

Dublin Simon 2023 Annual Impact Report **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/110987>)**



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Dublin Simon Community urges Government to prioritise homelessness on return to Dáil Éireann, amidst demand for services growing by 11% in 2023

Dublin Simon Community Annual Impact Report shows over 6,000 people supported by its services in 2023.

On the eve of operating phase one in a first-of-its-kind homeless treatment facility in Ireland, increases in homelessness and lack of funding commitment are a major cause for concern ahead of Budget 2025.

The organisation calls for Government to invest in essential homeless health and treatment services, as it returns to the Dáil,

Dublin Simon Community released its Annual Impact Report for 2023, whilst highlighting how critical its 100-bed Usher's Island health and addiction care facility will be to its ongoing work, amidst the housing and homelessness crises in Dublin.

Despite making home a reality for almost 1,700 people by the end of 2023 through tenancy sustainment services, long term supported accommodation and independent housing, the organisation is grappling with a rising demand for support, marked by an 11% increase in the number of people served last year. In addition, despite 923 people receiving health, addiction treatment and recovery services over 2023, clients in recovery reported feeling stuck due to the lack of viable accommodation, leading people in some cases to relapse, as a result of feeling trapped. This echoes the experience of those still in emergency accommodation, where the rate of people exiting to a secure home of their own is far below what's required.

Catherine Kenny, CEO of Dublin Simon Community, states, "As we observe Recovery Month, the surge in homelessness feeds a continuing strain on our services and highlights an urgent need for increased capacity in health and addiction treatment services that are tailored to the needs of those with an experience of homelessness. Ireland saw unprecedented levels of homelessness throughout 2023, a trajectory that has not changed course in 2024. Our own emergency services felt this locally with a 13% increase in the number of people availing of our emergency accommodation, and a 34% increase in the number of people who were in contact with the Dublin Simon Outreach team throughout the year."

The Usher's Island facility represents a critical component in our work to make home a reality, with its services poised to

make a substantial difference in the lives of those struggling with homelessness and addiction.

Kenny adds, "While we have 100 beds ready to be utilised, only 51 beds will be operational in the coming weeks as phase one funding is only agreed. Phase two in 2025 will see the remaining 49 beds utilised. Our facility will not only save millions annually for the health system but will also address many of the health-related challenges and obstacles faced by the homeless population. Each week this year has brought a new story, illustrating the dire need for additional services. We're determined to use this facility to support the many individuals who use and have used our services, but still face barriers to recovery and stable housing.

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