

DEPAUL

Homelessness has no place

BREAKING THE HOMELESSNESS CYCLE – BUILDING BETTER FUTURES

Impact Report 2024

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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. It was a bittersweet year for Depaul in Ireland. Throughout 2024, we gained a renewed sense of purpose and vigour with the launch of our new Strategic Plan, Leading the Way Home, which heralded an intention of strengthening our voice as an organisation committed to constructive and lasting change to end homelessness globally.

However, the depressing fact that homelessness and housing stress continues to grow is something that cannot be ignored. It is unacceptable that throughout 2024 homelessness numbers continued to climb month on month – passing a record high of 15,000 by year end – including thousands of children in temporary accommodation across the region and thousands of children stuck in direct provision.

A new government was established and we welcomed the increased social housing targets. The cost of living crisis certainly fuelled increased housing stress and homelessness making it increasingly difficult for NGOs to fulfil their mission in a time of increasing demand. However, we are so grateful to the general public who continued to donate substantial and vital funds to Depaul in 2024. Without them we would be unable to operate our services in the manner which we do, reaching those with the greatest complexities.

In 2024, we continued to play a critical national role in the delivery of our service to those most vulnerable, serving almost 10,000 individuals and families across the island of Ireland. It was a year of many achievements but we were particularly proud that we expanded our innovative Homeless Health Peer Advocacy service, which is funded by the HSE, to Cork City. 2024 also saw the establishment of our Trafficked Women's accommodation programme funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, which is the first of its kind and the establishment of a family hub in Westport serving women and children with complex needs emerging from Direct Provision.

I would like to thank all our employees and volunteers – their professionalism and passion continues to be the driving force for our organisation, enabling us to change and save lives every day. 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.

I would also like to commend and thank our Chief Executive, David Carroll, and our executive and senior leadership group for their professional dedication to our work. Continued public trust is critical for the delivery of our mission and I would like to thank our Board of Trustees for their skills and professionalism, allowing us to meet the highest governance and financial standards.

And finally, I would like to sincerely thank our range of statutory funders, grant making bodies, businesses and the general public for their continued support throughout the year, without whom we would not be able to do our valuable and critical work.

John Murphy
Chairperson of the Depaul Board of Trustees



A WORD FROM OUR CEO

As we reflect on 2024, what remains most important – and most urgent – is our unwavering commitment to serve people who are too often excluded, overlooked, and left without the support they need to change their lives for the better. At Depaul, we believe that homelessness has no place in our society. It is not inevitable. It is not acceptable. And together, we are determined to play our part in bringing it to an end.

This year has brought significant challenges, but it has also been a year of real progress. Despite operating in an increasingly complex and pressurised environment, Depaul has continued to deliver critical, life-changing services to those most in need – supporting almost 10,000 people across our services. Guided by our Vision, Mission and Values, and firmly anchored in our strategic plan, **Leading the Way Home**, we've remained focused, resilient, and ambitious in our response.

We are proud of what we've achieved in 2024. Our work continues to be underpinned by the highest standards of governance, management, and service delivery. These foundations are essential as we respond to increasing levels of need and as we develop new and innovative ways to support people experiencing homelessness and move them out of homelessness. In fact, in 2024 we moved more than 1,000 service users out of homelessness and into suitable long-

term accommodation, which was a marked increase on 2023, something we are very proud of.

And yet, we cannot ignore the reality we see every day: the scale and severity of homelessness across the island of Ireland. As a charity which operates in both Northern Ireland and the Republic we are afforded a unique insight into the challenges brought about by housing stress and homelessness on both sides of the border. The record numbers reported throughout the year have been disheartening, but they also strengthen our resolve. We continue to call for a radical and coordinated response to address the root causes of homelessness, and to provide real, sustainable pathways out of it.

In 2024, we saw unprecedented demand across our 42 services. Our waiting lists continued to grow, and the needs of the people we support became increasingly complex. Mental health challenges, addiction,

trauma, and social isolation are all too common among those we work with. The connection between homelessness and poor mental health is undeniable—and yet, the systems designed to support people remain fragmented, overstretched, and under-resourced.

In response, 2024 saw us take important steps to shine a light on these growing challenges. We commissioned key research to better understand the evolving needs of our service users, and we launched our Headstrong initiative — an ambitious programme designed to improve access to mental health and addiction support for people experiencing homelessness. We believe this initiative has the potential to be transformative, and we look forward to growing and developing it further in the coming years. We also continued to try to meet our service users where and how they needed us to and this is evidenced in the 25% increase in key worker sessions we saw in 2024.

Looking ahead, I remain deeply grateful to our Board and Committee members, our dedicated staff and volunteers, our funders, statutory and corporate partners, and all of our donors. Your belief in our work and your support for those we serve makes everything we do possible.

Together, we will continue to challenge the systems that allow homelessness to persist, and we will work relentlessly to ensure that every person has the opportunity to live with dignity, safety, and hope.

David Carroll
Chief Executive of Depaul

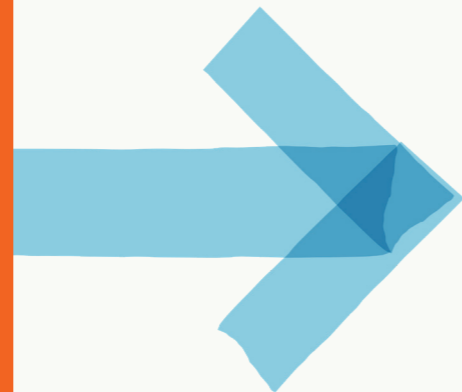
DEPAUL INTERNATIONAL

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.

Since 1989, the Depaul family has worked with over 510,200 people experiencing homelessness. We are spread far and wide and our 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 2024, 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 75,900 people in 2024, 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.



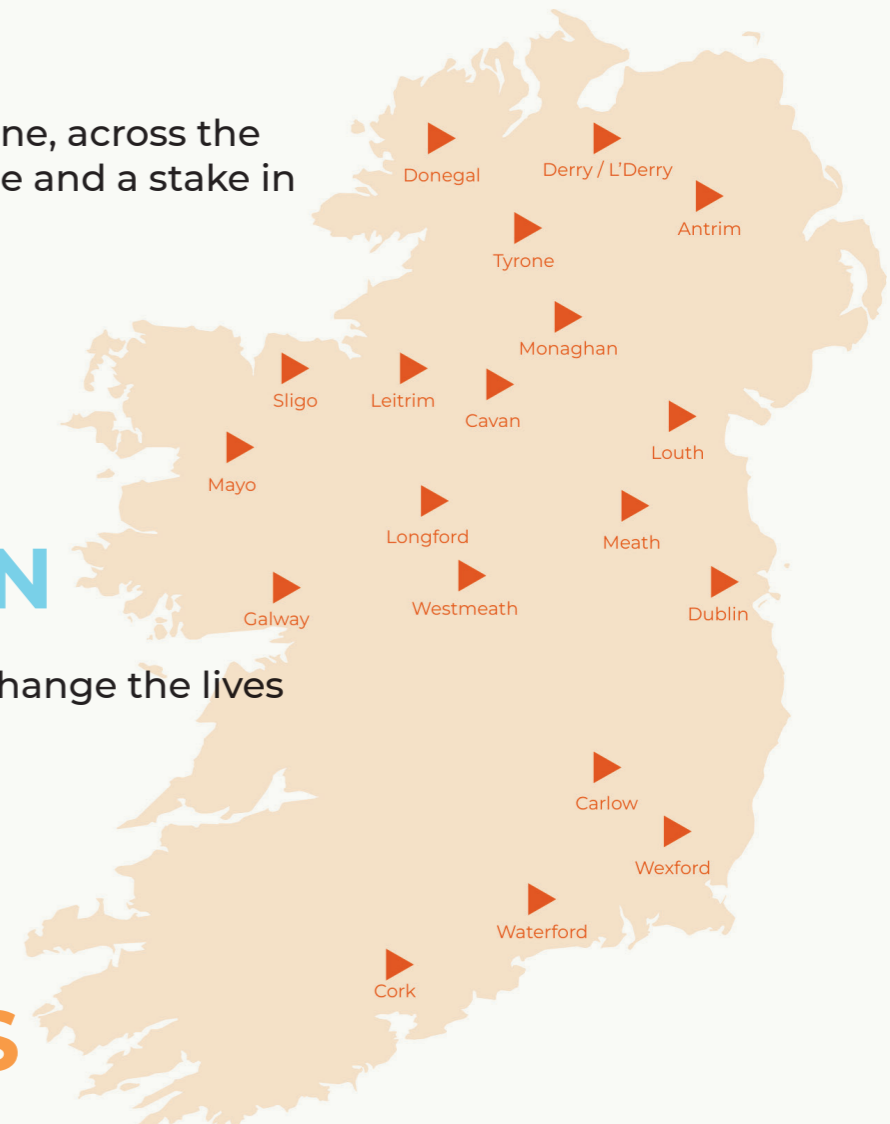
OUR MISSION

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.



2024 TIMELINE

JANUARY

Took over the Chair of Dublin Homeless Network



MARCH

Depaul hosts a welcome event for first batch of Graduates

MAY

HHPA Cork began



JULY

Depaul launches three year strategic plan



SEPTEMBER

PHA event NI - launched research looking at 10 years of PHA funding etc

NOVEMBER

Depaul wins island of Ireland grant from Citi Global Innovation Fund



FEBRUARY

Reports show 13,841 people, including 4,170 children homeless in ROI



An overview of homelessness and human trafficking in Dublin

APRIL

Depaul and Passage launch research report on human trafficking

JUNE

Implemented interim Housing-First services Meath

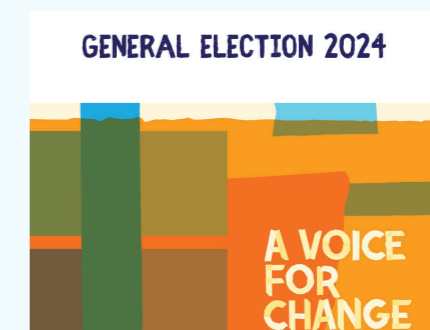


AUGUST

Opening of Augusta Lodge Mayo

OCTOBER

Depaul releases its Programme for Government



DECEMBER

Belfast Lord Mayor joins Depaul to raise vital funds

2024 IN NUMBERS

9,836
PEOPLE

7,412 adults and 2,424 children supported in 2024

231
VOLUNTEERS

dedicated over 20,000 hours to making a difference to the lives of our service users (155 - 2023, 17,000 hours)

706
SERVICE USERS

reported concerns or support needs related to their mental health. Including

42
SERVICES

1,012
SERVICE USERS

moved out of homelessness and into suitable long-term accommodation, a 39% increase from 2023 (726 - 2023)

1,366
FAMILIES

helped through Depaul's services

257

incidences of suicidal ideation reported and

799
BED SPACES

50,257

KEYWORKING SESSIONS

were carried out, a 25% increase from 2023

16
BABIES

were born in Depaul services

135

of self-harm.

BREAKING THE HOMELESSNESS CYCLE - BUILDING BETTER FUTURES

In 2024, homelessness level records were broken again and again. 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.

Our 2024–2026 strategic plan, Leading the Way Home, kicked off this year. Grounded in our vision, mission and values, this strategy reaffirms our commitment to a trauma-informed, housing-led and low-threshold approach to the delivery of our services. Above all, the needs and voices of our service users remain at the heart of our service provision.

In 2024, Depaul supported a total of **9,836 services users** – including 7,412 adults and 2,424 children – in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. These figures include individuals and families living in Direct Provision who we support through our Cosán Nua service and who are not included in the government’s homelessness figures.

We **helped 1,012 people move out of homelessness** and into suitable long-term accommodation, a 39% increase from 2023. This is especially impressive against the current and ongoing housing crisis, which has impacted the availability of affordable move-on housing options.

A tremendous **50,257 keyworking sessions** took place across all our services in 2024, a 25% increase compared to 2023. For another 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.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT: KEYWORKING SESSIONS WITH JIM SPERIN, DEPUTY MANAGER

I have keyworked in the rain and in hospital waiting rooms. I once keyworked in a toilet in a wet shelter for long-term street drinkers. Keyworking can be formal or informal, on the stairs, or over a cup of tea, with a file and a bunch of unsigned paperwork under your arm.

My favourite keyworking session was with a long-term rough sleeper who had entrenched alcohol issues. We spent the day in the National Gallery looking at Picassos and Rembrandts. By the end of the day, he had agreed to attend his first residential alcohol detox unit. He is now a manager in a homeless charity with a passion for literature and the poetry of Dylan Thomas.

So what is keyworking and why do we do it? Simply put, every person who comes to Depaul is assigned a keyworker, they could be a case manager, a project worker or a support worker. We believe passionately in the potential of all who come through our doors and that’s part of the magic of every keyworking session.

To be in the room alongside someone with years of homelessness behind them or alongside a family where homelessness could be just around the corner is a massive responsibility. It takes courage, compassion and commitment on all sides.

Keyworking sessions are where the hard work starts, where the hard questions are asked and where magic can happen. Relationships are built and trust regained, housing forms and medical card applications are filled out, support plans are drawn up. In a keyworking session, futures begin to take shape.

Last year, across the island of Ireland, our staff carried out over 50,000 keyworking sessions in various rooms and hallways over countless cups of tea and digestive biscuits. There were over 50,000 moments of magic, hope and the beginnings of belief. There were over 50,000 opportunities to change the lives of those affected by homelessness.

DEEPENING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF COMPLEX NEEDS

Depaul continued to strengthen its voice in 2024 by partnering with Mental Health Reform and commissioning an urgently-needed and independent assessment of mental health needs and services available for people experiencing homelessness in Ireland.

While 1 in 5 people in Ireland experience mental health difficulties, the situation is far worse for those experiencing homelessness. Within Depaul's services, 36.9% of service users (2018–2023) reported enduring mental health difficulties requiring intervention, nearly twice the national rate and more than likely massively underestimated, as government homelessness data excludes many people living in precarious situations, such as those couch-surfing or living in direct provision.

The gap in mental health care for those experiencing homelessness is particularly alarming. Only 4.2% of Depaul service users have access to a psychiatric nurse, and just 9.4% can see a counsellor. Additionally, 88% of service providers say staff shortages and long waiting lists are major barriers to care. Without timely intervention, mental health conditions worsen, pushing individuals toward crisis situations that require hospitalisation or emergency interventions – resources that are already overstretched and insufficient to meet demand.

With not enough mental health professionals available, Depaul's frontline staff – who are not medically trained – are forced to provide

stopgap mental health support in an already overstretched system.

In 2024, across the island of Ireland, Depaul staff supported **706 service users with mental health concerns**. In that year, we had **135 incidences of self harm** and **257 incidences of suicidal ideation**.

“ Homelessness and mental health issues are deeply connected, yet the services designed to support people are fragmented and under-resourced. People experiencing homelessness often face multiple layers of vulnerability. Without access to suitable mental health care, their challenges are exacerbated.”

- David Carroll, CEO of Depaul

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: MAIA - HEADSTRONG TEAM

I chose to work for Depaul on a whim - but one that I am so grateful that I followed. I was working in healthcare and worked with primarily geriatrics. I saw a post for a healthcare assistant in the shielding units at the time and thought why not. Depaul's values were set out and structured, four main points with service users being the main focus and at the heart of everything. This immediately felt aligned with my own feelings and views. I believe it is important to try to help others to see how they might be able to live better lives in our society rather than scolding them for living under the intense stress of addiction and trauma.

Once I started in the shielding units I knew this line of work was for me. I was surprised by how informally, but professionally everyone worked together. Between managers to the staff, the staff to service user's, down to ancillary. The teams I worked with were inclusive, professional and happy to lend a hand when needed. There is a specific aura in the services when there is a strong team working together in a good flow, that's all I have known in my time in Depaul.

The work I am doing is important for everyone in Depaul, not just service

users. It is important for project workers, Case workers and support workers to feel like there is support in Depaul that they can rely on when it comes to Mental Health. A case load in residential services can be heavy and busy, it is important the topic of Mental Health is addressed as singularly and effectively as possible. Mental health issues are not going away, as long as people are homeless they will suffer in one form or another.

We are aiming to create safe spaces by hosting information workshops in services, activities that suit everyone, and engaging in one to one work with clients who send in a referral for our services. It is rewarding when a service user tells you they feel better after a chat, it won't heal everything but it's making the load they bear that bit lighter. It's important for service users to feel they can confide in and trust mental health staff, if they can be open enough to trust us, this will hopefully allow them to be forthcoming and engaging with external services down the road. Getting to see a client that has been having a hard time turning it around and finding the positivity in life again, presenting well and being engaging in services is a very strong reason to do what I do.

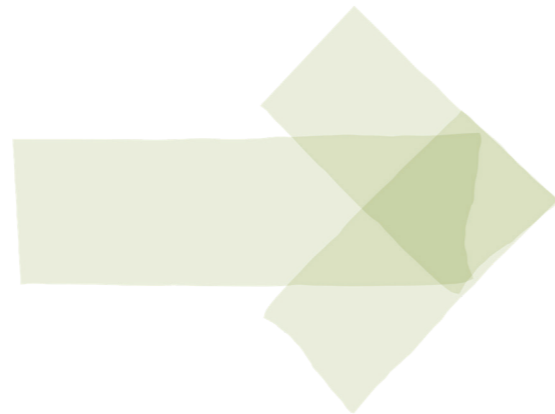
HEADSTRONG: DEPAUL'S MENTAL HEALTH FRAMEWORK

In response to the increasingly complex needs of our service users and backed up by research carried out in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, in 2024, Depaul brought all of its mental health supports under one framework: Headstrong. Grounded in our unwavering commitment to our service users and a fierce belief in their potential, Headstrong has allowed us to more effectively and meaningfully support our service users with complex needs. It also gives us the opportunity to see what's working and develop our mental health support plans consistently across all of our services.

In 2024, we recruited our first Specialist Mental Health Support Worker in our Back Lane accommodation service, giving us the ability to provide dedicated mental health support, interventions and activities. Throughout the year, this role worked with **20 service users** and delivered **208 interventions**. These interventions included formal and informal keyworking sessions, facilitating access to mental health services like psychiatrists, addiction support, mental health and wellbeing support, self-care advice, social interaction and activities, and interventions to help service users maintain and sustain their tenancies.

We also have Mental Health Case Workers providing support across our Dublin services, as well as in Sligo, Donegal, Louth and Monaghan. These case workers support our service users with assessments and onward referrals to specific mental health supports, as well as providing brief interventions and group activities in services.

In partnership with St James' Inclusion Health Team, we established and developed our outreach Mental Health Support Team for Dublin services. Kicking off in 2025, this team will provide dedicated support to our services, creating improved support plans for people with mental health concerns, improving retention within services – thereby reducing the need for reassessment and redrafting of support plans in multiple services – and improving onward links with mainstream mental health services.



CASE STUDY: HEADSTRONG IN ACTION

Joseph* has chronic mental illness exacerbated by a dual diagnosis. He was discharged from inpatient admission to Back Lane after a two-month stay. Our Specialist Mental Health Support Worker met with him regularly on his return. Working in conjunction with Depaul's Clinical Nurse Manager and an inreach GP service, our Specialist Mental Health Support Worker developed a detailed and tailored support plan as well as a safety and wellbeing plan, ensuring that staff in the service were aware of any signs of Joseph's mental health deteriorating.

Joseph's support plan relied on the involvement and collaboration of the community-based mental health team who were able to provide early

intervention, such as medication adjustments which helped to avoid hospital admissions and keep Joseph as well as possible. It also included an education piece for staff in the service about how to manage Joseph's illness, emphasising the importance of any hospital stays being as short as possible and with a clear pathway back to his placement.

Joseph is doing really well now. He is managing his mental health much better with the adjusted medications, self-advocating around his treatment and working well with the staff team in the service.

**Names have been changed to protect service users' privacy.*

ROSA'S PLACE: INNOVATION, ACTION AND COMPASSION

In partnership with The Passage, Depaul launched ground-breaking research in 2024 that shows a resounding link between homelessness and victims of human trafficking in Ireland.

The report called on politicians to involve homelessness organisations in the introduction of the National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking. It also suggested developing specialist accommodation options for victims of human trafficking that are safe, suitable and trauma informed.

In response to these findings, Depaul piloted a specialised unit capable of responding to the needs of survivors of sexual exploitation. In 2024, we marked the first year of full operation of Rosa's Place, Ireland's first-ever dedicated service for women who have experienced trafficking. Our team works closely with partner organisations and statutory agencies, including the HSE Anti-Human Trafficking Team, An Garda Síochána, Ruhama, and legal services, to deliver wraparound support, with a strong emphasis on psychological safety, case management, and restoring autonomy.

Throughout 2024, Rosa's Place has had a profoundly positive impact on the women it supports. The safe, calm, gender-specific, and trauma-informed environment offers a crucial space for recovery after the trauma of exploitation and trafficking. Residents consistently report feeling respected, heard,

and empowered – often for the first time in years. The consistency of care and strong advocacy by staff help our service users to rebuild trust, self-worth, and hope. Many women have made significant progress during their time in the service, from stabilising mental and physical health to pursuing education and employment.

Some of the most powerful moments in 2024 were when several women chose to disclose their trafficking experiences to An Garda Síochána. For many, this step came after weeks and months of building trust, feeling safe, and having their voices heard without judgment. Rosa's Place provided that calm, trauma-informed environment these women needed to begin processing what they had been through. Staff supported women through the emotional process of disclosure and, when appropriate, helped them engage with the Garda National Protective Services Bureau. These moments were not just about seeking justice, they were about the women in our care reclaiming agency, breaking their silence, and beginning to heal. The courage shown by the women in taking this step speaks volumes about the impact of the service.

SERVICE USER SPOTLIGHT: SOPHIE'S* STORY

When I came to Rosa's Place, I was completely lost. Rosa's Place has given me the strength to understand what happened to me and begin processing it. It's been a journey – over the last few months I have been so grateful to have been placed here. The staff have been fantastic, they have checked on me, looked out for me and hugely supported me. Everyone takes action and makes sure that everything I need is prioritised. I can't express how important that has been to my healing.

I came to the staff one day about how I was feeling. I was totally overwhelmed, scared and I could hardly leave the room. They listened to me and knew straight away that I was anxious. They were able to teach me about anxiety and told me how the GP could help me. Because of that, and because of how calm and normal the staff were about it, I could go to the doctor and that has changed everything for me.

I feel like a new person. What can I say, it's just a lovely, lovely service and everyone is treated fairly and with kindness. They don't pick sides and they let everyone have their say, it looks like a hard job but they don't make it seem like a job. They do it because they really want to help us.

Recently, someone recognised me from before I moved to Rosa's Place. They couldn't believe I was the same person. I didn't speak before, I was so depressed and scared. And now, this woman sees me laughing and speaking out. That's how much Rosa's Place has done for me, I feel like the person I have always meant to be.

**Names have been changed to protect service users' privacy.*

DEPAUL HOUSING - HOUSING-LED SOLUTIONS

With record numbers of people already accessing emergency accommodation in 2024, the important role of housing provision in eradicating and preventing homelessness was once again highlighted. Throughout the year, over 16,500 notices to quit were received by the Residential Tenancies Board. Over 55% of those notices were because the landlord wanted to sell the property.

In 2024, Irish homes increased in price at almost double the rate of 2023, while the stock of homes available slumped to a historic low. 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.

We firmly believe that we can transform lives through our housing-led work and it is a key part of our service philosophy. We want to develop all our services with the specific objective of providing housing solutions and long-term housing options for those experiencing homelessness and for supporting people within housing.

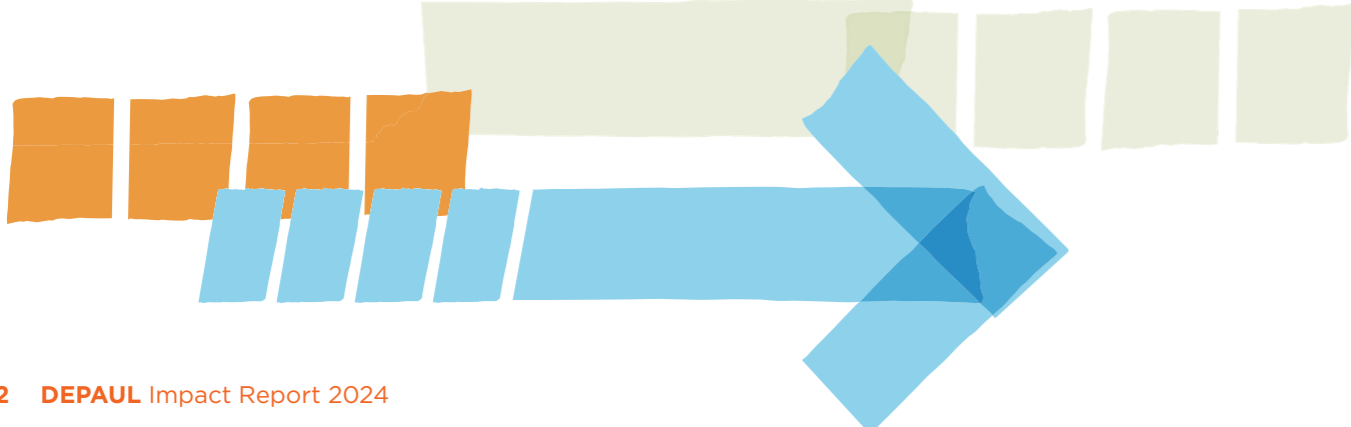
Depaul Housing Association plays a crucial role in delivering housing-led solutions.

It operates as a housing provider working with those who have the greatest and most complex needs. In 2024, Depaul Housing acquired 25 new properties, including our first properties in Cork.

By the end of 2024, Depaul Housing was providing housing in its own properties for 51 individuals and families and had another 16 units undergoing work to make them tenant ready.

Depaul Housing also manages properties around the country which can accommodate 31 individuals and families under lease and other service contract arrangements for Government agencies.

Amidst the challenging landscape of housing provision in Ireland, we are incredibly proud of what has been achieved in the last 12 months. We know that through our housing-led work we can reach more people and help them on their journey out of homelessness.



SERVICE USER SPOTLIGHT: JAMES'S* STORY

I've been homeless for many years. I struggled with addiction and mental health. I had a cycle of addiction for over 20 years. I got clean through a treatment centre. Then I linked in with Housing-First, who got me in contact with Depaul. I'm now 3 years clean from all substances. I'm running marathons. I do local fellowship meetings. I have a beautiful son, a loving partner and I'm a million miles away from where I used to be in addiction. I'm so grateful to Depaul Housing for what they've done for me and for giving me my forever home.

**Names have been changed to protect service users' privacy.*

BUILDING RESILIENCE AND HOPE THROUGH HEALTH AND REHABILITATION

At Depaul, everything we do is about ensuring our service users have the support and resources they need. We are a leader and innovator in our approach to service delivery. Depaul provides vital onsite healthcare supports while working closely with other agencies to ensure those experiencing homelessness have access to the healthcare they require. Some of our specialist services focus on those who are emerging from recovery-based programmes.

Suaimhneas is a female-only service which provides beds for up to 6 women who have completed a residential drug treatment programme and have a minimum period of 8 – 10 weeks drug - and alcohol - free. Within the service, days are very structured for the residents. The women are engaged in full-time therapeutic day programmes during the week and while the weekend is also structured, there is time for residents to relax and have meaningful use of their free time.

We use **trauma-informed care** practices which help our teams to engage with service users more effectively, offering the potential to improve the likelihood of positive outcomes. 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.

One of the biggest challenges for this service in 2024 was the lack of recovery-based accommodation for service users when their time in Suaimhneas was coming to an end. We provided extensions to these service users, but it meant we didn't have space to take new referrals from treatment centres. There was also a challenge for service users who don't have local recovery services when they leave Suaimhneas. This has a huge impact on service users' ability to continue their own recovery journeys.

In 2024, 15 women were provided a safe, supportive environment to live in.



SERVICE USER SPOTLIGHT: AMY'S* STORY

When I first arrived in Suaimhneas in August of 2024, I was a broken person. I had little trust in people, no trust in myself. I could not assert myself. I isolated myself and was wary of people. I had completed a treatment centre, was homeless, had distant and strained relationships with my family. For the first time, I was trying to navigate life without a substance in my body.

Everything was new – living with other women, beginning to trust other women, learning about boundaries, being respectful of others, having responsibility and accountability.

Over the past 10 months, Suaimhneas has been vital to my life in recovery. I completed a full-time day programme, pushed

my comfort zone, participated in a panto and now a play. I have been working with a counsellor. Suaimhneas staff have been available to me and allowed me to express myself.

In Suaimhneas, I have found my voice, my confidence, and grown as a woman who is now responsible, accountable, compassionate, respectful and aware. Suaimhneas has helped me to put in place healthy boundaries with family and friends. I credit Suaimhneas for helping me become the woman I, as a child, wished to become – a woman I admire and respect.

**Names have been changed to protect service users' privacy.*



HHPA - TAKING A LEAD FROM PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

Taking a lead from the lived experience of those we serve is at the heart of finding workable and lasting solutions to the complex challenges faced by people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Through our peer-led programmes, we constantly see the transformative impact that peers with lived experience of homelessness have on our service users.

Depaul's Homeless Health Peer Advocacy Programme (HHPA) was first established across our Dublin services in 2019. This programme trains and supports people who have experienced homelessness to provide assistance to homeless people who are attempting to navigate and access healthcare services.

Our Peer Advocates bring invaluable first-hand knowledge of homelessness, creating a unique and empathetic support system that resonates with those they assist. Our Peer Advocates work to empower our service users to access and engage with crucial healthcare services, and ultimately to advocate for themselves and become more independent.

In 2024, as a result of additional funding, we expanded our HHPA programme into our Cork and Derry services, in response to a growing number of service users missing appointments and the urgent need to help people experiencing homelessness re-engage with healthcare and access support for attending appointments.

In 2024, 362 hospital appointments were supported through the HHPA programme, over double the amount supported in 2023.

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.

Another important aspect of the HHPA is the development of our Peer Advocates. Through the HHPA, Peer Advocates are provided with tailored learning and training opportunities and meaningful employment experience. Through their participation in the programme, Peer Advocates are encouraged, supported and upskilled to develop confidence and essential knowledge.

Each Peer Advocate has a learning and training journey that is tailored to meet their individual needs. For some, computer literacy or confidence may be early areas of focus,

as this may be their first professional role or re-entry to the workplace after a long leave. This tailored aspect ensures all participants engage in regular development, but no one is left behind.

“ When I used to be talking to doctors and counsellors and people like that, I'd always kind of smile and nod because I just wouldn't understand. But now, because of the chats we have, I feel kind of entitled to question them if I can't understand. So like my confidence alone seems like it's improved. And my health - sure that goes without saying. I even rang the dentist last week to check in cause I couldn't remember an appointment I had. Usually I'd just let staff do all that.”

- HHPA Service User

MIGRANT SERVICES - PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

Depaul strongly believes that new communities are welcome and should be integrated into our society. In partnership with the Department of Justice, our Cosán Nua inter-county service has provided support to people living in Direct Provision since 2019. Spread throughout the East and West of Ireland, our work covers 220 Direct Provision centres across 15 counties.

Cosán Nua provides comprehensive case management support. Through this service, we have continued to help prevent homelessness and support people in their search for suitable homes, their desire to establish roots in their new communities, and their need to access education, training, employment and health services.

In 2024, we engaged with 2,098 households, and supported 672 households moving out of IPAS accommodation.

Our aim is to provide support for migrants and appropriate accommodation at what is an incredibly difficult time for them. As a charity working to support migrants experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, we continued to be deeply concerned about the reliance on Private Emergency Accommodation (PEA), which we saw in 2024. We have seen first hand that these can be substandard, unsuitable

accommodation, where those placed are often isolated and see little by way of wraparound support.

In 2024, we opened our first supported accommodation service for International Protection Applicants. **This service now provides a safe home for 10 mothers and their 17 children.** All families who are seeking International Protection are processing the traumatic circumstances that caused them to flee their homes. Our trauma-informed approach ensures that the safety and healing of these vulnerable families are prioritised throughout their time in our service.

SERVICE USER SPOTLIGHT: BAHATI'S* STORY

"I was warmly welcomed here and was moved to a reception centre in Dublin where I stayed for more than 2 years.

One of the organisations that came through to help was Depaul. After I received my refugee status, I was introduced to Depaul for housing assistance. They helped me to fill the housing forms and guided me through the process. They then helped me to apply for housing. Depaul staff walked me through the journey.

I was given a notice to leave the service to open space for others.

My case worker played a crucial role in supporting me through this process. Through this help, I managed to get a room. Depaul followed me through, they gave me a gift voucher to buy a few things that will help in my new environment.

The journey has been difficult but finding the organisations like Depaul and many others who went all the way to help us settle in a new home was phenomenal."

**Names have been changed to protect service users' privacy.*

FOYLE HAVEN: 10 YEARS OF LOW THRESHOLD HARM REDUCTION

Depaul's commitment to putting service users at the heart of our work has yielded transformative results, both for the individuals we serve and the wider community.

In 2024, Depaul released the findings of independent research commissioned to evaluate the impact that Low Threshold Harm Reduction Services have had on service users over a ten-year period. Depaul's Foyle Haven Day Centre in Derry/L'Derry was evaluated as part of this research. We worked alongside Arc Solace and First Housing, with funding from the Public Health Agency (PHA).

Foyle Haven is a vital Low Threshold Harm Reduction Service in the Northwest, operating as a central communal hub that provides comprehensive, person-centred, and holistic support to some of the most marginalised individuals in society. It offers a "home from home" environment, where service users can spend a significant portion of their week, engaging in social activities, enjoying hot, nutritious meals, accessing showering facilities, and benefiting from a "damp policy" that supports harm reduction without requiring abstinence. This approach is crucial for building trust and enabling engagement, particularly for individuals not ready or able to commit to formal treatment.

Foyle Haven has a profoundly lifesaving and life-changing impact on its service users.

Our brilliant staff are experts in administering Naloxone, acting as a first response that has directly saved lives in the community.

Beyond immediate crisis intervention, the service significantly contributes to service users' overall wellbeing. **Survey findings indicate that 79% of respondents noticed improvements in their physical health and 84% in their mental health since engaging with the service.** This is achieved through a diverse range of support, including health hubs providing access to medical screenings and treatments, needle exchange programmes, counselling, and recreational activities that offer hope and reduce social isolation.

A core strength of Foyle Haven lies in its dedicated, professional, and compassionate workforce. Staff cultivate meaningful, trusting relationships with service users, built on pillars of relatability, equality, lack of judgement, genuine care, and "forever support", extending assistance for as long as needed without a deadline. This unique dynamic allows staff to address complex needs effectively, often filling critical gaps where statutory services fall short, particularly for those who may not meet specific criteria or have burned bridges with other support systems. The evaluation of Foyle Haven's interventions showed evidence that the previously chaotic lives of service users could be managed more effectively with purpose, enhanced esteem and self-respect.

In 2024 alone, Foyle Haven supported 141 unique service users, provided 7,807 meals and there were over 12,451 visits to the centre.

“The staff here are brilliant the way they work with us and the services they provide. They are very professional and have given me the best care I have ever received anywhere.”

- Foyle Haven Service User

HOUSING-FIRST EXPANSION - PRIORITISING A SAFE AND SECURE HOME

Housing-First was established in Northern Ireland April 2013 as a support service, when it was identified that there were huge difficulties in finding move-on accommodation for the people ready to leave Depaul's high support accommodation services and move into the community to their own home. Depaul advocates strongly for a Housing-First approach for addressing homelessness which prioritises providing people experiencing homelessness with immediate access to permanent housing, without preconditions like sobriety, employment, or participation in treatment programs.

Since the Housing-First launch in 2013 Depaul has worked with more than 220 unique individuals across the island of Ireland, including 64 in 2024 who were experiencing chronic homelessness and possessed multiple complex needs. After a successful pilot period in Belfast, Housing-First was adopted into Depaul's mainstream work in 2014 - opening next in Londonderry/Derry. Since then it has continued to grow and in 2024, Depaul expanded its Housing-First offering in ROI by implementing interim Housing-First services in Meath in June and later in Dublin.

In 2024, Housing-First worked with 64 unique individuals across the island of Ireland.

Building upon the principle that housing is a human right, the Housing-First model focuses on first giving someone experiencing chronic homelessness immediate access to a settled and secure home in the community. Very often these individuals are deemed as unable to live independently and maintain their own home. However through partnerships with the person themselves and other support services, using the Housing-First case coordination model, tenancy sustainment is possible for many of the individuals referred

to Depaul. After placement Depaul uses a wrap-around, case co-ordinated approach to ensure service users have the dedicated and tailored support they need, which contributes to our service users' ability to sustain their tenancies, live independently and maintain their own home.

However, there is always more Depaul wants to do to enable its service users to reach their full potential. Due to their complex needs, previous trauma and chronic homelessness, many service users have missed opportunities to learn important life skills. On top of this, adjustment in a new and unfamiliar area can take time - and support. This is where one on one caseworker support can make all the difference. Throughout 2024, our Housing-First teams worked hard to identify, and assess what further support could include: life-skills, dealing with anti-social behaviour, help with completing forms, money management, advocacy with other agencies including health professionals and many more. This wrap-around approach means that once accepted onto the service, each service user is allocated a caseworker who will be responsible for leading with and coordinating their case.

“ Without Housing-First, I don't think I would have maintained this home that I have been in for almost two years now.”

- Depaul Housing-First Service User

SERVICE USER SPOTLIGHT: MARGARET'S* STORY

Depaul's Housing-First service has been a lifeline for me. My struggles began with drug use and abusive relationships, which led to my children going into care and me becoming homeless. Over a number of years, I was moved between B&Bs, constantly unsettled, I lost contact with my youngest daughter, it was devastating and my addiction worsened.

After several overdoses, I got off heroin and was connected with Depaul through my probation officer. They supported me with appointments, encouraged me to engage with services, and helped me feel part of a community again - involving me in community activities at their service and events including a hairdresser, Halloween pumpkin carving, and general information related to everyday life skills.

With my support worker Tom by my side, attending social services meetings with me about my eldest daughter, helping me cope - things started to

improve. With his support, I made the decision to get clean and work toward being a mother to my daughter again. I've stayed clean and I've also completed courses in CBT, self-esteem, and anger management. My contact with my daughter has increased from fortnightly to weekly which is an incredibly important milestone for me.

Depaul has liaised with my support services to provide the NIHE with letters of support and my housing application has been reviewed and I'm now on the waiting list for a property where my daughter will be able to come and stay overnight in her own room. After seven years of moving around to various homeless support facilities we will have our own home and it's all thanks to the intervention, guidance and support of Depaul Housing-First, to whom I will forever be eternally grateful.

**Names have been changed to protect service users' privacy.*

AN GLÓR MÓR - 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 these 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 2024, we continued to support our council of service users: An Glór Mór. This council has direct links to senior leadership along with our Board of Trustees. Through this council, we make it easier for service users from across the island of Ireland to give their first-hand feedback to decision makers in our organisation. To make it as accessible as possible, everyone is given the opportunity to link in online, if they can't attend group meetings in person. We also make sure that any ideas from any service users are passed on for discussion, if they can't attend a meeting.

Through this council, we have gained invaluable insights from people with lived experience of homelessness about how we can develop and improve our services to more effectively address the challenges they're facing and the service gaps they're encountering.

In 2025, we have plans to develop a strategy for improved service user involvement within An Glór Mór. We want to create a structured,

inclusive, and representative system where service users have a stronger voice in decision-making. Once this strategy has been implemented, we hope to see increased engagement from service users, empowering them to take an active role in shaping the design, development and delivery of our services.



COMMITTEE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT WILLIAM, GLÓR MÓR COMMITTEE

I was asked by Depaul if I would like to attend the Glór Mór meetings. This is amazing as senior service managers and board members of Depaul attend these sessions to discuss what can be done to improve the help and the health of people in their services who are experiencing homelessness. So it's a nice opportunity to have our say and get involved.

We discuss everything from health matters to getting fruit every day with our meals. At these meetings it is made very clear to us that as the service users our opinion really matters - particularly on what we think

can be done to improve our lives while we are staying or using the Depaul services.

And it's not just our opinion, they also want our suggestions - and if they are feasible, Depaul makes them work. I have been going to these meetings from the beginning and have seen lots of things done. They are making sure that people accessing their services have things to improve their situation, like health, dental, mental health, and courses. Depaul does wonders with the little amount of funds that are available to them. Everyone I have asked says the same thing.

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.

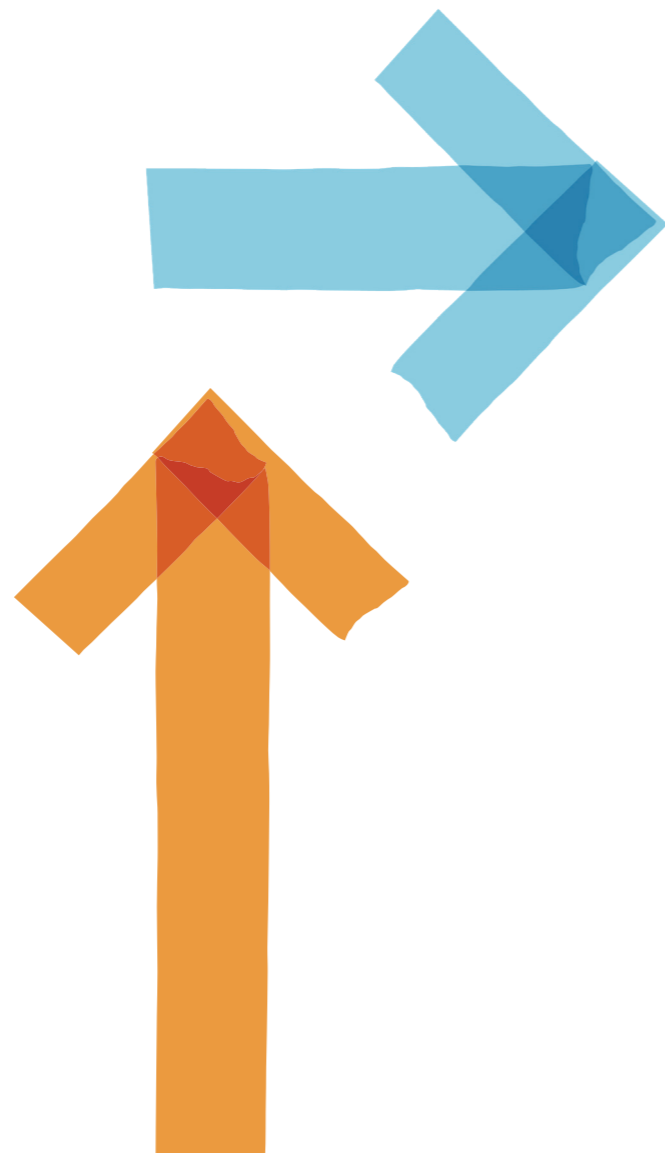
In 2024, a total of 231 individuals dedicated more than 20,000 hours to making a difference in the lives of our service users.

with organisational goals. Their work was instrumental in the department receiving the Investing in Volunteers Award in 2024, recognising excellence in volunteer management and engagement.

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's Volunteer department is responsible for managing a diverse and dynamic portfolio of volunteer initiatives across Ireland, overseeing recruitment, training, and support of part-time volunteers across a network of services and ensuring a positive and impactful volunteer experience aligned



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: FATMA'S STORY

My experience volunteering with Depaul Ireland has been mind-opening and transformative. My student placement gave me the chance to work with people that were homeless, and learn first-hand about the difficulties they go through and the important part that frontline services do to help them.

The fulfillment of assisting service users in their practical needs including housing support and job applications left a lasting impression on me during my professional experience. During my experience, I vividly remember assisting a non-English service user through their housing application process. We assisted them through the process even though language presented a challenge and they successfully filed the application on time. I deeply understood during those situations why patience combined with cultural humility and effective communication remain critical skills for social work.

Working in this field is challenging mainly because you're often dealing with crises while facing constant pressure. During a medical emergency, with critical thinking

and a fast response, I was able to assist staff in providing the best care for the service user before the emergency unit arrived. I have learned the essential skills of teamwork together with crisis-focused decision making and maintaining connections.

I received support from staff members through their mentorship along with their encouragement which helped my professional development and ongoing social services work.

Being placed with Depaul has allowed me to further learn about homelessness, social policy, and advocacy. In addition, more importantly, it has validated my zeal to make a concrete contribution in people's lives. I am so thankful for the skills, experiences and relationships I have gained on this journey so far and am looking forward to bringing these lessons into my future career as a social worker.

FULFILLING OUR PEOPLE'S POTENTIAL

Depaul's Learning and Development programmes support staff by providing the skills and information to help them excel within their role and strive for personal and professional development. From mandatory health & safety training to leadership development, as well as skills for supporting service users from all backgrounds, we endeavour to empower and encourage our staff to pursue learning opportunities, both formal and informal.

In 2024, we introduced a structured learning plan at the induction stage for all staff. These plans helped to improve induction paths, which are now tailored to specific roles, to better equip staff with essential knowledge and skills for success. As part of this, we reviewed mandatory training by role, ensuring good use of training time and customising training requirements based on responsibilities.

Our Depaul Building Blocks programme won Best Learning & Development Strategy in 2024. This is a blended learning initiative

that embeds Depaul's core values, enhances staff's skills, and improves service users' outcomes.

We also formally relaunched our Mentoring Programme in 2024. Both those new and experienced within their role and the organisation participated in the Programme, allowing participants the opportunity to develop themselves and get to know others within the organisation. The programme kicked off with a half-day workshop to give participants guidance on how to start their journey.

In 2024, we also recognised the hard work of our teams by calling out individual teams who went above and beyond - living Depaul's values in their every day work.

TEAM OF THE YEAR ROI:
Little Britain Street

STAFF MEMBER OF THE YEAR ROI:
Anita O'Neill

TEAM OF THE YEAR NI:
Stella Maris

STAFF MEMBER OF THE YEAR NI:
Patrick Convery

DEPAUL GRADUATE PROGRAMME: ADDRESSING SECTOR-WIDE CHALLENGES

Depaul's Graduate Programme aims to bring socially conscious talent into the charity sector and to build future leaders for the sector. Graduates are placed on the front lines of Depaul's services, actively contributing to our mission to end homelessness and change the lives of those affected by it. Throughout the Programme, graduates spend 12 months in Depaul's services, gaining valuable skills and experience while contributing innovative ideas to tackle homelessness and making a positive impact on the lives of marginalised individuals and families.

From Day 1, the young people on our Graduate Programme receive hands-on support to guide their professional growth in social care, helping them achieve their career aspirations. The Graduates receive ongoing training and professional development throughout their 12 months, while also working with an assigned mentor in their service.

After a successful pilot year, we received 293 applications for the 2024-2025 Programme, showing the interest and demand in this kind of innovative programme. Thanks to our graduates, line managers, mentors and the support of our funders, we are helping to build a sustainable future for the sector, while also ensuring more support is provided for Depaul's service users.

"I had the privilege of participating in the Graduate Programme, where I gained invaluable hands-on experience working within a homeless hostel. The programme allowed me to deepen my understanding of homelessness, develop practical skills in supporting vulnerable individuals, and build strong connections within the sector. Not only did this experience give me the confidence and knowledge I needed to secure my current role, but it also solidified my passion for the work. After completing the programme, I chose to stay with Depaul because of their unwavering commitment to supporting both the people we serve and their staff. The sense of community and the opportunity to continue growing within such a meaningful organisation were key factors in my decision to stay."

**- Roisin Meenan,
Graduate of the Depaul Graduate Programme**

DEPAUL'S STAFF TEAM

The team at Depaul is made up of **731 staff members – an increase of 11% compared to 2023**. 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 **231 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

Paul White,
Company Secretary
(appointed 1 October 2024)

Ursula Fernee
(appointed 5 February 2025)

Patrick Hopkins
(appointed 23 October 2024)

David Lane

Jennifer Lee

Mary Leonard

Fr. Joseph Loftus

Tim McKeown
(appointed 7 February 2024)

John Megahey

Sr. Margaret O'Donovan

Paul O'Malley

Joseph Wolfe
(appointed 17 July 2024)

Depaul Housing Association

Éamonn Conlon,
Chairperson

Patrick Grenham,
Treasurer

Laurence J. Tuomey,
Company Secretary

Miguel Fitzgerald

Mary McKeon

John Murphy

Marion St John

Executive Leadership Team

David Carroll,
Chief Executive Officer

Kevin Barrett,
Director of Finance and Risk

Siobhán McKenna,
**Director of Fundraising
and Communications**

Dermot Murphy,
Director of Services and Development

Sarah Reeves,
Director of People and Organisation

Ross O'Connor Kenny,
Director of Operations and Compliance

Auditors

Crowe Ireland 40 Mespil Road
Dublin 4, D04 C2N4

Solicitors

A&L Goodbody, IFSC, 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 Number: 357828

Belfast

449 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 3BJ
Charity Commission Registration No.
102995
HMRC Charitable Tax Ref. No. XR87991
Company Registration Number: 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 2024 - WELCOMING PARTNERS

2024 was a positive year for Depaul's fundraising, thanks to the generosity of our incredible supporters who believe in a future free from homelessness. We're grateful to each and every one of our supporters, from individuals and families to schools and community groups, 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 where we continued to see so many other global emergencies and a cost of living crisis being experienced by so many across the island of Ireland.

In 2024 we were grateful to see significant growth in donations from individuals across Northern Ireland, despite a challenging funding environment. We were also hugely grateful to welcome **several new key major grant partners such as the Citi Foundation, and the National Lottery Community Fund.** These partnerships were key to our growth and ability to fund new services. Our partnership with the Citi Foundation through the Global Innovation Fund - enabled Depaul to secure funding for the headstrong initiative in ROI and the Women Leaving Prison project in Northern Ireland. Our services were also greatly boosted by the support of the National Lottery Community Fund which funded our Sustainability Manager to explore options for

existing and new services.

Through fundraising Depaul was also able to support the growth and expansion of its Homeless Health Peer Advocacy Programme (HHPA). Both new and old - our incredible partners including Walls, A&L Goodbody, William Fry, and Ecclesiastical to name but a few, helped us on our mission to really make a difference in the lives of those experiencing homelessness across the island of Ireland.

Throughout 2024, Depaul also continued to grow its community fundraising effort with participation at festivals including All Together Now and Forbidden Fruit - raising vital funds and helping considerably to raise awareness of Depaul's mission and the extent of the homelessness crisis in Ireland. We also continued to work on increasing 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.

Our Statutory Funding Partners

Depaul is grateful to all of our statutory partners; the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive, local authorities across the country including in Cork, Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Longford, and Kildare, 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. Since October 2021, when obligatory reporting commenced, Depaul Trustees have reviewed our adherence to the ROI Charities Regulator Governance Code annually and submit a report confirming our compliance each year. We are also compliant with the Code of Good Governance NI.

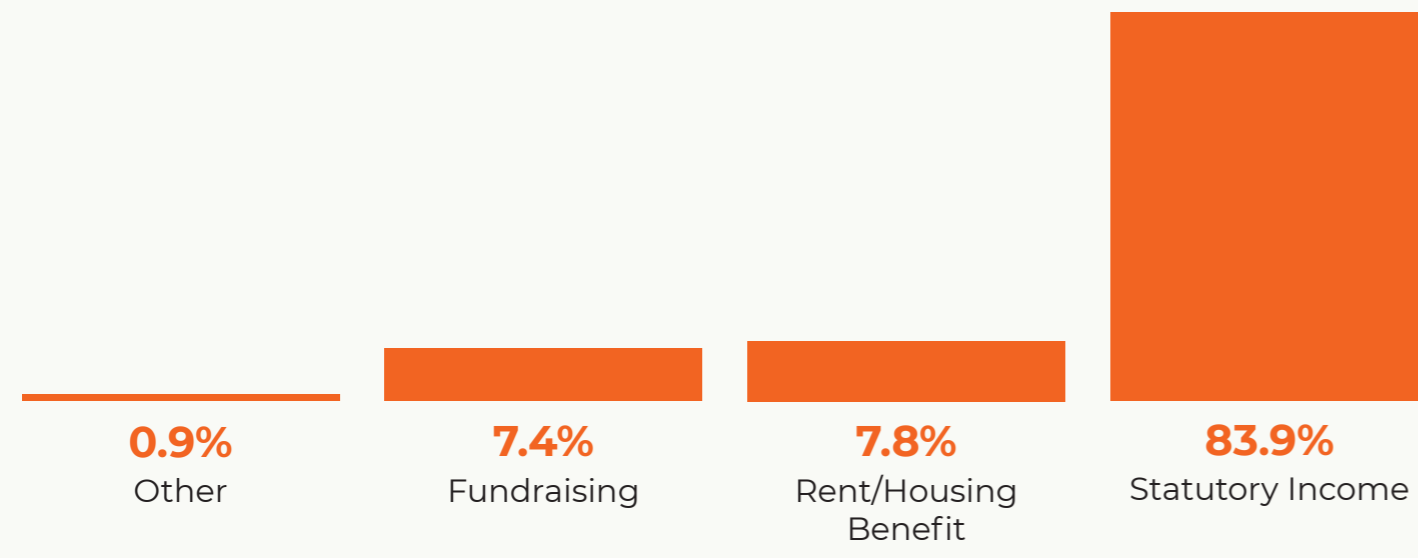
Depaul adheres to the Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public and the UK Code of Fundraising Practice. We are registered with the Charities Regulator in Ireland as well as the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

In 2025, we will add a new Executive function – Operations and Compliance – to our organisation which will ensure that, as we grow, we continue to pursue the highest standards of oversight and governance.

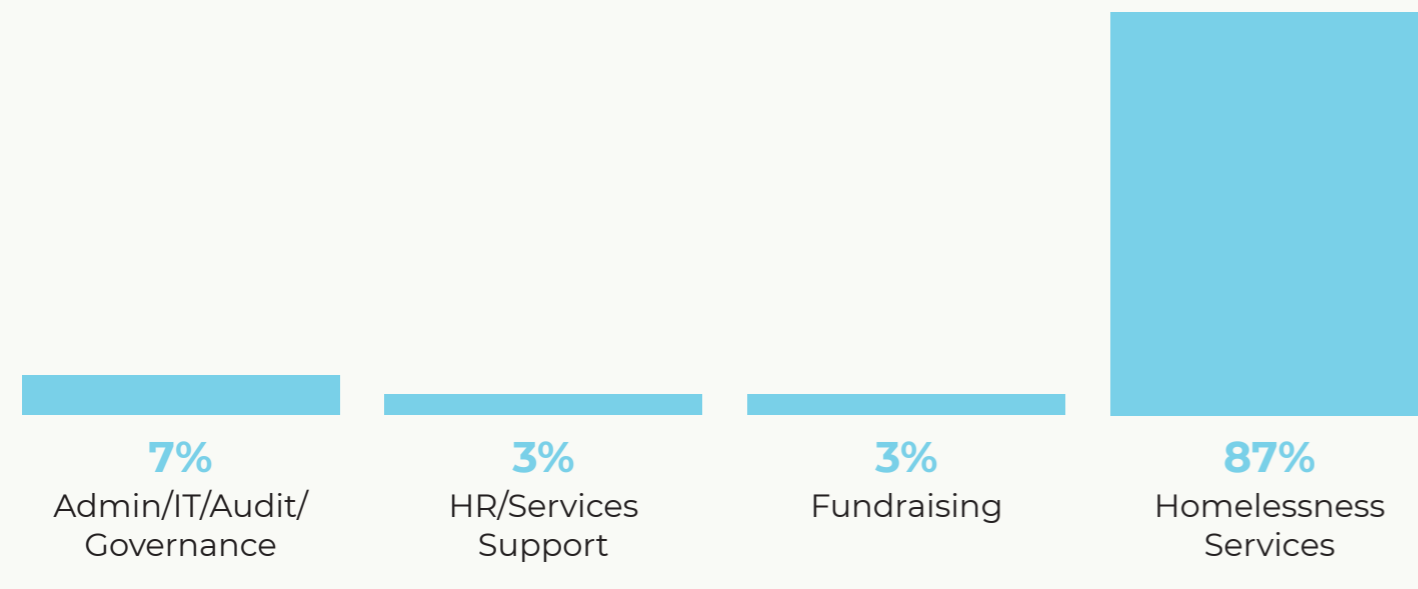
THE DEPAUL IRELAND GROUP INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

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

INCOME €35,667,673



EXPENDITURE €35,000,761



OUR SUPPORTER PROMISE

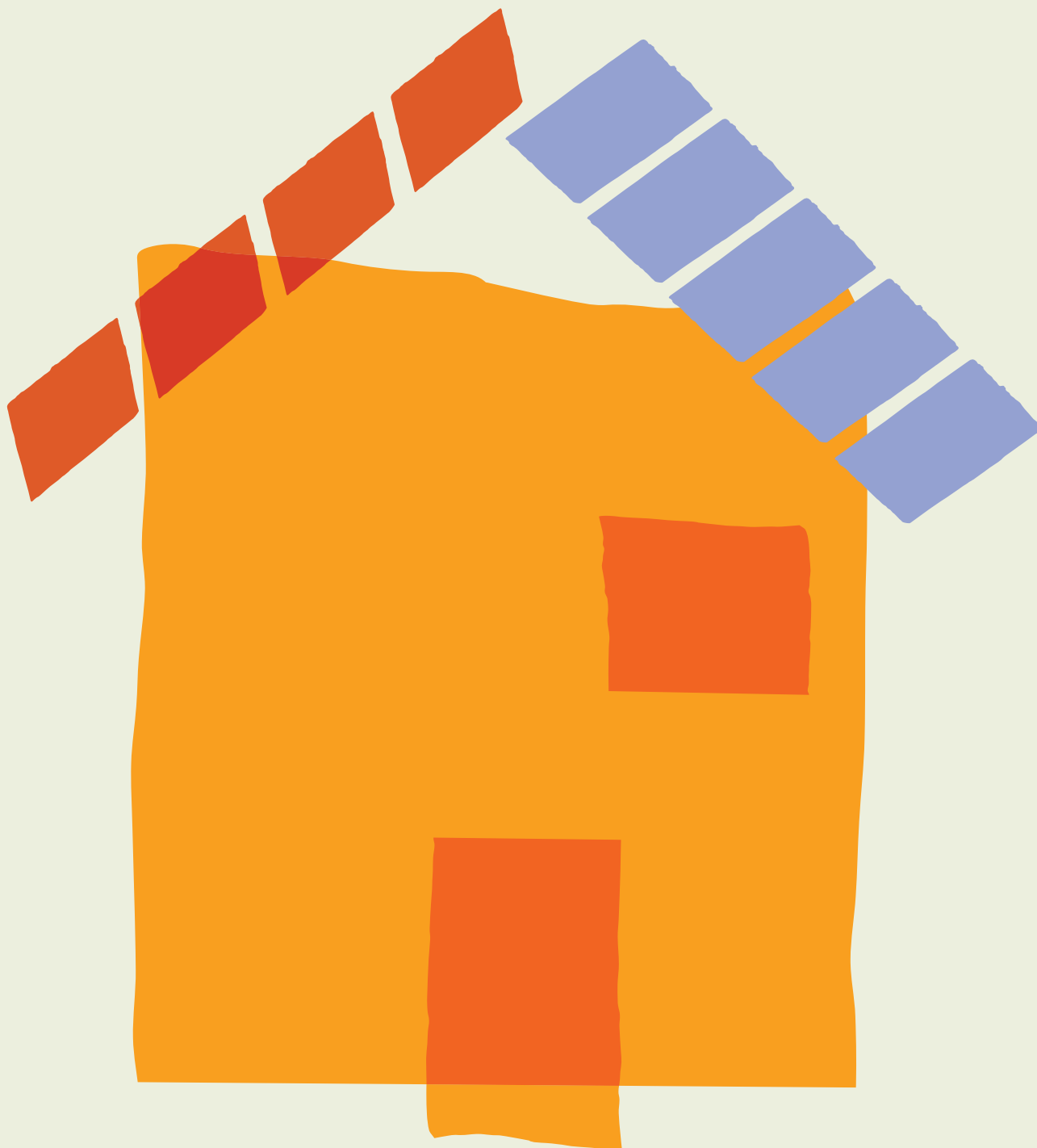
We are deeply committed to transparency and accountability in all of our fundraising activities. We are so grateful for the generosity of all our supporters and we treat all donations with the highest ethical standards.

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.

DEPAUL

Homelessness has no place



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