in society and a community to join.

BUILDING RESILIENCE AND HOPE

At Depaul, everything we do is about ensuring our service users have the support and resources they need. People experiencing homelessness are struggling more and more with a range of complex needs and we have seen first-hand the rise of mental health issues across our services, especially among those who have become trapped in temporary accommodation as a result of the lack of move-on options.

In 2023, we carried out research in Northern Ireland alongside Simon Community NI against the backdrop of the ongoing repercussions of a pandemic and the devastating cost-of-living crisis. This research showed that people experiencing homelessness are more vulnerable to mental health issues as a result of poor living conditions, anxiety and stress. Out of 170 participants, 115 (68%) reported they have received a diagnosis for a mental health disorder. This is significantly greater than the 19% seen in the general population (O'Neill et al, 2019).

As part of the research, we spoke to our fellow homeless support providers who agreed that the profile of people presenting as homeless has changed and that “the needs of services users have become more complex with addiction and mental health issues that require more specialist support.” The high prevalence and severity of mental health issues among people experiencing homelessness is a cause for concern. We want people

who are suffering homelessness to get the right support at the right time, so that they have fewer challenges and obstacles in their journey out of homelessness.

At Depaul, we are a leader and innovator in our approach to service delivery. We have a number of specialised services that support people with their mental health.

Last year, we supported

10,936

individuals across Dublin, Regional Services and Northern Ireland.

In 2023, our **Befriending Programme** continued to grow and adapt to the needs of our service users. This specialised service has proven to be a catalyst for positive change, leaving a lasting impact on the service users it engages. By helping our participants engage with each other and their community, we hope to ease the transition out of supported accommodation. With the help of our incredible volunteers, we show our participants they have a place in society and a community to join. The Befriending Programme has had a transformative impact on its participants.

In October 2023, we expanded our Befriending Programme to our Peter's Place Hostel, in addition to our continued support of ex-residents and long-term residents of Back Lane Hostel. For the young residents of Peter's Place, we focused on making community connections and exploring interests that can continue with them into independent living. Behind every social event and individual link-in is the aim to reduce isolation and prevent a return to homelessness.

In 2023, with the help of our amazing staff and volunteers, we supported **81 service users with over 1,000 in-person link-ins and 321 telephone support link-ins**. We were also proud to deliver **over 100 social activities**. We are so grateful to our long-term volunteers, as well as the ESC volunteers, who offered a staggering **1,094 hours** of their time to offer voluntary befriending support.

Depaul has a number of other initiatives that support mental health and resilience, with community services that aim to prevent people falling into homelessness.

Foyle Haven Day Centre in Derry/L'Derry is one of our key low threshold harm reduction hubs in Northern Ireland and provides a safe and compassionate environment for vulnerable individuals across the city.

In 2023, there were over

11,200

visits to the centre, supporting adults who are experiencing homelessness, addiction, poor mental health or social isolation.

Initially set up as an add-on service to our **Foyle Haven Day Centre, Depaul's Harm Reduction Floating Support Service** expanded in 2013 due to increased demand. It provides one-to-one support to assist people who are experiencing difficulties with their tenancy and are at risk of homelessness due to alcohol and substance use. Our staff visit people in their homes and provide tailored support that will meet individuals' unique needs.

Depaul's Migrant Homeless Action Team supports single men, women and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and are not from Ireland so therefore have limited entitlements to support. Our team provides tailored case management support focusing on resettlement and community engagement and integration. We also act as a referral agent for people to access specialised support relating to housing, health, addiction, training and employment.

In 2023, we worked with

63

service users and we completely resolved all migration barriers for 35 service users.

Through our Ballymun Case Management team, we offer advice and support to people at risk of homelessness in a range of areas, including assistance accessing mental health supports and emotional support. It's a flexible service and can last for as long as the individual or family needs. In 2023, we responded to 145 housing-related queries and supported 35 service users moving on to long-term accommodation.

SERVICE USER SPOTLIGHT COLIN'S STORY

My name is Colin and I've been a resident in Stella Maris since December 2021. When I first arrived, I already knew a few of the residents and staff members from other projects. I was able to fit right in straightaway and I didn't feel awkward or self-conscious.

Before being referred to Stella Maris, I had left a different project and had been living on the street and street drinking. At Stella Maris, I didn't need to go out street drinking. I was able to get food and try to stabilise my drinking, while staying in a safe and warm environment. This gave me a sense of security.

During my time at Stella Maris, I've built a bond with the staff there. I feel I can speak to them if I need to - they are always understanding and caring. They offer me a lot of support, especially when I feel low or depressed. They support me with any appointments about my health and benefits. I feel at the ease because I know everything can be sorted out.

One day, I would like to have my own accommodation but I find it a scary prospect. I feel that I would miss the company of others and the support of staff as I have no family. The staff have assured me that if I found my own home they would arrange support to come and help me. This is very reassuring to me.

I am glad that I came to Stella Maris. It is my home, where I feel welcomed and supported. I dread to think where I would be now if I had remained on the street.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT SOPHIE

My name is Sophie. I'm studying Health Sciences at the University of Missouri in the United States, and I interned at Depaul Ireland during the summer of 2023.

When I first heard that I was going to be interning in the Fundraising and Communications Department at Depaul, I was a little nervous because I had no experience working in that sector. However, my worries soon went away when I was warmly welcomed by the Depaul family on my first day.

Over the course of my internship, I learned so much about the difference Depaul makes to people's lives. Something that makes Depaul so special is how people who are dealing with mental health or addiction issues are never turned away. Anyone who needs help is encouraged to reach out, and the Depaul staff will try their hardest to provide the best possible support.

One of my most memorable experiences during my time at Depaul was when I visited Little Britain Street. While I was there, Jim Sperrin talked to me about the relentless mental and physical toll experienced by service users in temporary accommodation. It was an eye-opening experience to see what it was like for homeless people who deal with more struggles and obstacles than I could imagine.

I also visited one of the family services in Belfast during my internship. While I was there, I watched as one of the service users was interviewed about her experience as a single mother with twins. She and I were the same age, and it really put into perspective that homelessness can affect anyone. It is devastating and Depaul's mission to end homelessness is so inspiring.

I am so grateful to Depaul for this unforgettable experience and the internship opportunity. Depaul will forever hold a special place in my heart.

AMPLIFYING THE VOICE OF LIVED EXPERIENCE

At Depaul, our service users are at the forefront of everything we do and everything we stand for. We understand the power of using your voice and we use our platform to amplify the voices of our service users and people experiencing homelessness. Without their voices, we would lose important insights into how we can help people more effectively. We advocate for hard-to-reach groups and we are always willing to go above and beyond to ensure that the most excluded get the help they deserve.

In 2023, we set up An Glór Mór, our service user council with direct links to our Board of Trustees, to make it easier for service users all over the country to give their first-hand feedback to decision makers in our organisation. We recognise the invaluable insight that people with lived experience of homelessness bring to discussions about how we develop and improve our services. We need to hear about the challenges they're facing and the service gaps they're encountering.

Our aim is to have service users from across Depaul services attend a meeting with our CEO, David Carroll. To make it as accessible as possible, we've given everyone the opportunity to link in online, if they can't attend the group meetings in person. As well as that, if any service user wants their voice to be heard but can't attend the meeting, their ideas can be passed on by staff for discussion.

An Glór Mór was in its infancy in 2023 and it's still growing and making even more strides in 2024 with the establishment of a committee of service users.

In 2023, we welcomed the opportunity to make a submission to the Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use to confirm our support for the decriminalisation of the drug user. As part of our submission, we hosted our own Citizens' Assembly with our service users and staff so that we could use our submission to share their words directly with members of the Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use. Their lived experience gave essential insight into how overcoming addiction can be a lifelong battle that requires time, patience, empathy and a pro-recovery environment to ensure better outcomes, and isn't something that should be punished through the justice system.

SERVICE USER SPOTLIGHT DONNA'S STORY

My name is Donna. My children and I moved into the Cloverhill hostel in early September 2023.

In the summer of 2023, my children and I found ourselves in an unfamiliar place of uncertainty and instability. The landlord of a property I had been renting long-term wanted to take his residence back, and my children and I were about to be homeless.

We were first placed in a hotel by the housing executive. It was far away from everything we were accustomed to - friends, family and schools. But after five nights in the hotel, I received a phone call to say a place had become available in Cloverhill hostel. A huge weight was lifted immediately. My family and I could go back to some kind of normality, as it was near their schools, our family and our friends.

I was nervous at first but, when we arrived at Cloverhill, I was immediately put at ease by the deputy manager who made me feel very welcome and reassured me that my family would be looked after and helped on our journey to obtain our forever home.

All of the staff were kind, friendly, informative and very welcoming. They made sure we had bedding, food, and cooking appliances amongst many other home essentials. They have been constantly compassionate and understanding towards our unfortunate homelessness. They have offered help, support and advice, even when I didn't ask. They were always available for me and my children.

The staff have gone above and beyond to make us feel part of a community rather than just individuals living in a hostel. They invited the kids to days out, arts and crafts and other fun activities in the common room. They're compassionate towards my son's special needs and treat him with care and respect. My daughter was nervous to move into Cloverhill, but the staff helped her settle in quickly by including her in their activities, as well as simple things like watching her ride her scooter in the hall or asking about her day. It's made all the difference to her settling in.

Last month, my family received our first offer of a home, which we accepted and are now waiting for refurbishment work to finish. My family and I will be moving over the next couple of weeks and I honestly feel we couldn't have got this far without everything the staff have done for us.

As a family we are grateful for the help, support, endless time and effort we received from every staff member in Cloverhill. We cannot thank each one of them enough and wish them all the very best in their futures.

HOUSING-LED SOLUTIONS

In 2023, over 4,000 notices to quit were received by the Residential Tenancies Board in the last three months of the year. Over 60% of these notices to quit were because the landlord intended to sell the rental property.

With record numbers of people already accessing emergency accommodation, the important role of housing provision in eradicating and preventing homelessness was once again highlighted. A lack of housing is the greatest barrier homeless people in Ireland are facing when trying to free themselves from the grip of temporary housing support.

Depaul is action oriented and, in line with our values, we do what we say we are going to do, even during the most challenging of times. Our prevention services, like our Ballymun Case Management Team, work in communities ensuring families and individuals are able to maintain their tenancies and live independently.

On top of this, Depaul's Housing Association (DHA) has been making every effort to acquire properties to help individuals and families desperate to exit homelessness.

In 2023, DHA acquired our

50TH
PROPERTY

with many more properties in the development pipeline heading into 2024. In response to the ever-increasing number of eviction notices, DHA acquired our first tenant-in-situ properties. This has enabled tenants who have been served notice by their landlords to avoid homelessness and remain in their homes, with DHA as their new landlord.

Depaul and DHA are very proud of what has been achieved in the last 12 months and look forward to contributing in a purposeful manner alongside our statutory colleagues to continue to provide more housing solutions. We believe we can transform more lives through our housing-led work in the coming year and will continue to advocate for the rights and needs of all of the men, women and children on the margins of society.

EMPOWERING AND CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE'S POTENTIAL

Depaul's Wonderful Volunteers!

At Depaul, volunteers are an important aspect of achieving our mission and living our Vincentian values. We recognise that volunteers have a unique role in engaging with the lived experience of homelessness, and involve part-time volunteers, students on placement, full-time volunteers from Ireland and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) participants.

In 2023, a total of

155 INDIVIDUALS

dedicated more than 17,000 hours to making a difference in the lives of our service users. Volunteer activities play an important role in our harm reduction work; meaningful interactions are a diversion from complex issues, and assist with healthier lifestyles, better engagement in communities, and even revealing hidden talents.

Their leadership on the frontlines of homelessness is humbling, and has contributed greatly to our interventions for some of the most vulnerable people in homelessness. We are extremely grateful to all of our volunteers who have made such a positive impact on the lives of our service users.

Depaul Graduate Programme

Depaul launched our pilot Graduate Programme in September 2023, with grant support gratefully received from Community Foundation Ireland and Benefact Trust to enable us to establish and develop this innovative programme over the coming years.

Denise Charlton, Chief Executive, Community Foundation Ireland said,

“People with skills, knowledge and passion for their roles are essential if we are to truly achieve equality for all in thriving communities. Community Foundation Ireland and its philanthropic supporters recognise this and are proud to partner with Depaul to address the urgent shortage of social workers. Together we are providing opportunities to people driven by empathy and care. We wish all who complete this programme every success into the future.”

Initial outreach through Graduate Fairs, engagement with Third Level institutes, and via digital marketing took place from September 2023, allowing us to begin to attract new talent at an early stage in their career in response to ongoing recruitment and retention challenges.

Our Graduate Programme involves significant training and mentoring, which offers our participants the opportunity for growth within our organisation, and we hope will be a transformative journey that will prepare graduates for a fulfilling and impactful career.

Emerging Leaders

Emerging Leaders is a bespoke leadership development programme, marketed towards staff in entry-level positions who have a desire for self-development and progression within the organisation. As well as preparing and supporting staff as they advance in their careers, we want to develop the future leaders not only of Depaul but also the sector at large. Of those still with the organisation, approximately 33% of Emerging Leaders graduates have progressed onto higher level roles, with another 22% taking on further responsibilities in their service.

In 2023, we reviewed and updated the programme to ensure that our approach remains relevant. One of the most significant updates made to the programme related to group projects. Following the completion of three residential classroom days, our 2023-2024 participants will work in groups to deliver a project on a topic suggested by the Senior Leadership Group and in alignment with our organisational strategy and objectives, like Health & Wellbeing, Trauma-Informed Environments and LGBTQI+. The groups will be supported and mentored by an expert or lead on the topic, and will present their project to a panel of senior managers and directors at the end of the programme.

DEPAUL'S STAFF TEAM

The team at Depaul is made up of **over 650 staff members - an increase of almost 13%** on last year. Our service staff work across a variety of homeless services to provide intervention, support, and care to people experiencing homelessness. Our support staff work to ensure that all of our services can operate effectively and with the resources required. Alongside this, our extensive team of **155 volunteers** work across our services to support the work of our staff, ensuring that everyone has a place to call home and a stake in their community. Their commitment to empowering our service users is commendable.

Board of Trustees Depaul ROI/NI

John Murphy, **Chairperson**
Paul Stanley, **Treasurer**
Laurence J Tuomey, **Company Secretary**
David Lane
Jennifer Lee
Mary Leonard
Fr. Joseph Loftus
Sean Meaghey
Yvonne McWhirther
(resigned 22 September 2023)
Sr. Margaret O'Donovan
Paul O'Malley
Paul White

Depaul Housing Association

Éamonn Conlon, **Chairperson**
Patrick Grenham, **Treasurer**
(joined 23 March 2023)
Laurence J Tuomey, **Company Secretary**
Miguel Fitzgerald
Mary McKeon
John Murphy
Marion St John

Executive Leadership Team

David Carroll, **Chief Executive Officer**
Dermot Murphy, **Director of Services and Development**
Kevin Barrett, **Director of Finance, IT and Risk**
Sarah Reeves, **Director of People and Organisation**
Caroline O'Connell, **Director of Fundraising and Communications**

Auditor

Crowe Ireland 40 Mespil Road Dublin 4,
D04 C2N4

A&L Goodbody

3 Dublin Landings, North Wall Quay,
Dublin 1, D01 C4E0

Registered Offices

Dublin

18 Nicholas Street, Dublin 8, D08 VCP7
Charity Registration No. 20048938
Charitable Tax Exemption No. CHY 14753
Company Registration No. 357828

Belfast

449 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 3BJ
Charity Commission Registration No.
102995
HRMC Charitable Tax Ref. No. XR87991
Company Registration No. NI05410

Depaul Housing Association

18 Nicholas Street, Dublin 8, D08 VCP7
Charity Registration No. 20157746
Charitable Tax Exemption No. CHY 21987
Company Registration No. 590529

FUNDRAISING 2023

Thanks to the generosity of our incredible supporters who believe in a future free from homelessness, 2023 was a positive year for Depaul's fundraising. We're grateful to each and every one of our supporters, from individuals and families to schools and community groups, and from philanthropic foundations and trusts to corporate partners and legacy donors. This year our wonderful supporters provided Depaul staff and service users with strength and resilience when it was needed most, helping us raise vital funds to support our work and enhance our efforts to end homelessness and change lives across the island of Ireland. It was inspiring to receive such amazing support, particularly in a year of so many other global emergencies.

In 2023, we worked hard to ensure our fundraising messages resonated with our supporters and the general public to show how Depaul's work was even more important during these incredibly challenging times. We began a journey to increase our digital capability to meet the expectations of our supporters so that they can donate and communicate more effectively with us online. We focused on engaging more closely with all of our generous supporters, across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, paying particular attention to connecting with supporters in new communities in line with the regional expansion of our services and Depaul Housing. We highlighted Depaul's local impact to ensure that all of our supporters from Derry to Cork and from Mayo to Dublin knew that they could be part of the solution for their local community by partnering with Depaul.

We are excited to forge cross-border, national and regional partnerships in new areas where we have a presence from the transfer of SVP regional services in 2021 and ongoing service expansion across the island of Ireland.

We also strived to offer an increased range of ways for our supporters to become an integral part of our mission, either by donating online or to our appeals, becoming a regular donor or leaving a legacy gift, supporting community fundraising events and initiatives or signing up to our schools' programme, taking part in our fundraising events, such as the Depaul Sleep Out, or taking on a personal fundraising challenge, becoming a corporate partner, through employee volunteer and fundraising engagement, payroll giving, making a corporate donation, or offering pro bono work, gifts in kind or skill sharing, or by pledging valuable grant support.

We were blown away with support for our Christmas Appeal and Presents for All Campaign in 2023, which meant a great deal to service users, some of whom were facing their second Christmas in emergency homeless accommodation. Your kindness touched our hearts and provided a beacon of hope at the toughest of times for families and individuals. Without your support, we simply would not have the same positive impact or the ability to expand our services to meet the growing and changing needs of people who are experiencing homelessness. We are eternally grateful to everyone who gives their time, money and talents to help us provide life-changing and life-saving support to the thousands of men, women, and children who need us most.

We want to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt thanks to all of our supporters, partners and funders. We simply would not be able to provide the level of service we do to each of the men, women, and children in our care without your ongoing support.

Although we would like to thank everyone individually, it is impossible within the confines of this report. We hope you know that your support means a great deal to everyone in Depaul, especially our service users who are grateful for your ongoing belief in their future potential.

Our Funding Partners

Depaul is grateful to all of our statutory partners; the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive, local authorities across the country, the Health Service Executive, the Irish Probation Service through the Department of Justice, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the European Social Fund, The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Supporting People and the Public Health Agency for the coordinated and concerted effort to tackle this housing and homelessness crisis and its consequences.

Our Strong Governance

Depaul demonstrates transparency and accountability in all activities at all levels of the organisation. Depaul is governed by a non-executive Board, which is supported by non-executive committees with formal terms of reference. Depaul has robust controls and procedures in place to ensure good financial management and decision making. Our Statutory Financial Statements are prepared in compliance with SORP, which is the recommended standard for charities, and are subject to external audit. We are also subject to periodic and random audits by external organisations, such as local authorities and other state agencies from which we receive funding. We also have a number of service level agreements with several government departments and are required to make quarterly and annual returns for this funding stream. Our Board of Trustees play a vital role in ensuring that we, as a charity, are adhering to best practice at all times. In October 2021, Trustees reviewed our adherence to the Governance Code and confirmed full compliance.

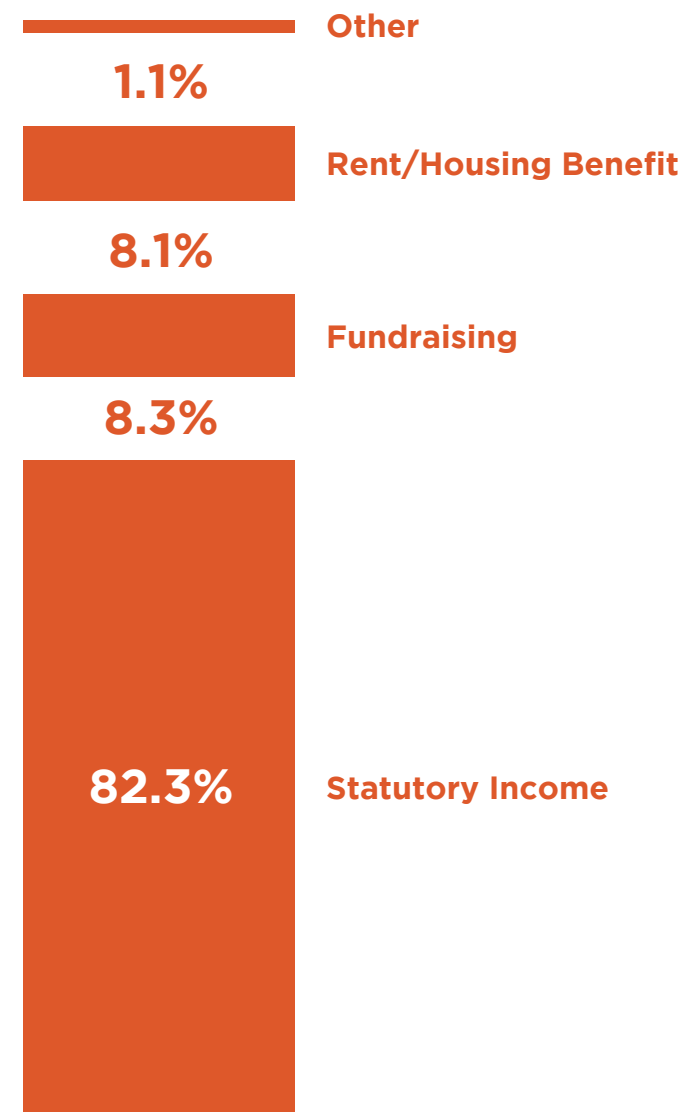
Depaul adheres to the Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public and the UK Code of Fundraising Practice. We are registered with the Charities Regulator in Ireland as well as the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Depaul Housing is a subsidiary of Depaul Ireland and is an Approved Housing Body (AHB) regulated by the Approved Housing Body Regulatory Authority (AHBRA) and subscribes to the Standards for AHBs issued by AHBRA. As an AHB, Depaul Housing is eligible for Government capital grant funding to develop accommodation, through the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS), Buy and Repair (B&R), Capital Asset Leasing Facility (CALF) and Repair and Leasing Scheme (RLS). Depaul Housing is also governed by a non-executive Board, which is supported by non-executive committees with formal terms of reference.

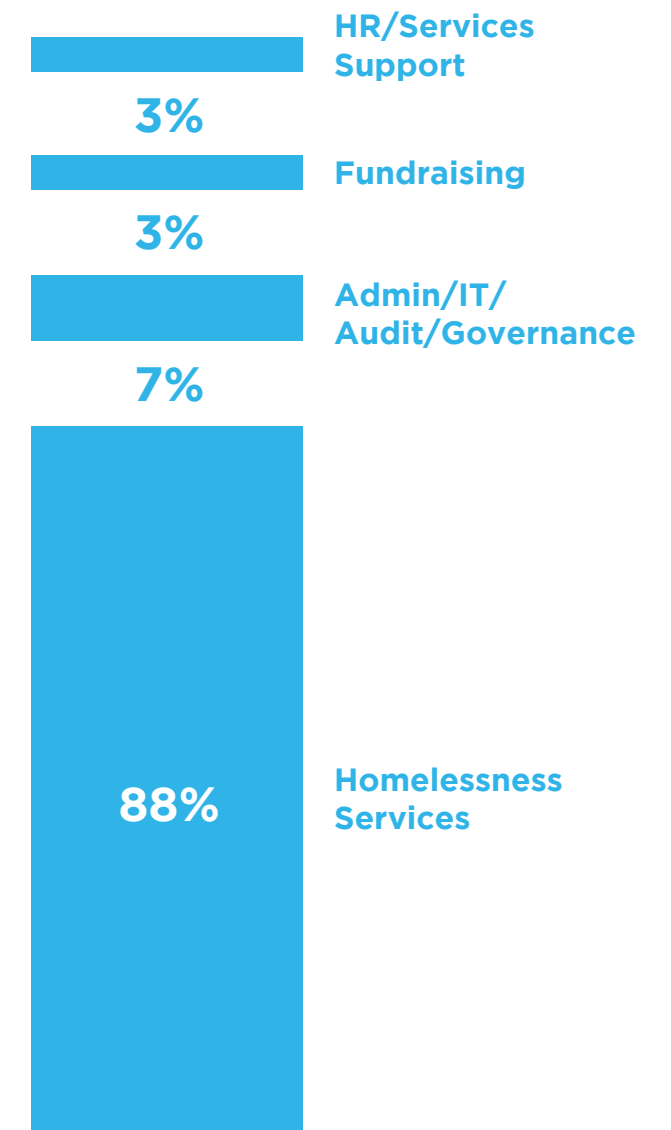
THE DEPAUL IRELAND GROUP INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

(includes Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Depaul Housing)

INCOME €31,114,345

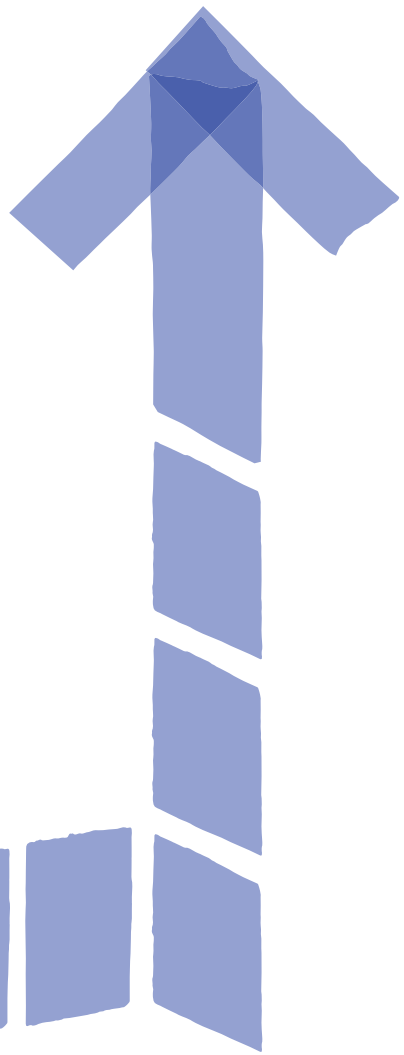



EXPENDITURE €30,162,379



SUPPORTER PROMISE

We are committed to maintaining the highest standard of financial integrity. We recognise that, as a recipient of large amounts of public funds and private donations from organisations and individuals, we have a duty to use our financial resources properly and effectively. We do, and we always will. We take the issue of transparency and accountability very seriously and are delighted to answer any questions you may have.





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DEPAUL