

# Merchants Quay Ireland

A Community of Hospitality, Hope and Justice

**ANNUAL  
REVIEW**  
2010

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**Merchants Quay Ireland**  
**Homeless & Drugs Services**

PO Box 11958  
Dublin 8

Location:  
Merchants Quay Ireland,  
28 Winetavern Street,  
Dublin 8

Tel: 01 524 0160  
Fax: 01 5240946  
E-Mail: [info@mqi.ie](mailto:info@mqi.ie)  
[www.mqi.ie](http://www.mqi.ie)

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# Annual Review 2010

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# Chairman's Introduction

HUGH MCKENNA, OFM

Chair of Merchants Quay Ireland

As the new Chairman of Merchants Quay Ireland, it gives me great pleasure to welcome the Annual Report for 2010. The ongoing effects of the economic crisis facing our country continue to impact on the most vulnerable members of our society. In times of hardship the marginalised members of our communities often suffer disproportionately and are the first to be affected by cutbacks.

The numbers attending our services demonstrate very clearly that we are meeting a very real need in our society. During 2010 we have seen an ongoing increase in people seeking help in our homeless and drug services and this shows no sign of letting up.

Back in the thirteenth century Francis of Assisi gave up a life of wealth and privilege to reach out to the poor and marginalised. He turned his back on everything he had known and set out on a journey to find the face of the poor Christ in those who had been forgotten by society. He did this, not by preaching to them, but by his presence and his tender care for them.

Merchants Quay Ireland continues this Franciscan tradition of reaching out to the most vulnerable people in our towns and cities. It is inspiring to see the members of staff and volunteers welcoming our clients with dignity and respect. Like Francis of Assisi they too show deep compassion for those who find themselves in difficulty.

One of the most exciting developments in the last twelve months has been the expansion of our services at St Francis Farm in Tullow. A new detoxification facility has been developed and this will provide a hugely needed service to people from all over the country.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all our funders, both voluntary and statutory. Without your help and constant support we would be unable to offer the services we do. Finally I wish to put on record my deep appreciation for all the members of our staff throughout the country: full-time, part-time, relief and sessional as well as our volunteer staff. You are the public face of Merchants Quay Ireland and you can feel proud of the work you do in reaching out to those on the margins.

*Hugh McKenna, OFM*



# Looking Back

TONY GEOGHEGAN

Chief Executive Merchants Quay Ireland

With the on-going economic recession 2010 was a difficult year for many people. At Merchants Quay Ireland demand for our services is growing rapidly and the needs of those seeking help are now greater than ever. In 2010 we provided 57,840 meals for homeless people as compared to just 45,710 in 2009. This represents an increase of more than 26% and is an indication of the increasing poverty and desperation experienced by so many in our society.

In our drug services, despite a significant drought in heroin in the second half of 2010, MQI worked with 575 new injectors over the course of the year, more than 10 every week, showing that demand for drugs remains constant.

Our response to these issues has been to grow and develop our services to meet this increased demand. In 2010 we established no fewer than seven new initiatives to meet increasing needs. These range from Traveller Services and Day Services in the Midlands, to new training initiatives and evening time services for homeless people in Dublin as well as new Aftercare Housing Services and Women's Services. We are now on the point of opening our new 10 bed fully medically supervised detoxification service at our St. Francis Farm facility in Tullow, Co. Carlow. These new initiatives have been achieved on the tightest possible budgets and in partnership with Statutory and Voluntary partners and with support from our Donors. The scale and range of these developments show what can be achieved with very little money, hard work, dedication and a commitment to social justice. I am particularly appreciative of all of our staff at Merchants Quay Ireland. It is their willingness to go the extra mile for our service users that has made these developments possible.

Despite the Government's commitment to end long-term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough by December 2010, homelessness remains very much with us with up to 60 people sleeping rough on Dublin city's streets every night. In response to the complete lack of services available to homeless people in the evenings,

MQI, together with Focus Ireland jointly established a new evening time service for homeless people in July 2010. By the end of the year there was an average of 138 persons attending that service each evening.

In addressing homelessness our priority must be access to secure long term accommodation. This approach is more effective both on an economic basis and on a human level as we know that the longer people remain caught in homelessness the more deskilled they can become and the more difficult it is for them to transition to independent living and to reintegrate into mainstream society

In addressing drug use our priority must be access to services that reduce the harm caused by drugs and provide clear pathways towards rehabilitation and a drug free life style. In this regard Merchants Quay Ireland is now delivering services in eleven counties across Ireland reflecting the fact that the drugs crisis is a national crisis. Addressing homelessness and the drugs crisis is fundamentally about reducing human misery or it is about nothing. It should not be reduced to economics. Nonetheless in this era where policy is focused almost exclusively on reducing public expenditure it is important to again draw notice to the fact that according to the British Home Office every £1 spent on drug treatment saves £3 in criminal justice costs alone. When Health savings are included the saving is £9.50. Investing in harm reduction service directly reduces health care expenditure. Investment in drug substitution treatment has been shown to reduce other healthcare costs and to reduce crime and investment in drug free treatment and aftercare can reduce expenditure on healthcare, criminal justice and social welfare. Most of all investing in all of these areas reduces the misery associated with drug use for everybody.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Geoghegan', with a horizontal line underneath.

# Merchants Quay Ireland

Merchants Quay Ireland is a national voluntary agency providing services for homeless people and for drug users. We provide creative and innovative responses to the issues of drug use and homelessness in Ireland.

## Vision

We look forward to a society where nobody is without a place to call home and where drug related harm is minimized and the range and quality of drugs services is maximized.

## Values

- Providing quality services for drug users and homeless people
- Offering access for the most marginalized
- Promoting positive change
- Working at the cutting edge
- Involving our Service Users
- Valuing our staff
- Managing finances prudently
- Promoting partnership

## Mission

Merchants Quay Ireland is a community of hospitality, hope and justice. We seek to:

- Work for justice and opportunity for those who are excluded in partnership with those who share our aims
- Create a place of safety, compassion and welcome for all who enter our doors and offer high quality services to meet their needs
- Remain committed to supporting all who work in Merchants Quay to enable us to achieve our full potential in our various roles
- Believe in and cherish the value of every human being in keeping with our commitment to social justice coming from our origins in the Franciscan Tradition.





***“It’s not the needle exchange, it’s not the sandwich you get. It’s when you walk in the door and someone says, ‘How are you, how are you doing?’ They accept you exactly as you present yourself at the door. And you might not answer, but just to know someone is asking...”***





*"It's just, there would be lots of people lost without this place. Because we have nowhere else to go, I mean if we are tired you can come over here and go to sleep on the table. I know it's not much but it's better than sleeping on the street..."*

# Addressing Crisis

## Open access Services

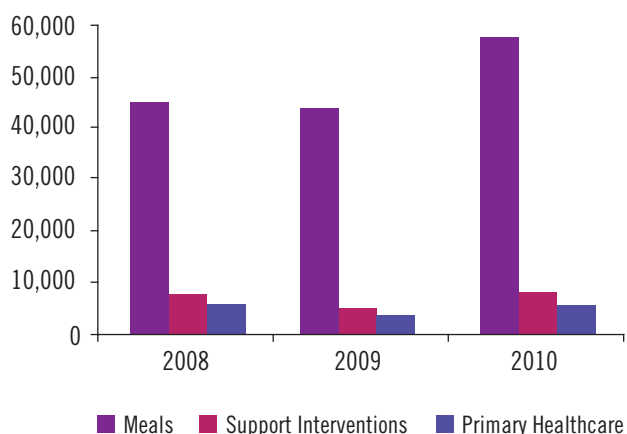
### Open Access Homeless Services

Throughout 2010 more and more people came to our homeless services seeking help. We provided more than 60,000 meals for homeless people at our Day Centre and with Focus Ireland, in our new Extended Day Service which operates in the evenings.

#### *The Drop-in Centre for People who are Homeless (Fáiltiú)*

The aim of the Drop-in Service is to provide a “one stop shop” offering a range of interlinked services meeting the key daytime needs of homeless persons with the twin purpose of minimising harm associated with life on the streets and offering clear pathways towards settlement and reintegration. Our Cook Street Centre is open seven days a week from 7.15a.m. to 4.30p.m. with shorter opening hours at weekends.

Figure 1. Homeless Services between 2008 and 2010



The services we provide for homeless people from this centre are as follows:

- *Information, Advice and Crisis Support Service:* The drop-in service includes assessment of service users’ needs, advice and information on health, social welfare, emergency accommodation, long-term housing and other issues. In 2010 we recorded 6,585 supportive interventions with service users of our homeless service, an increase of 38% on 2009. Interventions include key working sessions, referrals to emergency accommodation, social work services, medical services and social welfare services, help in contacting friends or family, access to drug treatment and support in a variety of other matters. The Dublin Simon Outreach Team links in with this service on a weekly basis.
- *Meals Service:* Homeless persons are offered two meals a day (breakfast and lunch). A total of 57,840 meals were provided in 2010. This was a 26% increase on 2009. Sunday remained our busiest day with more than 400 persons attending for breakfast or lunch each Sunday.

#### *Primary Health Care Services*

MQI is working in partnership with the HSE in providing a primary health care service for homeless people. The service has General Practitioners, a Dentist, Nurses, a Counsellor and a Chiropodist. All told there were 3,685 health care interventions during the year, an increase of 15%.

- *Nursing:* In 2010 there were a total of 2235 nursing interventions, or 186 per month, 14% more than in 2009. The drop-in nurse led clinic provides a full range of primary health care services such as wound care management, blood testing, sexual health, medication management, and women’s and men’s health issues. Mental health presentations range from acutely suicidal clients to those who need to be referred back to services they have lost contact with. Referrals to tertiary services such as A & E and other hospital services and advocacy are a large part of the nursing role.

## Addressing Crisis

The citywide Primary Care Safety Net Service, of which MQI medical unit is part, is still developing and will provide for consistency and continuity of care between those homeless services involved.

- *Counselling:* Homelessness is often associated with severe stresses and difficulties in life, and it is not surprising that many people find it hard to cope. The Counselling Service for homeless people works at two levels – firstly providing a brief crisis counselling service targeted at service users in distress and secondly offering medium to long-term counselling relating to issues such as relationships and bereavement as well as issues of drugs and homelessness. In addition we provide group support for homeless service users attending our day programmes. We provided 588 counselling sessions in 2010, a 29% increase on 2009.
- *G.P Service:* Our two GP's dealt with in the region of 874 consultations or 73 per month, up 13% year on year. The service is used by clients with a variety of acute and chronic illnesses.

## Open Access Drugs Services

These services can be accessed by drug users simply by walking in from the street. For this reason we are often the first place to which drug users turn for help. Services include:

- *Needle Exchange – Health Promotion Unit*

Here we provide drug users with information about the risks associated with drug use and the means to minimise such risks. We also offer drug users a pathway into treatment and the possibility of living life without drugs.

In our needle exchange and health promotion service our main focus is on HIV and hepatitis prevention, promoting safer injecting techniques and safer sex and on providing information on overdose and other risks. We also offer early referral to drug treatment services.

In 2010 the number of visits to the needle exchange was just under 25,000. This represents a 20% decline on the numbers using the service in 2009. Most of this decline was due to a heroin drought which began at the end of October and continued on into the early months of 2011. Thus, whereas we had 2,650 needle exchanges in January 2010, in December, at the height of the drought the corresponding figure was just 850. The total number of service users was 4,308, an increase of 5%, despite the drought. A total of 575 new injectors presented in 2010. In addition a total of 1,617 safer injecting workshops were undertaken with injecting drug users. The figures here serve as a reminder that heroin use remains at very high levels and that significant numbers of new people are beginning to use heroin every year.

- *Crisis Contact Service*

Many of the drug users who come to us are in crisis. Some have become homeless, others have financial problems or are in trouble with the law. Relationship or family breakdown is an issue for many people. We offer drug users practical help in getting through such difficulties – by providing counselling, advice and information, through referral to other relevant services or by providing support to people facing court action and working with people in prison.

- *Outreach Service*

This service aims to make contact with drug users not engaged with services and to make referrals to Merchants Quay Ireland services as well as to other external agencies. In 2010 the outreach team contacted vulnerable drug users on the street, collected used needles and syringes and also liaised with local community groups, the Gardaí, Dublin City Council and other drugs and homeless service providers. The service engaged in an average of 92 client contacts per week. Furthermore an average of almost 1,100 discarded needles were collected every month.



- *Family Support Group*

The Family Support Group meets regularly providing a forum where parents, and other close relatives and friends of drug users are offered support and advice on a range of issues. The participants provide support for each other and the group is continually open to new members. The Family Support Group is linked to the Citywide Family Support Network which offers an opportunity to raise issues at a national level.

- *Work with Clients in Custody*

Merchants Quay Ireland endeavours to continue working with service users within the prison system. We offer support, advice and counselling with a particular focus on accessing appropriate post-release options. This process entails a close working arrangement with the Probation and Welfare Service and with members of the legal profession.

***The earliest snowfall in 17 years took us all by surprise. But one of our wonderful supporters donated a supply of new work clothes and sturdy boots. There was enough to outfit all our clients at a time when they critically needed it. Go raibh míle maith agat!***



# Promoting Positive Change

## Progression Pathways Programmes

These services offer the first steps away from crisis drug use and towards stability. They are aimed at people who are currently using street drugs, or those recently engaged in treatment and seeking more stability and structure in their lives.

Services include:

### Stabilization Services

- *Methadone Prescribing Treatment and Support:* Methadone substitution therapy helps people to break their links with illegal and high-risk drug use. There were 19 service users on this programme in 2010.
- *Into Education and Employment* offering therapeutic groups, life skills training, personal development work and pre-employment training to help drug users reintegrate into society.

Links with the City of Dublin VEC allow us to include a strong educational component for this programme, which is of considerable importance in addressing the educational disadvantage experienced by so many of our service users. In 2010 we increased the capacity of this year long programme by 25% in 2010 – from 12 to 15 clients.

***“Jessica was here nearly two, two and half years. She refused to take a chance and go outside and show what she was made of. It was a major thing for Jessica to be able to share the skills she had with other people. Now she has moved on to the work experience and she does not want to come back. She’s using the skills that she has learned, which is brilliant. She even sounds different on the phone. It’s fabulous. When you see it you say Wow. People can change.”***

- Programme Staff

- *The Gateway Programme* offers a bridge between crisis services and stabilisation services. This Programme provides one to one support linked to a range of leisure and learning opportunities. The aim is to encourage service users to examine alternatives to drug use. The programme offers access to more structured treatment, education and training. An average of 78 persons participated each month.

***“It put a great structure in my day. Stabilisation helped me move on from where I was.”***

- *MQI Equality for Women Programme*

With Support from the Pobal Equality for Women initiative MQI was able to develop a range of low threshold training opportunities for women as well as a range of other supports (e.g. interview skills training, CV preparation) aimed at assisting marginalised women with a history of drug use to move towards further training and employment. Training inputs provided included information and communications technology, literacy, gardening / horticulture skills, personal development, personal grooming and presentation, hair care and holistic therapies.

A total of 42 women participated in these classes over the course of the year.

## Aftercare Housing - Ballymount

This innovative programme offers transitional accommodation to drug users who find themselves homeless after completing residential drug treatment. The programme aims at assisting the integration of former drug users into mainstream society by providing opportunities for those who had drug or alcohol problems to participate in group and one-to-one therapeutic sessions and activities.

These service users have transitional accommodation in the Greater Dublin Area. Residents are required to be involved in an appropriate Day Programme (such as the MQI Drug Free Day Programme) and are offered one-to-one support, an aftercare group and a weekly community night with staff. Service users' settlement needs are addressed from the start of their stay. All service users are also offered a one-to-one counselling and support during their stay.

In 2010 Ballymount House operated at close to capacity with an average of 3 people staying in this 3 bed house during the course of the year.

## Settlement Service

The Settlement Service is delivered to those seeking to move away from being homeless and we actively seek to include those who have a history of drug and alcohol problems. We work with homeless people from a variety of settings - rough sleeping, hostels, B&B's, short-term arrangements with friends/families and transitional and supported accommodation. In addition the settlement service targets those using our residential drug treatment services, where a high proportion of participants have effectively no home to return to on completing the programme.

We use assessment interviews, individual support plans, one-to-one key working sessions, group support, personal development and life skills training, advocacy and pre and post settlement support to assist our service users to find, access, and sustain long-term appropriate accommodation.

During the settlement process the main issues being addressed with service users are accessing interim and long term accommodation, family relationships, money management, counselling, legal matters, and employment.



***“I want to learn stuff I left behind, because when you are on drugs for so long, like you are blind to a lot of stuff as well,”***

In 2010 the Settlement Team (including our High Park Settlement Worker) provided support to an average of 74 service users each quarter. In terms of outcomes 45 were resettled during the course of the year.

## Training and Work Programmes

- **FÁS – Community Employment Services:** MQI works in partnership with FÁS to provide hands on training for prospective drugs workers, clients and post-treatment service users. This is done through a number of Community Employment (CE) projects based in our services. CE projects provide participants with skills that enable them to access permanent employment. In many cases our CE projects have often provided service users with their first experience of paid employment.

In 2010 a total of 90 persons participated in CE programmes at Merchants Quay Ireland. Of those 26 completed their FÁS placement at Merchants Quay during the course of the year. Of these 6 (23%) secured permanent employment and 2 (8%) moved into full time further education. In addition 18 completed a MQI residential or community based drugs intervention programme as part of their CE project.





***“The service more than matched my expectation. It is more helpful than I thought it would be... they are here to help you with recovery. They have the time to help you and any problem you have you can talk to them about.”***



## Midlands Services

With support and funding from the Midlands Regional Drugs Task Force and the HSE Merchants Quay Ireland provides much needed services in the four Midlands counties of Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath.

The MQI Family Support and Community Harm Reduction Team was established in late 2008 and provides dedicated outreach services for individuals actively using drugs and Family Support Services focused on the needs of the families of active drug users

The team consists of two family support workers and two full-time and two part time Outreach Workers working across the four counties:

### 1. Family Support Services

This involves the provision of services and interventions that support families in carrying out their functions. Such services often concern counselling, guidance and advice. Family support is seen as increasingly important in the areas of drug treatment and prevention.

The Family Support Service assists families to:

- deal with the trauma associated with discovering their loved one is involved in drug use
- work with vulnerable families in the area of drugs prevention
- act as a reliable source of information and advice on drug use and related issues
- deal with the reaction of neighbours and others
- overcome self blaming responses
- create positive coping strategies that will help parent and the drug user make positive decisions
- build their capacity to respond
- set rules of behaviour for those living in their house
- challenge views that they caused it, can control it, or can cure it.

We also provide one to one support by appointment for parents and other close relatives seeking advice and support. We work to proactively link people with other support or treatment services that may be relevant to their needs.

In 2010 our Family Support Service providing services to 237 new clients across the four counties, in the form of Family Support Groups, or one to one support (115 were accessing both service types).

*“I thought it was brilliant from the first day I came. I love it. You can build trust and get to know people so that you know you’re not on your own. It’s hard to explain it to anyone outside of the group.”*

### 2. Midlands Community Harm Reduction Services

We are aware that most local people and organisations are very concerned about the level of public and community harm associated with drug use in their communities. They are also very worried about the risks that drug users may expose themselves to.

#### Aims

The aims of this service are to:

- Act as a resource for community groups, in the target areas, in their efforts to minimise the impact of problem drug use on their communities.
- Reduce the level of individual and community harm experienced in local communities as a result of drug use in the target areas.
- Reduce the associated level of public health risk experienced in the designated areas.
- Provide harm reduction and crisis support services to local drug users in places and at times where such services are unavailable.
- Ensure that problems associated with drug use are minimised.
- Promote a partnership model between Residents Associations, Estate Management Committees, Community Policing Services and Midlands Outreach Service in tackling the drugs issue at local level.

Our harm reduction service worked with an average of 62 clients each month, providing 174 interventions per month in the form of advice and support and an average of 124 needle exchanges each month. As with the services in Dublin, the heroin drought led to a significant decline in the number of needle exchanges in the last quarter of the year.

## Promoting Positive Change

### 3. Midlands Rehabilitation and Aftercare Service

Merchants Quay Ireland, with the support of the Midlands Regional Drugs Task Force established a Rehabilitation and Aftercare Service in September 2010. The purpose of this service is to provide a range of rehabilitation and aftercare supports targeting clients from the region including those exiting drug treatment or exiting prison. This involves assisting clients in the process of regaining their capacity for daily life from the impact of problem drug use and enabling their re-integration into their community.

Our Rehabilitation and Aftercare Worker provides case management for clients with a view to ensuring that all have their needs assessed, and have the opportunity to participate in developing a care plan offering a pathway towards rehabilitation. She also provides psychosocial support for persons leaving drug treatment or released from prison via one to one support and aftercare group work.

In 2010 a total of 55 clients accessed this service.

*“I’m nine months clean... and I’m doing my relapse prevention on a Tuesday. I can get a one-to-one during the week if I need it so everything is grand. They helped me when I needed it.”*



*“If you need support you can just pick up the phone and ring (Support Worker). Nothing was too much, anything I needed help with he did. He is always helpful and always there.”*

## National Prison Based Addiction Counselling Service

### Overview of Services

In 2010 Merchants Quay Ireland won our second successive tender completion for the delivery of the national counselling service for prisoners with drugs and alcohol problems. This service operates in 13 Prisons in all parts of the country.

The service offers structured assessments and evidence-based counselling interventions with clearly defined treatment plans and goals. This occurs within the context of care planning within multidisciplinary teams.

Counselling is available to prisoners who have a history of drug use including opiates, cocaine, ecstasy, amphetamines, LSD, anxiolytics, hypnotics, alcohol, cannabis and other illicit and licit drugs.

### Services offered include:

- Brief interventions,
- Motivational Interviewing and Motivational Enhancement therapy
- 12-step facilitation programme
- Relapse Prevention
- Cognitive-behavioural therapy which would also include problem solving approaches, development of alternative coping strategies, anxiety and stress management and anger management.
- Harm Reduction Approaches

### Outcomes

In 2010 the Addiction Counselling Service provided in excess of 13,000 counselling hours in the prisons over the course of the year. The 23 counsellors carried an average caseload of more than 550 prisoners.

## Drug Free Treatment Services

Our Drug Free Treatment Services aim at providing easily accessible treatment for drug users who wish to become drug free. Service users can be self referred or may be referred from a wide variety of agencies across the country.

### High Park Residential Programme

This is a 17 week fully residential programme designed to help participants to become and remain drug free. The programme is a low threshold programme that seeks to attract service users who might not otherwise engage in drug free treatment such as homeless drug users and female drug users. The emphasis is on assisting service users to gain insight into the issues which underpin their drug use and developing realistic measures to prevent relapse. The High Park programme offers individual care plans which, where necessary incorporate in-house detoxification in partnership with

community GPs, individual counselling, group therapy, educational groups, work assignments and recreational activities.

In 2010 there were 62 admissions to the High Park programme. The proportion of homeless persons accessing the service in 2010 was 36%. A total of 13 persons were admitted for community assisted detoxification in 2010 and 10 (77%) of these successfully completed the detoxification. 22 clients completed the full programme, compared to 19 in 2009.



***“In Merchants Quay they treat everyone as equal. I learned so many new coping skills and learned to look at a lot of things that would have driven me back down the road to addiction.”***

***“They sat up with me ‘til one or two o’clock in the morning and if you were going through something they’d ask... they won’t let you hide in any corner. With other places I never really got that.”***



## Promoting Positive Change

### St. Francis Farm Residential Programme

This is a therapeutic facility which, until September 2010 offered a long-term programme of six months duration for people with a history of problematic drug use. We decided to reduce the programme length to 14 weeks in October 2010 – the decision to reduce the length of the programme relates to the fact that from 2011 we will have a new detox facility on site, offering 4-6 weeks treatment for clients many of whom are expected to advance on to the rehabilitation programme, and because we have increased our range of aftercare beds and services. The move is also in line with research evidence showing that the optimal length of time for a residential treatment programme is in the region of three months. This change means that from 2011 we will be able to work with greater numbers of clients seeking drug free treatment

At St. Francis Farm we provide a safe drug free environment where service users can adjust to life without drugs and make positive choices about their future. We also afford service users the opportunity to explore the reasons for their drug use and to learn more effective coping mechanisms. We provide former drug users with access to training and education, as a means to gaining employment and we enable service users to develop their individual, social and interpersonal skills.



***“There’s a lot of people out there, that need help. If Merchants Quay weren’t there, I would have killed myself through overdose. I’m not the old Neil I used to be.”***

The programme covers areas of relapse prevention, one to one counselling, group therapy, self esteem seminars, assertiveness training, anger management, farm training, literacy skills, and computer skills training (ECDL). Service users also receive training in Emergency First Aid and in life skills and budgeting. In addition service users are offered the opportunity to participate in Yoga classes and reflexivity and fortnightly spirituality workshops.

What makes St. Francis Farm unique is the fact that our programme is situated in a working farm environment. Service users gain work experience in animal care, vegetable production, and in general farming. The food produced at the farm is used to supply the kitchens in our various centres, feeding up to three hundred people every day.

The St. Francis Farm programme had 34 new participants in 2010, including 6 women and 28 men. A total of 15 (44%) of clients were from the South East. 11 clients completed the full programme in 2010, one more than in 2009. Six clients remained on the programme at years end with completion dates in 2011. 20% of clients accessing our residential rehabilitation services in 2010 were from the greater Cork region.

***“It’s no bother doin’ a bit of hard work. I pick up a shovel, I’ll do anything. I’m just happy to breathe the air again – fresh air.”***

## Training

In 2010 a total of 721 persons participated in Merchants Quay Ireland's 25 training courses. The courses offered included the following;

- Project Worker Training Programme
- Health and Safety Training
- Drugs Awareness Training Programme
- Information and Communications Technology
- Supervision Training Programme
- Volunteering Induction Training
- MQI/University College Dublin: Certificate in Drugs Counselling Theory and Intervention Skills – Delivered in both Dublin and Cork
- MQI/University College Dublin: Diploma in Drugs Counselling Theory and Intervention Skills

One hundred and fifty five persons participated in our three UCD courses two of which were delivered in Dublin and the other in Cork. We ran 6 courses for MQI staff specifically focused on health and safety issues – these had a total of 200 participants.

## New Developments

### • *Extended Day Service*

In July 2010 Merchants Quay Ireland and Focus Ireland came together to establish a new service aimed at addressing a significant gap in services whereby there were no services available to homeless people rough sleepers in the evening time. The new service offers an evening meal, crisis support and advice and information as well as direct referral to the "night bus" service which arranges overnight accommodation for homeless people.

Between July and December there were 13,559 visits to the service.

### • *New Communities Support Service*

By the late 2000's the profile of homeless people attending MQI services had changed substantially – by 2010 more than one third of all visits to the service were made by people from new communities living in Ireland especially from Eastern Europe. MQI received funding from Pobal Dormant Accounts Fund – Homeless Measure to employ a New Communities Support Worker to facilitate support for people from the new EU states who have become homeless in Ireland. This worker is fluent in English and a number of Eastern European languages and provides a range of supports including advice and information, referral and advocacy for these service users. As part of this project MQI is developing a range of information materials in a range of languages about the various services and supports open to people who are homeless in Ireland.

In the first six months of operation the New Communities Outreach Worker provided one to one support to 70 service users – the greatest number were from Poland – (41%), another 30% were from other Eastern European countries and the remainder were from elsewhere.

### • *Athlone Open Door Centre*

The Athlone Open Door Centre provides a range of services for drug users in Athlone including a Drop in Centre offering hospitality and crisis support, vocational training initiatives and support towards rehabilitation and reintegration.

- Enhancing service provision
- Offering clear progression pathways for clients
- Extending the partnership to include FÁS, VEC and other key players
- Providing a support team and management structure for the sole remaining worker at the Open Door Centre

The service has been operated by Westmeath Community Development for many years, but following an Evaluation in 2010 it was agreed that MQI would take on responsibility for the service from January 2011 in order to enhance services for clients.



## Promoting Positive Change

- *Midlands Traveller Specific Drugs Project*

Since October 2010 Merchants Quay Ireland has been delivering a new drugs support service aimed at Travellers living in the four Midlands counties. The aim of the service is to provide support for Travellers in relation to their individual substance misuse including:

- Providing a 'continuum of care' to problem drug users enabling them to address their needs, as most appropriate for them (these needs may include health, social, housing, employment, educational and/or vocational);
- Assisting them in maximising their quality of life, and that of their families and communities; and
- Enabling their re-integration into their community.

The first three months of operation were focused on promoting and developing the service across the four Midlands Counties and to this end the Traveller support worker organised 33 meetings with various services and agencies in the region to this end. By the end of the year she built up a small caseload of 4 clients, a number that is expected to grow considerably in 2011.

- *Aftercare Housing –Leixlip, Co. Kildare*

Finding accommodation for the large proportion of clients leaving our residential services who are effectively homeless has been a big issue for MQI in recent years. In 2010 we made a significant breakthrough in this regard in partnership with the Respond! Housing Association, who agreed to provide us with a six bedroom group home in Leixlip, Co. Kildare, thus tripling the number of aftercare beds we have available to our clients.

As with our aftercare house in Ballymount, Co. Dublin, residents are required to be involved in an appropriate Day Programme and are offered one-to-one support, an aftercare group and a weekly community night with staff. Service users' settlement needs are addressed from the start of their stay.

- *Drug Free Day Programme*

In August 2010 we established a new drug free day programme aimed at clients exiting residential drug treatment at Coolmine Therapeutic Community, St. Francis Farm, High Park or other services. This year long programme is part of a wider range of aftercare

services for our clients and provides structured education and training aimed at assisting clients towards reintegration into society. The service, based in Chapelizod, had a full complement of 12 participants in place by the end of the year.

- *Easy Access Education for Homeless People*

With the support of Pobal Dormant Accounts Fund – Homeless Measure, MQI started a new Educational Initiative for Homeless People in 2010. The initial focus of work has been on developing a range of open access educational initiatives for homeless people availing of a wide range of homeless services in Dublin. Content developed includes:

- Decision Making
- Self-awareness
- Assertive communication
- Budgeting
- Skills tasters – Computers, Gardening, Art,

- *Riverbank Centre*

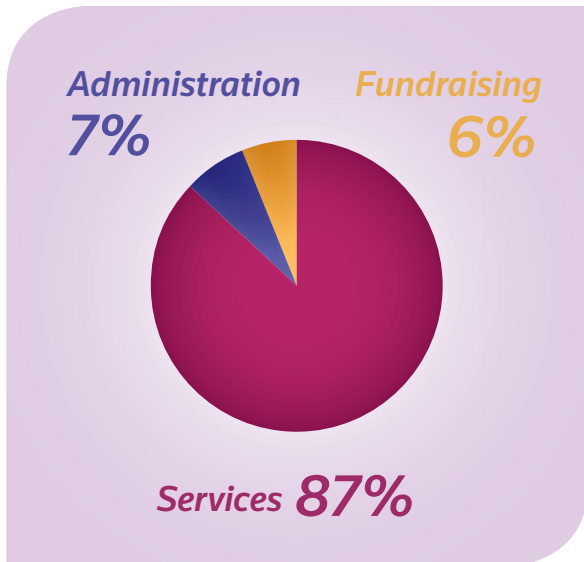
Work has at long last finally commenced on the redevelopment of the Riverbank Centre. The purpose designed redevelopment, when completed, will provide a single site location for all our crisis oriented Dublin based services. This fantastic new development could not have been realised without the support of the Franciscan Fraternity and the many donors and benefactors who support our work.

The architectural design team have completed their work and, after a series of consultations with staff, signed off on the final design and layout for the new centre. A contractor was appointed to 'strip out' and prepare the building for the main redevelopment work to commence. This phase is now completed. All statutory requirements in relation to fire, health & safety and disability certification are in place. The project has been formally put out to tender and the selection process for appointing the contractor is all but complete.

The main redevelopment work on the Riverbank Centre is due to commence in October 2011 with an anticipated completion date of July/August 2012. We expect to take possession of the completed building in September 2012. We hope to commence our direct client services provision in the Riverbank Centre from October 2012.

# Finance

## Where the money was spent



### Overview

Despite another difficult year financially, MQI not only maintained all existing client services but also opened up several new services during 2010. The highlights of the year are summarised below.

- MQI continued to maximise the resources spent on direct client services in 2010 with €0.87c in each Euro donated going to client services.
- Income and Expenditure for 2010 was €6.9m with MQI recording a surplus of €13k (as compared to a €38k deficit in 2009). Expenditure was €81k lower than 2009 due to the impact of cost reduction measures, this counter acted reductions of between 3% and 10% in state funding lines.
- In line with our Mission Statement and with a backdrop of reduced funding, MQI started new projects like the Leixlip Aftercare House, the Chapelizod Day Program and the Extended Day Service.
- MQI was awarded the contract for Prison Drug Counselling involving 21 staff in prisons across the country while also successfully implementing service level agreement contracts with our State and Voluntary Agencies.

### Cost Savings

MQI continued to implement cost saving measures on all expenditure lines in order to maximise value for money to clients and funders. These measures included the following areas:

- Linking key performance indicators to the cost of individual services to maximise the value to clients.
- Partnerships with business and other charities provided efficiencies in the provision of client services.
- Review of service contracts with tendering and reorganisation actioned to achieve cost savings.

### Outlook for 2011

Further state funding cuts coupled with increased demand for our services will make 2011 another challenging year. MQI has focused maximising the flexibility of our cost base in order to best adapt to changing client need and the availability of funding.

The success of our fundraising strategy has enabled the planned 2011 opening of our new Detox Centre in Tullow and also the new Riverbank Centre for Dublin day services in 2012. MQI will continue to develop new streams of income in line with emerging client need.

### Governance

MQI will continue to implement best practice taking into account recommendations from Industry, the statutory sector and our auditors. The Finance and Audit board sub committee met 3 times in 2010 in order to continue strong financial governance within MQI in line with best practice. Our auditors PWC reported directly into the Finance and Audit sub committee on the 2010 financial year in line with financial best practice.

### Fundraising

The support of those who donate to MQI is vital in the continuity of services to the poorest and most marginalised in our society. In 2010 MQI received €689k (10% of running costs) from fundraising.

## Income and Expenditure Account for MQI for the year ended Dec 31st 2010

	Total 2009	Total 2010	Difference
Income	6,953,064	6,914,399	-38,665
Expenditure	-6,986,265	-6,905,583	80,682
<b>Surplus (Deficit) for the year before interest</b>	-33,202	8,816	42,018
Interest received	-4,334	4,064	8,398
<b>Surplus (Deficit) for the year</b>	-37,536	12,880	50,416
Accumulated surplus at 1 January 2010	53,721	-129,034	-182,755
<b>Accumulated surplus at 31 December 2010</b>	-129,034	-116,154	12,880

## Merchants Quay Project Ltd. Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2010

	2010		2009	
	€	€	€	€
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Tangible Assets		89,203		108,418
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Debtors	611,895		314,485	
Cash at bank and in hand	914,685		554,878	
	<u>1,553,580</u>		<u>869,363</u>	
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	-1,419,211		-739,794	
Net Current Assets		<u>134,369</u>		<u>129,569</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		223,572		237,987
Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)		-209,481		-219,061
Net assets excluding pensions liability		14,091		18,926
Net Pension liability		-125,715		-138,651
Net liability including pension liability		<u>-111,624</u>		<u>-119,725</u>
Represented by: accumulated (deficit)/surplus		<u>-111,624</u>		<u>-119,725</u>

## Franciscan Social Justice Initiative Ltd. Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2010

	2010		2009	
	€	€	€	€
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Tangible Assets		37,459		93,933
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Debtors	609		184	
Cash at bank and in hand	440,073		232,693	
	<u>440,682</u>		<u>232,877</u>	
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)		<u>-437,790</u>		<u>-242,613</u>
Net Current Assets		<u>2,892</u>		<u>-9,736</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>40,351</u>		<u>84,197</u>
Deferred Grants (Capital Grants)		-44,882		-93,506
Deferred Grants (Revenue Grants)				
Deficiency of Assets		<u>-4,531</u>		<u>-9,309</u>
Capital and reserves				
Income and expenditure account		<u>-4,531</u>		<u>-9,309</u>
Total reserves		<u>-4,531</u>		<u>-9,309</u>

# Making a difference

T: 01 524 0160

F: 01 5240946

E: [INFO@MQI.IE](mailto:INFO@MQI.IE)

[WWW.MQI.IE](http://WWW.MQI.IE)

## **Merchants Quay Ireland**

**Homeless & Drugs Services**

PO Box 11958

Dublin 8

Location: Merchants Quay Ireland,  
28 Winetavern Street, Dublin 8

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