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COPE Galway

Let's help together

**ANNUAL
REPORT**



OUR VISION

Improved quality of life, in a home of your own, for people affected by homelessness; women and children experiencing domestic abuse and for older people.

OUR MISSION

To contribute to quality of life in a home of your own, by supporting home, promoting community and reducing isolation.

In 2018 COPE Galway supported:

1,406
people

HOMELESSNESS

Working to accommodate those who are homeless, assist with finding and keeping long term housing and prevent homelessness.

949 Adults 

457 Children 

186 Families 

21 Couples 

612 Single People 

457
women & their children

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Working to break the cycle of domestic abuse; offer safety, guidance and support; help understand the dynamics of abusive relationships and address structures in society which give rise to domestic abuse.

771 Outreach Appointments 
(to 208 women)

148 Play Therapy Sessions 

201 Court Accompaniments

Assisted & supported **169 women with their 233 children** whom we were unable to immediately accommodate on **227 occasions** 

730
older people

SENIOR SUPPORT

Working to support independent ageing at home, helping older people in our community to stay in their own home for as long as they wish to do so.

Supported through 

- Meals on Wheels
- Sonas Day Centre
- Lunch Clubs
- Community Support Projects

59,053 meals produced and delivered to 

- People's Homes
- Lunch Clubs
- COPE Galway Services

3,263 individuals supported through FEAD programme 
(Fund for European Aid for the most Deprived)

WELCOME

We hope you enjoy reading about all the areas we have been involved in during 2018, and the impact of our work for the community of Galway, which has only been possible thanks to the efforts of so many amazing people. Our volunteers, supporters, fundraisers, advocates, staff, board and the Galway Community as a whole play such an important role in all that we do. Together, we have achieved so much over this past year, and together, with more work to do, we continue to strive towards our vision of an improved quality of life in a home of their own for those who are vulnerable in our community.



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A Message from our Chairman

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2018.



As the Chairman of COPE Galway, my role and that of the trustees of the organisation is one of vision, oversight, governance and achieving impact. We are ultimately responsible for ensuring that COPE Galway has a purpose which meets a need, a strategy to achieve it, and sufficient resources which are well spent to implement this purpose, and to achieve the best possible impact for those who require our support.

Our purpose remains more relevant than ever in 2018 – to support people affected by homelessness, women and children experiencing domestic abuse, and older people in need of good nutrition and social supports. We have implemented a strategy over the last 5 years which has given us the capacity to develop services and supports for a growing number of people and families becoming homeless. We have also been developing a new facility for our domestic abuse service which continues to respond to family situations which threaten the very sanctity of a home. We continue to develop new and innovative solutions to meet the needs of our ageing population.

I see the evidence across the organisation of a strong, motivated, ethical, and professional workforce committed to achieving the very best for each person who calls on us, in association with our dedicated team of volunteers. I also see an organisation which operates to the best standards of governance, efficiency and transparency. I see an organisation which has earned the support of our community who, in so many ways, are becoming involved in our work and helping us to change lives. The outcomes and impacts of our work is set out in the body of the annual report and is made possible by all our supporters, donors and funders.

I also see an organisation which has delivered significantly in addressing Galway’s homeless crisis and will continue to do so. We have been acquiring more properties in recognition of the housing shortages in Galway, and will continue in this direction until supply locally is sufficient. We are also acutely concerned about the use of tourist type accommodation to provide emergency accommodation for families and we are committed to bringing local solutions to eliminate this practice. But we must also be prudent in our ambitions and mindful of capacity restraints given some of our funding challenges.

I commend the recent report of the Independent Review Group, established to examine the role of voluntary organisations in publicly funded health and personal social services, who recognise that “the delivery of many of our health and social care services today is dependent on voluntary organisations, which form an essential and integral part of the overall system” (C. Day, J. Grimson and D. Madden, October 2018). The report recommends that a list of essential services to be funded by the State should be agreed in consultation with the voluntary sector, and that full cost prices for the delivery of these services should be agreed centrally. Given the essential nature of the services we provide, this will be a welcome development if implemented.

While state funding systems are themselves struggling to meet ever increasing demands, it is the generosity of our local community which makes it possible for our work to continue, as evidenced by our growing fundraising revenue.

My message is simple. COPE Galway will continue to respond with passion and dedication to the real issues which are experienced by growing numbers of people in our community, in many instances on behalf of our State. We now need an investment of resources from the State to support us in our work so we can continue to effect real change and impact as evidenced in what you will read throughout this annual report.

I would like to thank all who support us in our efforts.

EAMON BRADSHAW
Chairman

A Message from our Chief Executive Officer



COPE Galway responds to the needs of a growing number of vulnerable people in the Galway community. In 2018 we worked with over 2,500 adults (plus their children) across our homeless, domestic abuse and senior support services. Our vision is to work towards improving people's quality of life in their own homes and we do this by supporting home, promoting community and reducing isolation.

The single biggest obstacle to the achievement of our vision continues to be the chronic shortage of housing in Galway, and this is affecting people across all our service areas. The difficulties are outlined in detail throughout our annual report but the most significant effects can be summarised thus:

We are seeing increasing numbers of

- Families becoming homeless and living in unsuitable emergency accommodation for long periods of time
- People sleeping rough in our city and county
- Women and children remaining in violent situations due to an inability to find alternative accommodation
- Older people becoming homeless and experiencing significant levels of isolation

These challenges have corresponding impacts in terms of general wellbeing and mental health and are felt most acutely by children.

COPE Galway seeks to influence policy at a national level, and we also advocate with people on a daily basis to access housing, services, supports, benefits and entitlements – this is the core of our work. COPE Galway also responds to identified issues at a development level.

In 2018, we saw work commence on the construction of our new domestic abuse facility, Modh Eile House. We continued to acquire properties to create shared accommodation for single people, purchasing a house in the east of the city. We continued to respond to the numbers of families and single people requiring emergency placement and we operated the Cold Weather Response again to provide additional spaces during the winter months. We also established a new Social Enterprise, Meals4Health, to respond to the growing demand for nutritional supports suited to the specific dietary needs of older people across Ireland. These and many more initiatives are outlined throughout the report and we continue to develop a range of other projects to meet growing needs across our community.

The team of staff across COPE Galway achieves the best possible outcomes for those we work with through their professionalism, dedication, sheer persistence and much good humour. Our people are at the core of our work. So too are our amazing team of volunteers who support our work throughout the organisation. Many others also contribute in so many ways and without whom we simply could not achieve the quality of life improvements in people's lives which you will read about in the following pages. To all I say a sincere thank you.

Thank you also to all our contributors to this, our annual report for 2018, especially those who have shared their own personal stories and journeys. Also a special word of thanks to Colette Coughlan and Adam Abbott who are responsible for the production of this report.

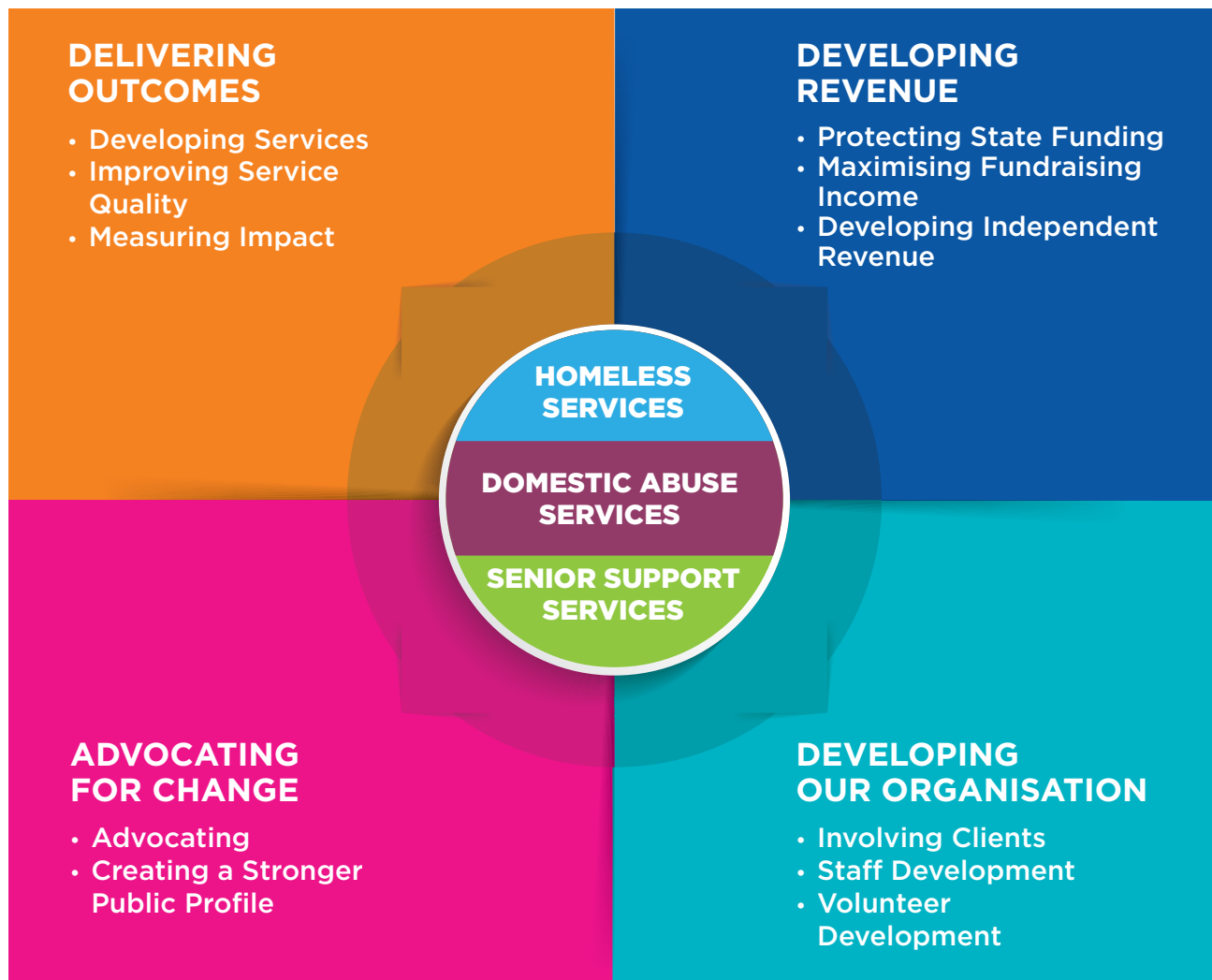
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JACQUIE HORAN
Chief Executive Officer

COPE Galway's Strategy (2013-2018): Working Together Towards Home and Community

COPE Galway's Vision is for improved **quality of life, in a home of your own** for people affected by homelessness; women and children experiencing domestic abuse; and older people.

Our Mission is to contribute to quality of life in a home of your own, by **supporting home, promoting community and reducing isolation.**



Strategy (2013 – 2018)

COPE Galway has been steadily progressing towards the achievement of our strategy, “Working Together Towards Home and Community”. This strategy has provided momentum for significant progress across many areas, captured broadly in the 4 ‘pillars’ outlined below.

Overall, in an environment of reduced statutory funding and a crisis-driven external environment, there were significant achievements against the strategic objectives. In parallel, COPE Galway has sustained core services and increased many responses to meet growing needs. COPE Galway will develop a new strategy during 2019.

Thank you to everyone who helped us to deliver on our mission of supporting home, promoting community and reducing isolation.

Some main achievements are captured under the four ‘pillar’ headlines below.

DELIVERING OUTCOMES

Concerned with the ongoing delivery and further development of services toward the achievement of outcomes which improve the quality of life of our clients in homes of their own. Includes some refocusing of activity toward a community model of service, with increased focus on outreach, preventative and in-community support.

| Homeless Services | Domestic Abuse Service | Senior Support Services |
|---|---|---|
| <p>In an environment of reduced statutory funding, we have sustained all services. We have been able to step up to the crisis for individual and homeless families with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of emergency accommodation and supports for growing levels of families experiencing homelessness – increased from 19 in 2013 to 130 in 2018. • 13 emergency / transitional homes secured for families. • Developing resettlement and tenancy supports in conjunction with housing acquisition strategies through partnership with Clúid and Galway Simon Community to secure 16 housing units for individuals (singles). • Securing Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) funding to purchase 3 housing units for singles and secured 3 others from Galway City Council, accommodating 18 single people. • Introduction of life skills support programme for single people in communal housing. • Annual provision of Cold Weather Response. • Conduction of regular street outreach to identify and signpost rough sleepers. • Focus on “Homeless Services Working Together” towards a more coordinated model of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction work commenced on new domestic abuse service and safe refuge at Forster Street – due for completion December 2019. • Memorial service and booklet completed to “Remember, Respect and Record the Magdalen Women of Galway”. • Increased capacity to respond to needs in County Galway. • Expanded childcare responses and community childcare outreach. • Input on domestic abuse for health professionals and third level students. • Developing expertise on child to parent violence. • “Moving On” and Parenting booklets produced by Client Forum. • Schools and colleges awareness raising campaigns. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering highly valuable nutritional, social and emotional supports. • Partnership with University Hospital Galway on nutrition booklet and legitimising meals service as health and social support. Direct increase in Meals on Wheels client numbers. • Increase in number and locations of lunch clubs (9 city and 4 county). • Development of Food Cloud and FEAD* programme – hub for food distribution including food parcels to other charities. (*Fund for European Aid for the Most Deprived). • Increase in one-to-one advocacy and support across 3 housing clusters for older people. |

DEVELOPING REVENUE

Concerned with ensuring COPE Galway has sufficient funds to support our vision across diverse and dependable income streams.

- New charity shop
- Increased regular income through monthly donors and community fundraising
- Grew annual Business Leaders' Sleepout as our major annual event
- Developed new Meals4Health social enterprise

ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

Concerned with maintaining a strong and consistently high profile with each of our key stakeholder groups; communicating in a way that is relevant to their interests and that demonstrates that COPE Galway is a voice for social change and can use its reputation and network of contacts to influence the development and application of policy in relevant areas.

- Improved COPE Galway profile
- On-going calendar of publicity campaigns highlighting our work
- Communications strategy
- Advocacy initiatives
- Submissions

DEVELOPING OUR ORGANISATION

Concerned with ensuring that there is open dialogue, meaningful engagement and opportunities for leadership and contribution and that a sense of empowerment is fostered and supported across the organisation so that everyone (staff, volunteers and clients) knows, understands and feels part of achieving COPE Galway's vision.

- Staff development - increase in staff morale/ engagement/ communications/ sense of value
- Volunteer development - achieved Investing in Volunteers quality standard (First in West)
- Client involvement - two client forums/ client involvement policy/ client expos/ client activities





Galway

lp together





HOMELESS SERVICES

In 2018 COPE Galway supported:

1,406
people

HOMELESSNESS

Working to accommodate those who are homeless; assist with finding and keeping long term housing and prevent homelessness.

949 Adults



186 Families

457 Children



21 Couples



612 Single People

Meet Noel

Noel credits COPE Galway with helping him to build a support network after he became homeless last year.

Noel (36) spent time living in a car with his beloved dog Mia following the breakdown of his relationship.

"A lot of stuff happened in one go and put me into a position where I became homeless. I was forced into it, it wasn't by choice. My mood really hit a low, I was really panicky, I was really in a bad place. For the first four months I stayed in the car with my dog because she was my baby," Noel explains.

He reached out to COPE Galway's Day Centre, where he was given advice on how to register as homeless and to secure the supports he needed. It was somewhere he could have a hot meal, a cup of coffee, and a shower, things that meant a lot when he was sleeping in the car. "It's the little things," he says.

"When I first went in, I would run in the door with my head down and back out again. I was a phantom. But then I started to trust them...There was some weeks that I wasn't talking to anyone bar the dog. But to go in there and sit down and say hello and talk, that was huge," he says. "It started building my confidence."

Noel experiences social anxiety and PTSD as a result of childhood abuse but found "COPE Galway was the backbone" that helped him build a support network. He began counselling with Let's Get Talking Galway and now has the support of his counsellor, life coach, GP and the COPE Galway team.

He has had highs and lows over the past year, but says COPE Galway was always there to steer him. "I wouldn't change a thing. If I didn't become homeless, I wouldn't have met COPE Galway. If I didn't meet COPE Galway I wouldn't be where I am today."

Noel lived in his car during the cold snap in early 2018 and heatwave during the summer time and began tweeting about his experiences. He even featured on radio and television programmes, where he highlighted the plight of families forced to give up their dogs when unable to secure accommodation.

Noel strongly believes in the therapeutic support pets can provide, which he says would be particularly beneficial for children in emergency accommodation. His boxer Mia, who has sadly passed away from skin cancer, always served as an impetus for him to get out and about when

he was living in the car. "She gave so much. She was very social," he says. "She had a great life, I'm smiling when I talk about her."

Having spoken out about his experiences of homelessness, he found that some people reacted negatively to his homelessness but says, "I didn't change overnight, I didn't grow talons or anything!" Noel, who previously ran his own garage, says, "It's not the stereotypical guy or girl all the time, it's a whole spectrum of people in all sorts of situations."

"No-one is immune to it"



"There are all different levels to it, from rough sleeping up to van life dwellers like me, people in emergency accommodation, and people on the edge of everything who are realistically one wage away from being kicked out. I don't think anyone is immune to it."

With support from COPE Galway, Noel is now living in emergency accommodation and working towards employment. He also runs a social group in Galway City, which offers a safe space for people suffering from social anxiety.

He has "all good memories of COPE Galway", which is why he has begun volunteering with COPE Galway's Charity Shop, something he wouldn't have even contemplated a year ago. "It was fundamental in me breaking down the last barrier and saying, 'I can actually do this,'" he explains.

Having been in contact with COPE Galway every day for the last year, Noel considers the team "part of my family at this stage." Everyone is lovely in there... They're human. You're not a number. They're empathetic but professional at the same time."

"I've thought about it so many times, if they weren't there, where would I have gone and what would I have done?" he says. "I'm completely blown away with everything they have done for me."



COPE Galway: Working to Accommodate People who are Homeless

In 2018 COPE Galway worked with 949 adults and 457 children affected by homelessness in Galway, including 186 families and 612 single people.

The persistent shortage of housing availability in Galway reached an all-time low in 2018 and resulted in many across our Homeless Services remaining in emergency accommodation for far longer than in previous years.

During 2018, in addition to providing emergency accommodation, our staff focused on accessing and offering supports to improve the health, wellbeing and life skills of people affected by homelessness. Longer stays in emergency accommodation have a negative impact on families, couples and single people's welfare. Our focus throughout the year shifted towards examining how we can also help address clients' frustration with longer stays in emergency accommodation and the associated increase in poor mental health by building their resilience and confidence and helping them move towards independence in a positive, beneficial way.

Family Homelessness

Family homelessness continued to represent a major challenge in 2018 and showed little sign of slowing down. Over the course of the year we provided emergency accommodation to a total of 130 families both directly in COPE Galway operated services and through placements in private emergency accommodation such as B&Bs, Hotels and other tourist and holiday let accommodation. We offered prevention, resettlement and tenancy support interventions to a further 56 families.

In addition to the shortage of affordable rental accommodation, our experience was one of limited uptake of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) by landlords for private rental accommodation in Galway city. Rent levels in Galway city are more often than not above the HAP rental cap limits and so are beyond what families can afford when they do become available.

COPE Galway continued to work with and support families during their journey through homelessness in 2018. Our Family Support Service identified supports that families may need during this time of crisis and uncertainty, with a particular focus on the needs of children and put in place various initiatives to help address these. For example, as families transition from Homeless Services into their own home, we offer assistance, advice and support with setting up household budgets and dealing with bills; accessing schools and identifying and linking in with local beneficial community resources and support services. We also offer a follow on support service for families as required.

Single Person Homelessness

In 2018, 612 single person households availed of our services. We accommodated 328 of these single person households in our emergency accommodation services at Fairgreen Hostel, Osterley Lodge and Cold Weather Response as well as through placements in PEA (Private Emergency Accommodation) tourist accommodation. The other 284 availed of support services provided at the Day Centre and through our Resettlement and Tenancy Support teams. A total of 16 moved on from COPE Galway's emergency and transitional accommodation services to live independently during 2018 and a further 16 moved to a combination of transitional and supported accommodation.

In 2018 Osterley Lodge discontinued accommodating families to allow the service to respond specifically to the needs of single homeless women.



“Difficult roads often lead to beautiful destinations”

In a crisis-driven housing environment, with little or no move-on, COPE Galway Family Services Staff have been focusing not just on finding accommodation, but on sustaining families to stay motivated when faced with frustrating situations. We help clients build resilience, develop better mental health and build skills that help them become independent and confident. With a strong advocacy role now part of our staff's remit, we are dedicated to helping our clients however we can.

Family Support Services Key Worker, Alison, writes here about a family her team worked with during 2018.

“I first met this mum of seven, with another baby on the way, at the beginning of October 2018. They had been given notice to quit from their long-term rental property. After the family entered private emergency accommodation in the form of a B&B, the children began to miss school and the Mum’s mental health deteriorated significantly. At this point I spent a lot of time meeting with the family both at our office and on visits to the B&B. I established a strong relationship with the family. We introduced wrap-around

“Thank you for listening to me”

services including mental health supports and TUSLA Family Support. We linked in regularly with the children’s school and advocated for the family with Galway City Council. Thankfully, things began to change - Mum’s mental health improved significantly and the children began attending school regularly.

After what I can only describe as countless phone calls, case meetings, multi-disciplinary meetings, emails and letters, the family received that large white envelope from Galway City Council containing news of... A HOUSE! Nothing gave me more joy than breaking that news to the family; it made every road bump we hit so worthwhile. Mum stated to me, “I will never forget you being there for me when I needed it the most.”

As I write this today, the family have seen their Forever Home for the first time. As Mum stood outside the house she turned and told me, “My weight has been lifted, I will be forever grateful.”

COPE Galway’s vision is for an improved quality of life in a home of your own home for people affected by Homelessness. It is a great honour to help make this vision a reality.”



Homeless Services Highlights

New Initiatives

With housing availability at an all-time low, our staff placed an emphasis on supporting clients to develop various important skills to help them become independent and confident while staying in emergency and transitional accommodation. These initiatives helped build trusting relationships between clients and staff – an important first step in working with people who find themselves homeless and isolated – and made a real and significant improvement in their lives.

Some of these initiatives included:

- **SafeTALK 'suicide alertness for everyone'.** Clients of Fairgreen Hostel attended two workshops which prepared participants to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. Participants had an opportunity to talk about their experiences of suicide and also developed the language, confidence and skills to talk to a friend who is expressing suicidal ideation.
- **Lifesaving skills demonstrations.** Staff trained as first aid responders and regularly offer clients demonstrations on CPR and other life saving skills.
- **Literacy Training.** Keyworkers trained in the area of literacy and supported clients with literacy skills
- **Client computer access** supported clients to look for work, accommodation, driver theory tests etc.
- **Sports and other recreational activities** included soccer and pool competitions with various local businesses, organisations and colleges.
- **Helping Hand Initiatives** involved volunteers from a range of local businesses and employers, ably assisted by clients, who undertook a number of enhancement projects across COPE Galway services. These initiatives included the painting and redecoration of the internal areas of buildings and the overhaul of garden areas including at Teach Corrib Day Centre, Fairgreen Hostel and Osterley Lodge and the fit out of the premises for Cold Weather Response.

- **Naloxone Administration,** where two staff trained as trainers to staff and clients on the administration of Naloxone, a medicine recommended by WHO for use as treatment in opioid overdose cases.

New Transitional Accommodation Acquired

We added a 3-bed house acquired with Capital Assistance Scheme funding provided by Galway City Council to our stock of community and transitional accommodation for single person households. We now have seven such houses with capacity to accommodate 24 people.

Mental Health Multi-disciplinary Team for Homeless People

Clients of COPE Galway Homeless Services started to experience the benefits of the development and roll out of a Mental Health Multi-disciplinary Team for Homeless People by the HSE in 2018. This team is being further developed in 2019 with a Consultant Psychiatrist post joining the existing disciplines of Community Mental Health Nursing, Occupational Therapy and Social Work.

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Place Finders and Homeless HAP

Both Galway City and Galway County Councils appointed HAP place finders in 2018. These roles are proving to be a significant assistance to clients of COPE Galway Homeless Services who are seeking private rented housing under the HAP scheme. The introduction of the Homeless HAP scheme to Galway City whereby an uplift rate above limits can be paid and deposits and rent can be paid in advance is also proving beneficial. These initiatives by the two Galway local housing authorities greatly improve our clients' chances of securing accommodation.



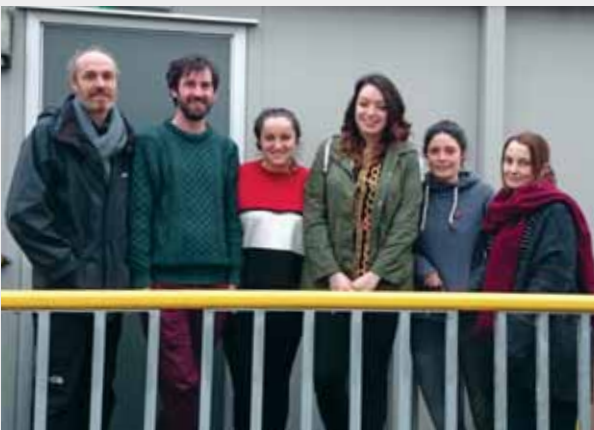
Homeless Services Challenges

COPE Galway worked tirelessly in attempting to tackle the homeless crisis in Galway, which showed little sign of abating in 2018. The continuing presentations of newly homeless households including families, couples and singles and the significant difficulties faced in securing move on housing from emergency and transitional accommodation were the major challenges faced across all frontline services over the course of the year. The shortage of one-bedroom housing for single person households continues to represent a major challenge in Galway and in 2018 contributed to a situation where lengths of stay in COPE Galway services were longer than ever. This in turn had a knock on impact in terms of a shortage of emergency beds for newly presenting homeless and increased numbers rough sleeping. It also resulted in an increasing reliance on Private Emergency Accommodation such as B&Bs and tourist hostels to meet the emergency accommodation needs of single people and couples.

In addition to these overarching and persistent difficulties, the other main challenges encountered in 2018 included:

Responding to Complex Needs

Mental ill health, depression, anxiety and in particular, addictions are significant factors in the lives of many of those COPE Galway worked with and accommodated in 2018. The current housing crisis leads to our clients often seeing their futures as very bleak. Responding to those with a “dual diagnosis”, whereby a person has a mood disorder such as depression or bipolar disorder and a (possibly extenuating) problem with alcohol or drugs, remains a challenge. We have developed our role in the meantime to ensure we provide and have access to the best possible opportunities for people to improve their physical and mental health and to constantly remain honest about their situation while also instilling a sense of positivity.



Lack of Rehabilitation for Drug Users in Galway

In-patient detoxification or rehabilitation facilities are not available to people using COPE Galway Homeless Services in Galway. This means those seeking and accessing treatment have to do so elsewhere, primarily in Dublin, where they are competing for places and waiting lists are usually long. Timely access to such services is vital.

Maintaining Tenancies

Our Resettlement and Tenancy Support Team provides a flexible and, where necessary, assertive community engagement approach, particularly for those clients who present with mental health difficulties or mal-adaptive coping behaviours and who would otherwise struggle to maintain their tenancies. This support is further enhanced through our Life Skills Support Service which helps people access further support and structure through engaging in meaningful activities in their own communities.

Addressing the Needs of People Sleeping Rough

For the thirteenth consecutive year COPE Galway operated a Cold Weather Response to help ensure that there were sufficient beds available through the winter period for people sleeping rough. Twenty three additional beds were put in place in conjunction with Galway City Council and with the support of the HSE for the period between November and April. In addition to this, early morning outreach work with people sleeping rough operated throughout the year with a focus on linking with and signposting people to where they can access assistance.

Left: Cold Weather Response Team

Meet Brendan

A former COPE Galway Fairgreen Hostel resident speaks about his journey out of homelessness and addiction.

A recovering alcoholic who spent time sleeping rough in Dublin and Galway has returned to education in a bid to help others.

A butcher by trade, 53-year-old Brendan* is now studying social care at third level, and is planning to use his experiences of addiction and homelessness to support others who face similar challenges.

During his time sleeping rough, Brendan found that the cold and wet are “not really your enemies”.

“That’s not really the problem. The problem is privacy and dignity; not being able to use the bathroom when you need to, to wash regularly, that’s what really got to me.”

“A hand up, not a hand-out”

The “erosion of self-worth” did more damage than the cold, he says.

A qualified life coach, Brendan had previously completed a residential treatment programme for alcohol addiction, but suffered a relapse following the death of a young family member.

He had nothing when he came to COPE Galway’s Fairgreen Hostel for homeless men. “I barely had what I stood in ... I was absolutely broken,” he says.

There, he went through detox and, thanks to the staff, says he found “that privacy, that dignity, that respect that all human beings deserve”.

“It’s that little moment when you know someone heard you. They’re not there to fix me but they heard me. They empowered me to help myself,” he says, citing the example of a savings plan put in place for residents, so that when the day comes to move on, they have something put aside.

The Fairgreen Hostel team put together a care programme, helped him through detox and provided him with essentials like shampoo and clothing. “My own part of it is I get up and I go to my meetings. I stay sober and I play my part... That’s the only way it really can work. Because you can’t get someone sober, they have got to go and earn it.”

He believes peer support is important, with residents at the COPE Galway Fairgreen Hostel taking part in regular meetings and activities like soccer and pool.

“It’s important, especially for morale. Christmas can be a hard time for a lot of people, it’s important for people in addiction that they don’t use it as a crutch, that they don’t fall back into old behaviour.”

Homeless people need a hand up, not a hand out, according to Brendan. He firmly believes that the Government doesn’t see the value in preventative measures and investing in long-term solutions to the homelessness crisis, instead preferring to “throw money at the problem”.

He believes Ireland should follow the Scandinavian model, where housing is provided first, and then wrap around supports like addiction treatment. Instead, he feels the Government leaves charities to help those most in need. “Without organisations like COPE Galway and other local charities, I hate to think what could be happening. It’s scary.”

**not his real name*



COPE Galway's Homeless Services

COPE Galway operates a range of services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Galway City including:

Day Centre Services at Teach Corrib

Targeted to single person households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Galway City. Services include the provision of information and referral to accommodation and mainstream services and assistance in securing long term accommodation. Food and access to washing and laundry facilities are available. The service operates from Monday to Saturday during day time hours. In 2018 the service worked with 633 households including 612 single people and 21 couples.

Family Support Services

Working with and supporting families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness including providing and placing families in emergency accommodation (operating some of this accommodation directly in the form of self-contained units at various locations in the community); homeless prevention interventions; resettlement and tenancy support; the provision of information; referral to mainstream services and assistance in securing long term housing. In 2018 the service worked with 186 families including 130 who were provided with emergency accommodation.

Resettlement and Tenancy Support Services

Focused on supporting people through their transition to independent living when moving out of homelessness and for the period of time required to help establish and sustain their tenancy. In 2018 the service worked with 81 people.

Transitional and Community Accommodation

Includes the Towards Independence Project and other transitional and community based accommodation for single person households which prioritises referrals from COPE Galway emergency accommodation services. In 2018 a total of 25 people were accommodated.

Emergency Accommodation Services

Fairgreen Hostel is a 26-bedroom emergency accommodation hostel for men who are homeless. The service operates to a harm reduction approach in working with those actively misusing alcohol and/or drugs. In 2018 a total of 117 men were accommodated. Those accommodated were supported on a range of fronts including health, welfare and housing with a key worker assigned to each person for the duration of their stay in the hostel.

Osterley Lodge is a 12-bedroom emergency accommodation and support service for single women who are experiencing homelessness. In 2018 a total of 41 single women and 4 family households were provided with emergency accommodation. The service discontinued accommodating families in 2018 due to the level of need among single women. Every woman admitted to the service has access to keyworker support and receives assistance to access a range of services in the community. The focus is on maintaining an empowering environment to build confidence, encourage women to support their health and well-being; to move out of homelessness and to access services and amenities in their community. An experienced and committed staff team focuses on delivering positive outcomes for all clients.

The **Cold Weather Response (CWR)** is a winter initiative that runs for approximately 20 weeks to provide night time accommodation and address the needs of people who sleep rough in Galway. In the winter of 2018/19 it had capacity to accommodate up to 23 people, both men and women. For the past three winters this project has been based at the COPE Galway Teach Corrib Day Centre. In 2018 the CWR accommodated a total of 178 individuals between the early part of the year when it operated up to April and again in the latter part of the year when it came into operation in late November.

Meet Sifelani

Sifelani always looks on the bright side of life. She believes that whenever problems arise, it means that blessings are on their way.

“The only thing you have to know is that in life there are some challenges. The road cannot be smooth all the time,” she says.

Sifelani’s journey with COPE Galway began over two years ago, when she found herself forced to present as homeless to Galway City Council. From there, she was referred to Osterley Lodge, COPE Galway’s 24-hour emergency accommodation service for women.

“They were really there for us”

Osterley Lodge is “a good place to be”, says Sifelani. “Because if there wasn’t that house, or if there was no COPE Galway, where are we supposed to go? We just thank God that there is somewhere to put our heads.”

After 6 months at Osterley Lodge, Sifelani moved into Community Housing with support from COPE Galway’s Resettlement Service, which helps people through their transition to independent living. “They helped me with many things,” she says. “They do their best because they know that it’s difficult.”

Sifelani spent 18 months with the Resettlement Service, during which time she struggled to secure private rented

accommodation. “I was calling the whole of this island,” she says of her search for accommodation. “Can you imagine? For two years, you don’t have a home.”

Faced with such uncertainty, “thinking too much” can be a major problem, says Sifelani. But through it all, she was supported by the COPE Galway team, including the Housing Worker and Life Skills Support Worker, who helped her to take part in training and other activities.

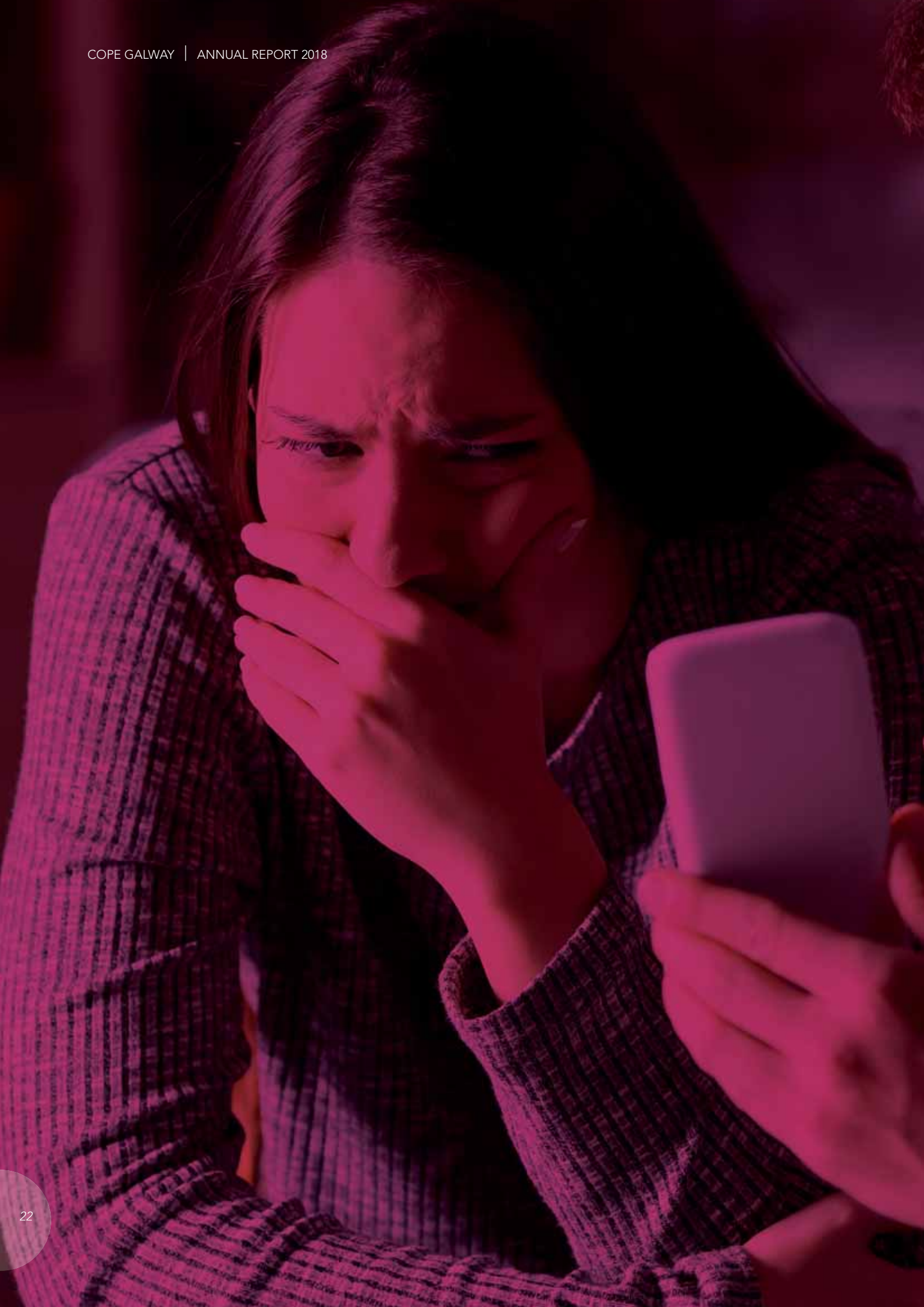
Wanting to use her time as best she could, Sifelani completed healthcare courses while living in Community Housing and now works as a care giver for older people. She loves her job and brings her natural positivity to the role, describing her work as “showing love” to her clients. “It’s nothing to give somebody a smile, all of us need a smile,” she says.

Going to COPE Galway’s Resettlement Office “will bring a smile to your face” too, according to Sifelani. The team there go out of their way to “show love” and help their service users. “They were trying their best to show that they are with us, that we should not think that we are alone,” she says.

Two years after she first entered Osterley Lodge, Sifelani finally secured private rented accommodation, but remains in contact with the COPE Galway team. “Even now, they are always making sure that we feel comfortable, we don’t feel like we are abandoned.”

“I always call them to talk to them. I am still thanking them...They were really there for us, I will never forget them.”

Photo: Sifelani stays in touch with her Resettlement Key Worker, Sylvia.



DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

In 2018 COPE Galway supported:

457

women & their children

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Working to break the cycle of domestic abuse; offer safety, guidance and support; help understand the dynamics of abusive relationships and address structures in society which give rise to domestic abuse.

771
Outreach
Appointments
(to 208 women)



148 Play
Therapy
Sessions



201 Court Accompaniments

Assisted & supported **169 women** with their **233 children** whom we were unable to immediately accommodate on **227 occasions**





Meet Stephanie

Sitting alone in the bedroom Stephanie* shared with her husband Richard*, she watched a spider crawl along the windowsill. "That spider has more freedom than I have," she thought.

"I felt like breathing was the only thing I was allowed, that I had control over, that wasn't being checked up on. That's how deep it went for me."

Stephanie was completely isolated by her husband. He watched her all the time, monitored the phone calls she made, stopped her from seeing friends and family, decided what their money was spent on and even what they ate.

"He could just look at me or look at the kids and they knew, 'We won't say anything or do anything.' You always had to look to him to see his reaction and if it was OK for them to watch TV or something, then it was OK for a while. But it was always controlled, everything was controlled."

When Stephanie first met Richard, she thought she was lucky to have someone so "perfect". "He made me feel I was lucky to marry him."

"Once I got pregnant with my first child, he was totally controlling over that, saying you can't be doing this or that... I just thought he was minding me because he'd buy flowers and things to pamper myself with, he always made it look like he was looking after me. But it was a little bit like being in the pot of water and gradually the heat's being turned up and you don't notice it because you're in it."

"He never hit me as such but he would use threatening behaviour, he would block me if I was going out the door or he would bang something or break something in front of me... It was total fear."

Richard would only allow her to speak with certain people. "I couldn't meet up with anyone unless he agreed that it was OK." She saw her own family rarely, only on special occasions, and any time they came over Richard would be "on his best behaviour."

"He'd be making the tea, making everything look normal, as if it was a normal house." But Stephanie's family saw through this. "They didn't like him and I didn't understand why. I thought he was the best person, that he knew everything, he always got everything right. And I didn't know what to do."

"The thing was, he never listened to me anyway, anytime I made a suggestion or had an idea he would tell me to be quiet or, 'No, we're not doing that'. He dismissed everything so I never had a say in anything. I think my brothers and sisters knew, they had seen the way he was before I did."

A turning point came when Stephanie was pregnant with her third child. "We were sitting in a coffee shop, he was gone to the toilet and I picked up a magazine. It was a house and home magazine or something because he would never let me look at those glossy magazines... I picked up that one because I knew if he sees me reading it, he won't say anything."

Flicking through the magazine, she spotted an article about domestic abuse. It listed signs of abuse and included a helpline number. "I was shocked, I couldn't believe it, that this is me. 'Are you afraid of this person' and all these things and I thought, 'Oh my God, all these things are me'. I had to act normal when he came back, as if I was still flicking through the magazine. But in my head, there was alarm bells going off. That was really the start of it for me, the start of getting help."

Afterwards, she kept thinking about the article. “I began to realise that it was true, that I wasn’t imagining it.” She rang the helpline and was directed to COPE Galway’s Domestic Abuse Service at Waterside House. Feeling relief that she had somewhere to turn, she called and arranged to meet one of the Staff. “That was brilliant, that I was able to come in and talk to someone and make sense of everything.”

At the time, Stephanie was breastfeeding and used a doctor’s appointment as a cover to meet with her Support Worker. Richard questioned her delay in arriving home, but never knew she had visited COPE Galway. “It was brilliant because it was all confidential... he never knew I came in here. It really, really helped me. The support I got was brilliant,” she says.

“Coming in here made me open my eyes to certain things and it gave me more courage, it made me feel, ‘I can leave him’. He had me beaten down, he had chipped away so much at me that I felt like ‘I can’t do anything’ but from talking to someone in here, from them saying, ‘He can’t do that, you have rights, your kids have rights,’ it helped me understand it.”

“It’s done in a very respectful, dignified way. It’s confidential, they wouldn’t turn you away, no matter how small it is, you always feel like you can come in and say it. It’s just to know there’s something there on the other side, it’s very important that the support is there for a woman in that position, to know that they can just pick up the phone or arrange to come in and talk to someone.

“It’s all private, he had no clue I was coming in here countless times and he had no clue that I even came in here once.”

With support from COPE Galway, her GP and a social worker, Stephanie took her children to her brother’s house. Richard arrived soon afterwards, begging her to return, but the next day COPE Galway helped Stephanie to obtain a Protection Order and ultimately a Safety Order.

Richard moved in with a friend but began writing her notes, telling her he would change, saying he understood why she had left, and spending more and more time with the children. “I was nearly believing him, he was being really good, doing stuff at the house, being really nice to everyone, allowing them to do things he wouldn’t have before.”

Throughout this time, Stephanie received support from her Support Worker in Waterside House. “Even after I left him, it still felt like he was watching me. I still felt like I needed permission to ring someone, and I had to keep telling myself, ‘It’s OK, I can do this now.’”

Richard was “gradually going back to his old ways”, not listening to her or caring about how she felt, when a family member passed away. Stephanie attended the funeral by herself and met people she hadn’t been able to see for years. “I was thinking about things, the people that I hadn’t seen for a long time, all saying they were glad to see me and it was really nice and I thought I want that kind of thing again.”

It was a significant moment as Richard continued to pressure her to allow him to return. “It was a long hard battle for years, to keep him from harassing me...But at least he was out of the house and I had my own space and was able to get the house running and look after the kids.”

“It took such a long time and it was very draining and tiring and it prevented me from doing a lot of things. But it was the best thing I ever did, leaving him.”

She has stayed in contact with COPE Galway, “It’s great to know it’s here.”

“There’s no bruises to show – it’s on the inside”

“If you don’t know what to do, it’s good to phone up and say, ‘I don’t know what to do, is this OK, is this normal because there’s something going on here and it doesn’t feel good or right.’ It’s good to talk to someone because they can see it from the outside and make sense of it.”

The offence of ‘coercive control’ came into law just this year, and Stephanie believes it’s past time that this aspect of domestic abuse is acknowledged. “I feel he should have been locked up because of what he did to me and the kids, the way he treated us. It was inhuman. It was like being in a prison. And it was made look to the outside like we were all a big happy family, going to Mass on a Sunday.”

“You can’t see it, you’re not getting punched or beaten, there’s no bruises to show. It’s the things that he’d say and do that go deep inside you. It’s on the inside, you can’t see it.”

Her advice to others who may be in an abusive relationship is simple - ring COPE Galway. “The first thing someone should do, even if they’re not sure, is to ring up and ask what can I do, to get advice and support.”

COPE Galway Domestic Abuse Service is available 24/7 on 091-565985.

** Names have been changed.*



COPE Galway: Working to Break the Cycle of Domestic Abuse

Our Domestic Abuse Service, currently at Waterside House in the heart of the city, has seen a lot of activity in 2018, working with 457 women and their children in that time.

Our work is focused on women who are in, who are trying to leave, or who may have already left, an abusive relationship. Some of these (about 15%) stay in our Refuge, which is intended as emergency accommodation for women and children in immediate danger from a violent partner. The bulk of our service users however do not avail of refuge, and some never even visit Waterside House. This part of our work is Outreach – the support we offer to women, often in their community throughout Galway city and county, who are able to find a safe place to live whilst they work through the issue.

We are very proud of the work we do with children, who are often the hidden victims of domestic abuse. Although we are often told *'the children don't know what he's like, they've never seen him hit me, he's never hit them'* - in our experience, every child in an abusive home is a victim. The altered dynamic, the walking on egg shells, the living in close proximity to a bully, all impact very harshly on a child. Very often the bond between mother and child has been undermined, with many mothers telling us they have not been allowed to play the role of Mother to their child. We work with each child whilst he or she makes sense of what is going on, helping them to process and build resilience, supporting them to rebuild a positive relationship with their Mam and while also continuing to have a relationship with their Dad.

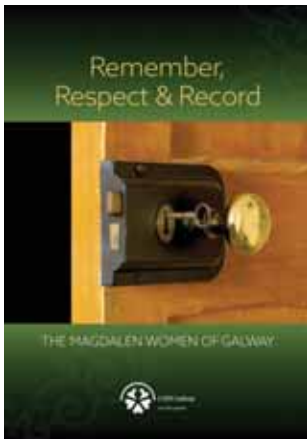
Our work extends to providing training to other professionals in nursing, medicine, social work, family support, education and a wide range of other agencies so they can better understand and better support women who have been living with abuse. Because we are committed to working to eradicate the practices and norms in our society that can allow domestic abuse to take place, we also work with schools and colleges on healthy relationships, delivering workshops and other participatory initiatives designed to encourage a mutually respectful basis in all intimate relationships.

Domestic Abuse Service Highlights

In considering our achievements, we highlight the hundreds of families who have been supported by us – each step a woman and her children take toward a life free from abuse is a success. Furthermore in 2018, we finally marked the beginning of the next chapter in the life of our Service – the development of Modh Eile House.

Modh Eile House

Gifted to us by the Sisters of Mercy, the site of the former convent on Forster Street is set to become the new home for COPE Galway's Domestic Abuse Service. We are grateful to accept this gift on behalf of the hundreds of women and children who flee abuse each year, and look forward to providing our service from this location early in 2020.



Acutely conscious of the history of the site on Forster Street, COPE Galway worked with historians and archaeologists to document the many stories associated with the location. In November of 2018, we held a memorial event for those who came forward to share their stories with us, and took time to acknowledge the pain and hurt, to reflect

on the deep sadness and grief, and to begin to contemplate a different future. We are heartened by the words of a former resident of the laundry, who said in her story, *Maisie Kenny's Escape*, **“They are giving the Convent to COPE Galway. I see that as a little token of atonement... There will always be women or girls in need of shelter – but there must never again be a shelter where you go in and the door is locked behind you and the key thrown away!”** We are aware of the responsibility this places on us and we are committed to honouring the faith placed in us.

Re-developing this site into a purpose-built Domestic Abuse Service is being made possible through the support of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government as well as a number of generous philanthropic donations, including Lifes2Good Foundation. In 2019, we will continue to seek financial support from our friends and neighbours throughout Galway, as we bring this exciting project to fruition.

Read more about the development of Modh Eile House in our **Looking to the Future** section of this report.

Client Partnership

Our service-users forum, SURF, is a valued partner in our work, providing the voice for those who need support and engaging in productive – and often lively – sessions with staff to guide our development. Issues discussed during 2018 included the setting up of a new monthly social support group, to be facilitated by our staff, and the requirements associated with the move to Modh Eile House. Events during the year included Christmas Lunch at High Café, a coffee morning at An Tobar Nua and two healing days attended by a mix of women from SURF and Outreach Services which took place in Spring and Autumn at the SCCUL Sanctuary in Clarenbridge.

Keeping Clients at the Centre of Everything We Do

At COPE Galway, we know that one in five women in Ireland will find themselves in an abusive relationship at some point of their lives. One in five – of our daughters, our sisters, our nieces, friends, colleagues, neighbours. Each of these women is loved by someone – a parent, a sibling, a child, a friend. As we keep this to the fore, we seek to ensure the rights of each woman are vindicated and we treat each woman who comes to us for support as a woman that we love – the way we would like to see our family and loved ones treated – with respect and with compassion.

Further than this we are led by client need in how our service operates and grows. For each woman, the key question is to ask ‘what do you need? What can we do for you?’, acknowledging that this woman is the expert in her own life, in her own safety and in determining what she needs to live the life she chooses. We work at each woman's pace, and listen whilst she works through her options to reach a decision she is comfortable with.

In operating our Service, we listen to what women tell us about what works well for them and in particular we have benefited from this valuable input in designing the ways in which we will utilise the space in our new home.

Paving the Way to a Better Future

2019 will be our last year at Waterside House. Although this building has many shortcomings it has served the women and children of Galway well, over almost forty years. Our challenge will be to take the essence of Waterside House – the ingredients that make it a warm, welcoming and safe place – with us as we move forward to our new home. With the continued support of our Galway community, we will make Modh Eile House a place of safety for those who need it.

Domestic Abuse Service Challenges

The lack of affordable rental accommodation and the consistent lack of housing availability has contributed to women staying either at home in a volatile situation where safety is compromised or at our Refuge for much longer than ever intended.

In addition, while we are there 24 hours / 7 days a week to assist and support, we were unable to readily

accommodate 169 women with their 233 children on 227 occasions. For these women, we provide emergency short term accommodation and/or work closely with other refuges in neighbouring counties, so that they can be safe in the immediate term, until space opens at ours. It is important to know that this should never be seen as a barrier to using our service or as a reason not to call us when in need.

COPE Galway Domestic Abuse Service Manager, Dr Carol Baumann takes a look at strength and resilience in survivors of domestic abuse.

At COPE Galway Domestic Abuse Service, we meet women from all walks of life who find themselves needing support and advice because of an abusive partner. Almost without exception, each woman blames herself; she is sure she somehow caused the abuse to happen. She will have been conditioned by her partner into thinking and believing that she is to blame as she searches for clues as to what she did wrong, what flaws lie in her soul and how can she make things better.

“I must be so weak... If I were a stronger woman he wouldn't dare hit me”

What a woman who is abused does not see is the very first thing we notice when we meet her - her strength. There are many forms of strength: physical, emotional, mental. There is the muscular strength of the athlete, the fervent passion of the campaigner or the strength it takes to survive an abusive relationship. Often we don't know our own strength - that is until we are tested.

Every day, we see a woman with amazing survival skills who manages - despite the constant knock backs and put downs - to get up every morning and get the children out to school, put food on the table and manage a household with meagre resources. Or a woman who manages to keep down a job or continue with her education despite living under siege, where her every movement is monitored or

controlled and where her access to money is determined by her partner. Women who are constantly walking on egg shells and whose safety is under threat, often to the point that she is fearful of sleeping ... just in case.

To survive and to function in these circumstances, to manage each day to present a smiling face to her children and to the world, takes incredible reserves of strength and resilience. Contrary to being weak, a woman who is abused is strong and extremely resourceful. And this inherent strength and resilience in her character is what will eventually forge the path out of the relationship, and into a new life.

Working with COPE Galway Domestic Abuse Service offers us a window to the best of humanity - women who use our Service are survivors and have stoicism, dignity and compassion in abundance. They dig deep to these reserves, and come out on top - free and without bitterness.

Let's take a moment to salute the women in our community who persevere and overcome difficult situations; the one in five women in Ireland who find themselves in an abusive relationship - our daughters, our sisters, our friends, neighbours and colleagues.

Our imminent move to Modh Eile House, our new home on Forster Street, will be fortified by the strength of these women, each seeking another way of life for her and her children. Once they are given the time and space away from their abusers these women will continue to grow in strength with the help and support of the community of Galway.

Visit our website www.copegalway.ie/domestic-abuse-service/ for further information and to download our Safety Planning Guide.

Be safe, be believed, be supported.

COPE Galway's Domestic Abuse Service

COPE Galway operates a range of services for women and children who are experiencing domestic abuse in Galway city and county including:

24 Hour Refuge

Our 24 hour refuge (the only one in the Western Region) offers accommodation to women and children who need a safe place to stay. It allows a woman who takes the step to leave an abusive home to be safe whilst she considers her next steps, and explores options as to what she thinks best for herself and any children she may have. It is a warm, welcoming environment, a safe space, offering sanctuary and calm – something which is welcomed following stress, fear and chaos.

While in the refuge, a woman is given time and support to reflect on her situation – there is no judgement and no pressure on any woman to take a specific path forward. Each woman is supported to work out what is best for her, at that particular time. This can include understanding her rights in respect of the law and its protections, as well as in the areas of welfare, health, well-being and housing. Many women who have used the refuge report that this time and space is instrumental in allowing them to think – they can do so, free from pressure, and safe from abuse. Once they have made decisions, they are offered support in moving forwards.

Children's Service

Our Children's Service aims to meet the specific and unique needs of children who come to the refuge with their mothers. Each child who has experienced an abusive home life will be impacted differently, and so it is important that each child is individually allowed time, space and support to understand and process their own experience; to heal and re-build relationships. Our Children's Service team are all qualified and experienced in child care and development, and create a fun, relaxed, safe and warm environment, which supports each child, as well as providing very necessary support to the mother in her parenting role.

Outreach Service

Our Outreach Service works with women in a community setting. Many women avail of our Domestic Abuse Service support without ever needing to stay in our refuge. In the same way, however, they are allowed space and time to consider their needs and wants, and to explore options available to them. Again, there is no judgement and no pressure to take any path forward – each woman can examine her rights and then be supported in progressing with these.





SENIOR SUPPORT SERVICES

In 2018 COPE Galway supported:

730
older people

SENIOR SUPPORT

Working to support independent ageing at home; helping older people in our community to stay in their own home for as long as they wish to do so.

Supported through

- Meals on Wheels
- Sonas Day Centre
- Lunch Clubs
- Community Support Projects



59,053
meals produced and delivered to

- People's Homes
- Lunch Clubs
- COPE Galway Services

3,263
individuals supported through FEAD programme (Fund for European Aid for the most Deprived)



Meet Delia

It's all about the company at the community Lunch Clubs.

That's according to Delia Cummins, who enjoys community lunches in Galway city every week.

"When I came to Salthill I didn't really know anybody," she explains. "Somebody introduced me to the Salthill one first and I couldn't believe it. You were just one of them immediately. I got to know so many people since I've joined."

Delia enjoyed Friday's Lunch Club in Salthill so much that she also began attending The Jes Lunch Club on Thursdays. "It makes such a difference, it brought me out of myself completely. It gives me confidence and now when you go up the street you're sure to meet somebody that you know; whereas I wouldn't have known one of them before. That's what I really like about it," she says.

Delia feels that older people who live alone may not cook well for themselves so having a hot, healthy meal at least once a week at a Lunch Club is important. The nutritious meals are

catered by COPE Galway's Community Catering Service. "At our age, a lot of people don't eat enough, especially veg," says Delia. "You eat better when you eat with people."

But more than that, is the social outlet that the clubs provide. Many diners are retired, aged from their 60s to their 90s, and may live alone. "It's the company. Eating alone - there's nothing so boring!" says Delia.

Delia had never heard of Lunch Clubs before and admits she would have thought, "I don't need that", before she went along. But now, she "would love if there were more of them!"

"I would hate if it wasn't there, I look forward to going there." She explains that Lunch Club diners look forward to their relaxed weekly meals, which give them a chance to chat to others and "have a laugh". "I would encourage anyone to go there."

Delia is conscious that many club members may not speak to others during the day if it wasn't for the clubs, particularly in



Three of the 24 Salthill Lunch Club Volunteers, who serve the weekly meal provided by COPE Galway Community Catering.

city areas where people often don't know their neighbours. "The worst sickness of all is loneliness and people don't reach out," she says.

But through the Lunch Clubs, diners "can meet up to go to the cinema, to bingo, that kind of thing. And you would never have met them if it wasn't for the Lunch Clubs".

“It makes such a difference, it brought me out of myself completely”

Sister Breege helps run the Salthill Lunch Club with fellow volunteer Frank. "Here in Salthill we have a lovely group, always between 12 and 16 for lunch and all enjoy the time together", she said. "I think we can say we have never got a meal from COPE Galway that was not first class and that would be the opinion of all who enjoy the meal. We also have a very dedicated group of volunteers - 24 to date who work in Groups of 4 or 5 every Friday. They too have formed a close bond and enjoy preparing for and serving the group of senior people - so everybody wins here! Frank and I are delighted to be involved and are always spreading the word trying to get more people involved in this great initiative".

Delia praises the volunteers that support the clubs. "They're always lovely, the volunteers are terrific. It wouldn't work without them."

And when it comes to the running of the Lunch Clubs, she says, "I wouldn't do anything differently except tell more people about it!"

COPE Galway: Supporting Healthy Independent Ageing at Home

Our work with older people in Galway is focused entirely on *Supporting Healthy Independent Ageing at Home*, which is most commonly identified as the stated preference of older people.

The overall aim of our work is to support and promote a good quality of life, promote community spirit and strengthen community links. Our approach supports the goals of the National Positive Ageing Strategy on Participation, Healthy Ageing and Security and addresses many of the key indicators identified in the 2016 Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative (HAPAI), National Indicators Report.

A community requires a wide range of services and supports to ensure that living at home is a good experience for older people. Some of the services we offer at COPE Galway are outlined below.

Senior Support Services Highlights

COPE Galway Community Support Service

assisted the following number of individuals in 2018 through:

**Community Support Projects
51**

**Sonass Day Centre
67**

Lunch Clubs 250+

New Lunch Clubs

In the past year we have added an additional three community lunch clubs to bring the total to 13 in the city and county. Lunch Clubs bring people together in their local communities, increase opportunities for social contact with neighbours and friends and help create new friendships and experiences. Lunch Clubs provide communities with volunteer opportunities and enable ownership of these as a community resource. Mervue Lunch Club celebrated its 8th birthday in 2018.

Outings

We set up weekly supported shopping trips for older clients, using our mini bus previously donated to us by Medtronic in Galway.



Advocacy and Information for Older People

We have sign-posted older people to a range of services and supports that facilitate independent ageing at home through Advocacy and Information sessions (funded by Community Foundation for Ireland) held at the lunch clubs. Attendees now have an increased awareness

and understanding of the Fair Deal Scheme, Home Support Services, Home Adaptation Grants and Meals on Wheels. We also provided practical information on how to access these supports in an easy-to-read information pack, encouraging people to share information with their friends and neighbours.

“Helping Hands at Home” Project

We received funding via the Ireland Funds to establish a new “Helping Hands at Home” project. This is a volunteer programme that aims to support older people to remain living at home independently and to improve their quality of life. The programme will be set up in 2019 to help older people with daily living tasks, provide information and advocacy in relation to a range of health and welfare supports, and provide regular contact to help reduce the incidence of isolation.

“It’s great that young people will come along to help us out, it really makes a difference”



Corporate Volunteer Projects

Several corporate ‘Helping Hands’ days were organised during 2018, where we brought teams from local companies together for gardening, painting and general clean ups to ensure safe, accessible and inviting outdoor spaces for older residents in our community. For example, in Walter Macken Flats in Mervue, residents had their walls painted, windows washed and a general clean up of the area courtesy of Medtronic and MathWorks. We also received monthly support from the employees of McCarthy Keville O’Sullivan (MKO, pictured above) who have been providing ongoing practical supports for the older residents of two Local Authority complexes.

New Community Room

In 2018, there was long-awaited progress with the refurbishment of a community room for one of the housing clusters in a community that we support. Residents now have a space to meet for tea and a chat and hold activities and their Residents’ Association meetings. The funding from the RAPID Programme 2017 recognised and supported the ongoing efforts of the Residents’ Association to improve amenities in the complex. The residents are also very grateful to Tús Workers from Galway City Partnership who installed storage units and to Galway City Council Tenant Liaison Officer Michael Forde for support with the project.

Enhanced Outdoor Areas

Funding was also received from the Community Enhancement Programme 2018, administered by Galway Local Community Development Committee to enhance the outdoor recreational facilities for residents in one of the communities that we support. Newly installed low impact outdoor exercise equipment, allowing up to four users at a time will promote health and wellbeing through gentle exercise and social interaction. This year we were also able to extend our Sonas Day Centre garden, which now has a new greenhouse and shed.

Senior Support Services Challenges

Our own resources limit our capacity to respond to more older people in our community. We would like to find the funding to be able to expand our role as a safety net for people who don’t have access to family, friends or neighbours.

In addition, access to an appropriate range of housing models to support our growing ageing population continues to be a challenge.

Advocating for a better programme of support and maintenance for residential complexes for older people continues to be a challenge. But we are happy to see progress in one such complex with an upgrade and refurbishment of the heating system by Galway City Council. This will provide its residents with efficient and effective modern heating units to replace solid fuel stoves, which many people found increasingly difficult to manage.

COPE Galway's Senior Support Services

Community Catering Meals on Wheels

We offer the best of healthy nutritious meals suited to the needs of an ageing person through our Community Catering Meals on Wheels service. We currently deliver meals across Galway city and some areas of the county.

“As important as the meal itself is, it’s also the fact that you’re contacting people who are living on their own - it’s a form of regular contact for them with the outside world.”

Tom Burke, Volunteer Driver

See the next section for some of the 2018 highlights at our Community Catering Service.

Lunch Clubs

Our lunch clubs across the city and county build on the importance of good nutrition combined with opportunities for social interaction in the local community.

“The lunch club means the world to the people who come here. There’s a small group of women who met here and they’ve ended up great friends. They now go out for lunch together too and are a real support to each other. Some of them have lost family and friends over the past few years and they’ve all rallied round...they can really lean on each other for support... it’s huge”.

Renmore Lunch Club Participant



Sonas Day Centre

Our drop in centre for older residents in Mervue and surrounding areas, aims to ensure that no older person is isolated and continues living a healthy independent life in their own home. Sonas is a social space for people to come and meet friends and take part in activities such as art classes, exercise classes, movie afternoons, knitting classes, weekly lunch clubs and breakfast mornings. We offer practical supports such as help with a range of health, welfare and housing issues that older people may have as well as a laundry service and form-filling.

“Sonas is like one big family ... It’s local people that you’re supporting, it’s the place that you’re supporting... it’s a huge part of Galway.”

Aoife Barrett, Arts Facilitator, Sonas Day Centre

Community Support Project

Our Community Support Workers provide social and emotional support through regular visits to people who are living alone. While many older people today have very supportive families, friends and neighbours to lend a hand, those without this support can often feel isolated, lonely and at a loss as to how to secure the services and supports they need.

We provide one-to-one or group support in, for example, accessing relevant services, benefits and information and we help navigate what are often complicated and time consuming processes, such as online information and access or auto attendant phone responses. We also support Residents’ Association meetings and liaise with Galway City Council Tenant Liaison Officers, community Gardaí and other community supports.

We access funding to organise classes, for example, on gardening, computer skills, yoga and art. Taking part in shared activities in an informal learning setting is enjoyable, good for mental health and supports community spirit.

“I was delighted to get help to figure out how my electricity bill was so high, I can manage it much better now”

Community Support Client

Meet Mary

Local resident Mary* has been coming to Sonas Day Centre in Mervue for a number of years.

"It's great ... there's always a kettle on the boil. Everyone is very welcoming, there's support there and it's a social outlet as well," she says.

The drop-in centre, run by COPE Galway, provides a safe social space for older people in the local community.

There is always a welcome, a listening ear and a helping hand when needed, according to Mary, who works part-time but visits Sonas whenever she can.

Open 6 days a week, older people are invited to simply drop in for a chat or take part in the many activities on offer through Sonas. From exercise classes to arts and crafts, there's something for everyone.

The Day Centre's activity schedule includes knitting and crocheting classes on Mondays, a movie afternoon on Wednesdays, Lunch Club on Thursdays, and Breakfast Club followed by art in the afternoon on Fridays.

There are also regular music sessions at Sonas. "I learned the words to songs, it was great," says Mary. "Ballads and every kind and any kind of songs. We had great fun!"

Lead Community Support Worker at Sonas, Karen Bonner, explains that the drop-in centre is a "social space for people to come meet people, to take part in activities or not - they don't have to. Everyone is welcome, just drop in whenever they want."

"There's always a kettle on the boil!"

The weekly Lunch Club is a highlight of the week for many. Taking place each Thursday at 1pm at St James' GAA Hall, diners can enjoy a hot meal followed by a sing-song led by local musicians, and "maybe a bit of dancing afterwards", says Mary.

"The Lunch Club is nice and then Friday morning, if you want, you can have breakfast and meet people. It's better than being in on your own isn't it?" says Mary, adding "you get to know people" through Sonas. "They're lovely here."

Sonas supports a wide range of people, not just those over 65 and not just those from Mervue. "There's a great mix of people," says Karen. "We have people coming from all over."

Mary feels that the social support that Sonas provides for the community is vital. "It's a support network," she explains. For instance, when someone is ill and unable to come along to Sonas, staff can arrange 'Meals on Wheels' through COPE Galway's Community Catering Service.

The Sonas team also provides support with laundry, shopping, home maintenance, form filling and a range of health, welfare and housing issues. "There's always someone there," says Mary. "There's somebody to go to."

**Name has been changed.*

Community Catering Service Highlights

Meals on Wheels

59,053
Meals Produced and Delivered

43,258 to 362
Meals on Wheels Customers

9,111
to Lunch Club Network

6,684
to COPE Galway Services

- Domestic Abuse Refuge
- Osterley Lodge
- Cold Weather Response

Meals on Wheels

Community Catering Meals on Wheels continued to provide a key service to many older people in our community in 2018. The service allows couples and individuals to enjoy the benefit of living at home without the pressure of having to cater. The impact the service is having on people’s lives can be seen in the feedback we receive from clients and their families. The following is a typical example:

“Dad started Meals on Wheels around three years ago after a great lot of persuasion. He got shingles four years ago and he lost a lot of weight. He never really cooked very well for himself since my mum died in 1998. Once I persuaded him to try them he loved them and has never looked back. It’s a wonderful service that you offer providing a very tasty well balanced diet. Keep up the amazing work that so many people rely on!”

Food Rescue and Food Donation Initiatives

COPE Galway is a charity partner of the social enterprise Food Cloud, connecting businesses with surplus food to charities through a software platform. In 2018 with the support of a team of food rescue volunteers, COPE Galway collected in excess of **8,766kg of surplus food** from our retail partners. This includes fresh fruit, vegetables



Chef John Kelly keeping some of his Friday kitchen volunteer team from melting during the 2018 heatwave.

and chilled products. This food, redistributed throughout COPE Galway services, offers food cost savings benefits.

Other food donations came from Piggott Eggs, who donate a case of 360 eggs each Monday morning. When Green Earth Organics customers go on holiday, they have an option to “pay it forward” by donating their automatic weekly order to COPE Galway instead of cancelling their box of veggies for their time away.

Meals4Health

In 2018, we developed our new social enterprise, Meals4Health, supporting people who need specialised nutritional support. Our fresh ready meals are suited to the dietary needs of older people and are delivered to people at home, anywhere in the country. Meals4Health was developed with the support of The Social Innovation Fund Ireland, through the Animate and Social Enterprise Development Programmes, in partnership with the Department of Rural and Community Development.

In June 2018 we were delighted to welcome Minister Sean Kyne to our Community Catering facility to showcase our Meals4Health social enterprise. You can read more on this in our “Looking to the Future” section.

www.meals4health.ie

Our Community

In addition to the services we provide supporting independent living at home and contributing to healthy communities, the team at community catering are very proud to enable the provision of safe, productive, progressive work placements for individuals gaining skills and training through organisations such as:

- Employability
- Brain Injury Quest
- Ability West
- National Learning Network



Minister Sean Kyne visits with our Community Catering team.

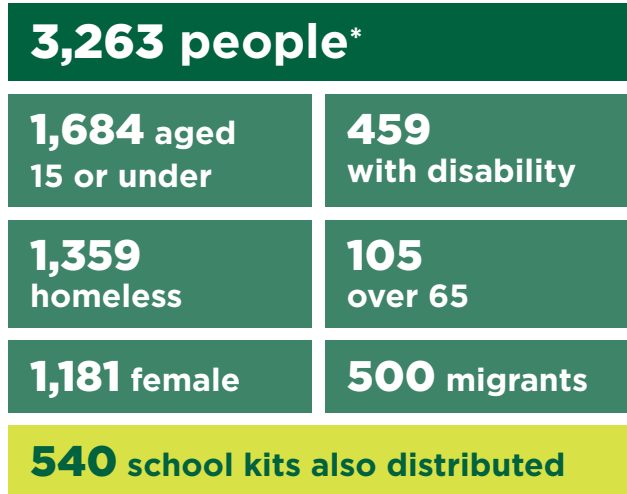
Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived (FEAD) Programme

The Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived (FEAD) is an EU-wide programme to help people take their first steps out of poverty and social exclusion. The programme aims to provide nutritious dry foodstuff to families and individuals struggling to provide themselves with the basic necessities of life due to a lack of financial resources. The impact of the programme is apparent from the feedback we receive from the social services we partner with to deliver it.

In 2018 TUSLA South Galway Family Services introduced the COPE Galway FEAD Programme. The programme has proved an invaluable resource to the area for family support workers addressing front line issues such as food poverty, rising rents and homelessness. The FEAD programme has helped over 70 families in the area in times of duress and allowed some families to budget for other essential items. More importantly, the FEAD programme has also allowed them to establish trusting relationships with families who might otherwise be reluctant to engage with social services.

An example of the “gateway” aspect of the FEAD programme has been our ability to use the network to distribute school kits to children of mothers who have had

In 2018, COPE Galway distributed food through the FEAD programme to:



**Total figure represents unique clients.*

to use their back to school allowance to pay for rising rents. Feedback about the impact of this ancillary programme has been very positive as evidenced by comments from a social worker:

“I’ve given both the kits and the boxes to a family of a mother and her three young children who is struggling to make ends meet. She said that she wouldn’t have been able to afford all the costs of back to school without the help of the kits and she has also said that the food boxes help her to ensure that her children are not hungry when she cannot afford food for them to pay rent. She asked me to make sure that I passed on how grateful she is to the staff and volunteers involved.”



Meet Aine and Richard

Mother and son Áine and Richard Hickey have helped to make thousands of nutritious meals for older people over the past nine years, as part of COPE Galway's Community Catering team.

Based in Ballybane, the service makes 200 meals each day, all prepared by a team of kitchen assistant volunteers and delivered by a team of volunteer drivers.

Áine has experience of both preparing and delivering meals, and feels the service provides an important social support to vulnerable people. "It's reassuring for families to know that the service is there, when someone is living on their own," she says.

"It's a lovely atmosphere, everyone is friendly. I look forward to going in on a Monday and meeting everybody"

Áine first began volunteering with COPE Galway after taking redundancy. Wanting to do something with her free time, she began volunteering with different local groups through Volunteer Galway and went on to join COPE Galway's Community Catering team with her son Richard, who has Down Syndrome.

Each Monday, the duo helps the chef with fresh food preparation like cutting carrots and juicing oranges – a particular speciality of Richard's – as well as cleaning and washing up. "Whatever needs to be done in the kitchen," Áine explains. "It's a lovely atmosphere, everyone is friendly. I look forward to going in on a Monday and meeting everybody," says Áine, adding they have made great friends through COPE Galway over the years.

The Meals on Wheels menu changes every day and clients can enjoy meals like meat, fish or vegetarian dishes with fresh vegetables and potatoes, soup and desserts. Áine and Richard help to prepare the fresh food, including that donated by local supermarkets and producers through the Food Rescue Project, which distributes surplus food to charities from its hub in Oranmore.

There is a great work atmosphere at the Community Catering kitchen, Áine says, praising the "terrific" staff and volunteers, and executive chef Geraldine Ryan.

"If I could choose a job, if I was still working, I would choose COPE Galway. We are all volunteers up there, bar a few staff. We are free to come and go so if we didn't like it, we wouldn't be there. But we're all there for years, which proves it's a very nice place to be."

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Working at COPE Galway

We have approximately 135 skilled staff here at COPE Galway. They work in diverse teams across a wide range of functions throughout our different services to help meet the various needs of our clients in Galway city and county. We have Project Workers in our Day Centre, Night Support Workers in Osterley Lodge and Fairgreen Hostel, Outreach Workers in our Domestic Abuse Service, Chefs in Community Catering, Community Support Workers, Residential Hostel Workers, Team Leads, Administration staff... the list goes on.

Such a variety of roles makes for a stimulating, dynamic and diverse culture.

At times, the environment we work in can be challenging. Our organisation recognises and appreciates the hard work, dedication and resilience of our teams across all our services. Some of our 2018 initiatives to support our employees are outlined below.

Health and Wellbeing

Our employees strive to find positive outcomes for the clients we work with, often while faced with many obstacles and very difficult situations. We endeavour to encourage and support our employees to focus and spend time on their own health and wellbeing. Over the last couple of years, in consultation with staff, we have set up initiatives to support our workers as best we can.

These have included an Employee Assistance Programme, regular mindfulness sessions, Wellness at Work training, massages and reflexology.

Recognising Length of Service

Each year we recognise and reward employees who have worked with us for a number of years. We have celebrated 20, 15, 10 and 5 years of service with many staff over the years. In 2018 we were delighted to recognise 25 years of dedication from Jackie Carroll, who works at our Domestic Abuse Service. Jackie also happens to be our mindfulness teacher, supporting staff in self-care.

“You cannot pour from an empty cup”

Employee Development

We value the reciprocity of investing in our employees and offer a variety of ongoing learning and development opportunities. Having a number of different services means we can provide the opportunity for staff to move internally and develop their skills with new challenges in new roles. Regular external training courses are also an integral part of working in COPE Galway.



Jackie Carroll celebrates 25 years of service with COPE Galway

Our Team

Some of our staff have kindly offered us an insight into their ever-evolving roles within the organisation of COPE Galway. Here, they talk about their development



**Sharon Reams,
Residential Hostel Worker, Fairgreen Hostel**

I started with COPE Galway as a relief worker at the Day Centre in September 2011. After a year there, I took a temporary post as relief worker at Fairgreen Hostel, then a six month maternity contract in the lead up to my current role as Residential Hostel Worker, which I've held since September 2013.

My role at Fairgreen Hostel has developed over the past eight years as the service we provide has evolved to match the changing client group. With clients now remaining with us for longer periods my role as key-worker has changed from one of crisis intervention with short-stay clients to now working with clients for a minimum of six months and offering support in many more areas such as employment, training, mental health and addressing addiction.



**Helena Ryan,
Acting Coordinator, Osterley Lodge**

I started with COPE Galway in June 1996 as a Residential Child Care Worker. I really cannot believe how quickly this time has gone. Since starting my journey with Galway Social Services (which was later renamed COPE Galway), I have had the opportunity to experience a few different roles within the organisation.

After moving into a team lead role and some difficult times of staff redeployment during a period of organisational change, I moved to an Outreach Worker position at COPE Galway's Domestic Abuse Service. I then redeployed to Osterley Lodge, where I have worked as a Residential Hostel Worker and, for the past 14 months, in an Acting Co-ordinator role.



**Michelle McGrath, Project Worker,
Cold Weather Response**

I started working with COPE Galway on a relief basis in October 2014. Initially I was based in the Day Centre and Osterley Lodge. Alongside these roles, in early 2015, I took up a part-time project worker position in COPE Galway Families' Service. In 2016 I also began working at our Domestic Abuse Service on a relief basis. After a mini career break in Australia in 2018, I was given the opportunity to work with COPE Galway again and happily jumped back into my relief positions. In November of last year I secured a full-time contract with the Cold Weather Response (CWR) service, where I remain until April 2019, when the CWR ends, after which I am looking forward to joining the team at the Fairgreen Hostel as relief staff.

journey within COPE Galway's services; where they see the biggest impact of their work - on their clients and on themselves - and how they make sure they take care of themselves.

Working for longer with a client gives us an opportunity to offer more in-house training. I have recently trained to be a Naloxone facilitator, where I can now train staff and clients in overdose prevention and Naloxone administration.

Building relationships with residents and rough sleepers who present to us is important. Having a vulnerable person place their trust in you to support and guide them is key. Sometimes the smallest interactions can be the most powerful and meaningful: helping someone find shoes that are clean and fit properly; accompanying someone to INTREO to establish payment; getting someone gym gear for their fitness course; listening to someone's fears about life after they move on from

Fairgreen. Our clients know that we will advocate for them and try our very best to support them in all aspects of their lives.

As the years progress, it can be difficult to shake the stress associated with working in a front-line homeless service. I try to ensure I have days spent with friends/family or I allow myself days to just rest if I am not up to seeing or talking to anyone after a particularly hectic day. I love going to the gym to unwind and refocus.

The support of the Fairgreen Team is invaluable, we genuinely encourage and care for each other.

Upholding the respect and dignity of the client is core to how we interact at Osterley. For me, that first meeting with the client is key. It provides the opportunity to offer compassion and understanding for the client's circumstances and reassurance that they have somewhere safe and warm to stay for the night. If a woman's basic needs can be met initially, then in time she can be supported through other needs such as poor mental health, addiction etc. When a client is ready to move on from Osterley we try to ensure they leave with hope for the future and have developed coping skills and life skills to stay in the community

With our roles at the crisis frontline, where we can sometimes be exposed to very complex and challenging

clients, self-care is very important. When I finish my shift I like to listen to music in my car on the way home. I also love to read and find this is a great way to escape from the day's challenges. I also like to walk and in Salthill we have a beautiful promenade to stroll or jog along.

Over the years I have worked with and continue to work with great colleagues who are there every day with a kind word or a cuppa that gets us through the hard times - staff are very supportive and mindful of each other. I also receive regular professional supervision from my line manager, which provides a space to reflect on the work we do.

Being allergic to working a 9-5, Monday-to-Friday type of routine, relief work throughout COPE Galway services and gaining experience in both the various homeless and domestic abuse settings has been wonderful so far. I work alongside a variety of amazing workers and clients from whom I can learn something new on a daily basis.

Developing an understanding of homelessness, domestic abuse, mental health and addiction has allowed me to understand and support clients accessing the services and build trust relationships while also helping identify my own areas of interest. I feel if we work from a place where we can open up clear communication lines both with

colleagues and clients, we can develop positive outcomes for the service and clients. Having the client feel supported and empowered simultaneously is really important to me in my work approach and working from a strengths-based and needs-led perspective has helped with delivering positive outcomes.

As far as self-care is concerned? You can't go wrong with lots of yoga and sleep!

Volunteering at COPE Galway



COPE Galway could not support the people who need our services without the commitment and hard work of the amazing individuals and groups who volunteer with us.

Our volunteers are a diverse team of people from all walks of life, all ages, nationalities and backgrounds. What they have in common is a desire to make a difference in their community, and in their own lives, by giving of their time.

Our teams of volunteers are very important to us. We celebrate their invaluable work every year when we get together at our annual Volunteer Recognition Lunch Event.

Investing In Volunteers (IiV) - a Quality Standard for Best Practice

2018 was a very exciting year at our Volunteer Office, as we embarked on our journey to carry out a formal self-assessment of our Volunteer Programme. **Investing in Volunteers** is a unique quality framework in that it focuses on volunteers. It is based on the main areas of volunteer management: planning for volunteer involvement, recruiting volunteers, selecting and matching volunteers and supporting and retaining volunteers.

The IiV audit provided a structure for us to review every aspect of our work with volunteers. It helped us to see very clearly what we were doing effectively and to identify key areas where we could be more effective.

Assessed against a range of best practice standards, the audit involved meeting with over 30 volunteers, board members and staff. COPE Galway proved to excel in all aspects of working with our volunteers and we attained our quality mark standard on 28th October 2018.

Terri O'Brien, Volunteer Ireland Quality and Programmes Manager said, "Volunteer Ireland is delighted to announce COPE Galway's successful achievement of this Award. They have demonstrated a real commitment to volunteering and proven that their volunteer management policies and procedures meet nationally recognised standards".

The IiV process was a very valuable journey for us all in preparing for the audit over the year. Equally rewarding was seeing staff and volunteers all engaging together in the process. We believe our Volunteer Programme has been enhanced to improve our volunteers' experience at COPE Galway.

Helping Hands Projects - Corporate Volunteering Programme

COPE Galway's Helping Hands Projects are open to companies and businesses who are seeking meaningful ways to become involved in our community. Volunteering provides a great platform to engage employees which can benefit the employee, employer, the volunteer-involving organisation and of course the community.

Last year we partnered with 10 companies who volunteered with 15 Helping Hands Projects (Medtronic; Marks & Spencer; Creganna Medical; Diesel Card; Thermo King; MathWorks; McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan; AIB; CSGI; Apple and CISCO). These companies helped us to complete a variety of Helping Hands Projects ranging from gardening, window cleaning, painting, general maintenance and upkeep of our services and clients' homes. They also assisted with the set-up of our Cold Weather Response Service and our Christmas Food and Donations Project. We are very grateful to them for donating their time and skills with such enthusiasm.



Meet Our Volunteers

“Whether it’s in the Lunch Clubs, the Shop, Community Catering... you’re going to be working in an environment with people who are kind. There’s camaraderie and good fun, but you’re also doing something for the people of Galway and that’s the most important thing.” ... “I love volunteering in the shop because I’m helping out where possible and I just enjoy the experience of volunteering. I’ve never done it before; it’s a totally new thing for me but I enjoy doing it.”

Senan, Office Administrator & Charity Shop Volunteer

“COPE Galway’s people are always good-humoured; they’re always in great form! They encourage people all the time and they’re helping them out. They’re very nice to us as volunteers and my [15 years] experience is that they are very nice to their clients as well, and that means an awful lot. ... Because if someone is living with an illness, and there’s an encouraging word or an empathic voice, it can bring them on a long way.”

Tom, one of COPE Galway’s 60-strong team of volunteer drivers who deliver thousands of nutritious meals to clients around Galway City each year.

“I absolutely love going in there. I work there Friday afternoons and it’s just the best end to the week ever, it just makes you feel really good. They’re so welcoming. It’s a real family environment. It’s a little small space but there’s really nice, warm energy in there.”

Aoife, Arts Facilitator, Sonas Day Centre

“I would recommend volunteering to anybody who’s sitting at home who might be retired and who would want to make use of their time and do something worthwhile... Volunteering is about giving but you also get so much out of it in terms of friendship and the people you meet. Retired people especially, who would have too much time on their hands, they would meet so many new friends if they opted to volunteer.”

Mary C, Administration Support Volunteer

ADVOCACY



COPE Galway: Advocating for Change

COPE Galway advocates for change in policy across a range of issues related to the areas of work of the organisation at local, regional and national levels. In addition to our frontline services advocating on behalf of individual clients, we also aim to empower the people we work with to advocate for themselves.

As an organisation, where possible, we seek to influence and change public policy and regularly make submissions and contribute to dialogue around the various social justice issues that negatively affect our clients.

In addition, we collaborate with and participate on a number of forums to advance our advocacy objectives at local, regional and national policy levels. Visit our website for our list of collaborators.

www.copegalway.ie/collaboration-and-partnership

Advocacy Forum

Our Advocacy Forum, which is made up of staff drawn from across the organisation and supported by our Advocacy and Policy Worker aims to identify and propose solutions to barriers and blockages our clients experience in claiming their entitlements. The Forum also contributes to the organisation's work in highlighting issues, raising public awareness and advocating for changes in legislation, policy and administrative practices at statutory level where appropriate.

Advocating for Change Subcommittee

This subcommittee of the COPE Galway Board of Management supports the delivery of our Strategic Plan: Working Together Towards Home and Community, by ensuring that there is a clear focus for our advocacy work. It consists of representatives from our board and staff.

Seeking Change in Public Policy

In 2018, we focused on making a number of key submissions. Our annual 'Pre-budget Submission' to the Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform in advance of Budget 2019 outlined specific requests such as prioritising the building of additional social housing; additional supports for marginalised groups, including a properly resourced and evaluated Youth Homelessness Strategy and ring fenced funding for therapeutic interventions for children and young people affected by domestic abuse. We also sought the creation of a statutory scheme for the provision of homecare services to ensure that older people can avail of the care they require while continuing to live in their own homes and for consideration to be given to the inclusion of a nutritional assessment as part of this scheme.

During 2018, we also identified the use of residential units for short term holiday lets in areas of high housing demand such as Galway, as an issue that was affecting our

clients as these properties were no longer in the rental market or available to those who need homes. COPE Galway raised this issue throughout 2018, calling for measures to be introduced to stem the loss of housing units to the short term holiday letting market and to bring residential units used for this purpose back into the long term rental market. We were pleased to learn in October that measures are to be introduced in 2019 to ensure whole homes can only be used for this purpose for a limited number of days each year and so are not available on the short-term holiday letting market full time. We hope that these measures will contribute to an increase in the numbers of homes available for renting in 2019.

As a member of the Irish Coalition to End Youth Homelessness (ICEYH), COPE Galway assisted in the drafting of the Coalition's call for Government action on youth homelessness. This document outlines the ICEYH vision of Government policies and service interventions needed to end youth homelessness. As a member of the coalition, COPE Galway is advocating for the development of a comprehensive Youth Homelessness Strategy and work on this will continue throughout 2019.

As a member of The Wheel (the national association of community and voluntary organisations), COPE Galway assisted in drafting a submission as part of a consultation process to examine the role of voluntary organisations in the provision of health and personal social services and to make recommendations on the future evolution of their role. This was commissioned by the Minister for Health.

Awareness Raising and Information Campaigns

Communicating our message to the right audience is important to us. We have a number of staff across our services who have taken on an outreach remit to visit schools, campuses, community centres and other venues and hold information events and seminars throughout the year. Information imparted can range from telling students about the warning signs of abusive relationships to making sure older people in our community know about specific services available to them or holding Q&A sessions at schools about what it means to be homeless in Galway.

We also conducted a number of public awareness campaigns during 2018. We regularly issue press releases and information with the aim of informing and educating the wider community on issues pertinent to our areas of work. With regular posts on our digital media platforms in relation to issues of social justice along with a number of initiatives that have garnered local and national media attention, we are very grateful to the print, digital and broadcast media for their support in publicising our work and campaigns throughout the year. Some of these are outlined on the next page.

Awareness-raising and Information Campaigns



Dr Niall Muldoon and COPE Galway CEO, Jacquie Horan at the launch of COPE Galway's 2017 Annual Report

A sample of 2018 awareness-raising and information campaigns include:

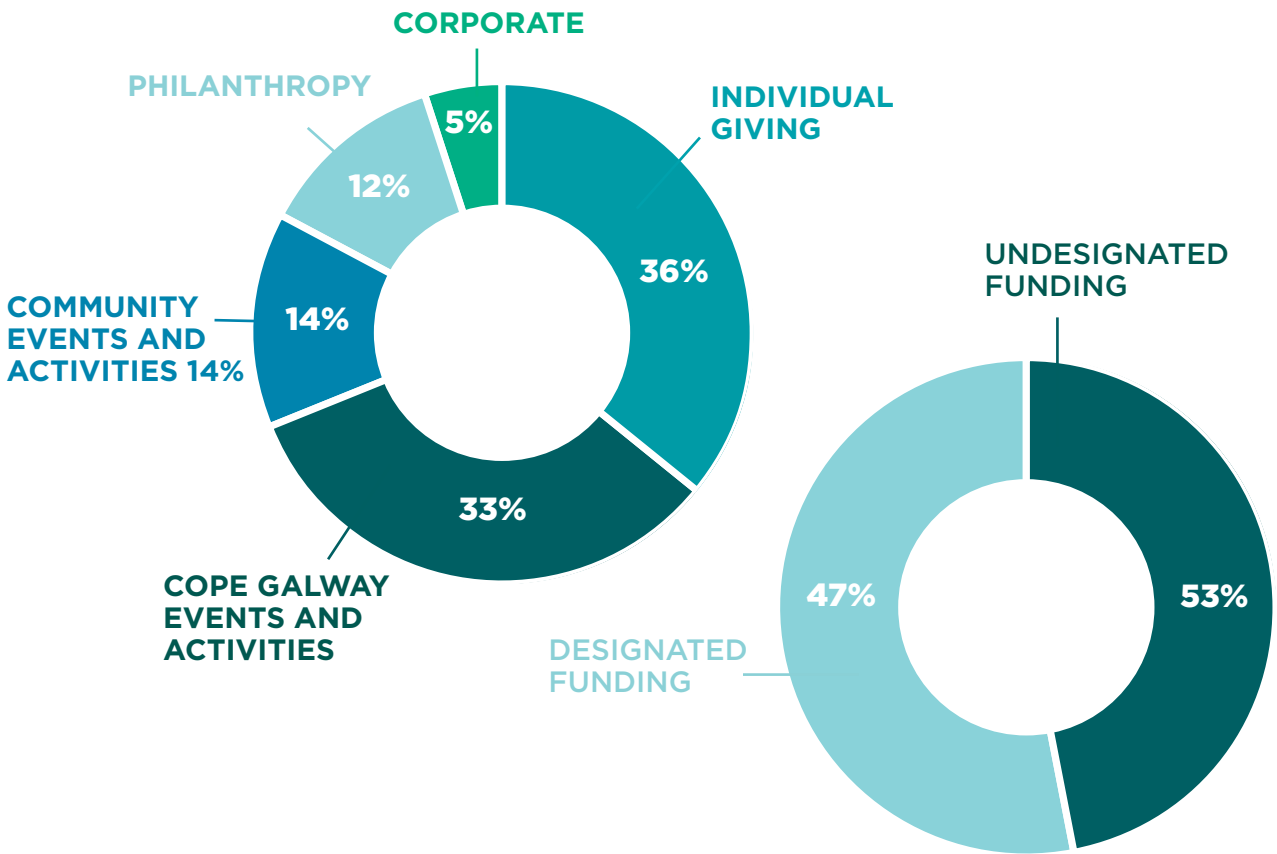
- Dr. Niall Muldoon, Ombudsman for Children, gave the keynote address at the launch event in October for our 2017 Annual Report. This event also gave us an opportunity to relay individual stories from people we have worked with across our services. With the focus of the launch on the long-term effects of domestic abuse on children, we also unveiled our video, Sean's Story – a powerful animated portrayal of the life of a young boy at our domestic abuse refuge.
- The 2018 annual international 16 Days of Action on Violence against Women campaign saw us release a robust set of 16 daily blogs addressing common myths around domestic abuse. We also published a new safety planning leaflet, "Staying Safe, Getting Out," on the final day of the campaign, Human Rights Day.
- The publication of the monthly homeless figures by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and the quarterly findings of our own one day census of the numbers in contact with COPE Galway services who were homeless or at risk of homelessness were used as opportunities to raise awareness of the plight of the growing numbers of families and individuals affected by homelessness at a local level in Galway. We asked for the support of the community and wider public in responding to this.
- We immediately and consistently posted information on our digital platforms during inclement weather to assist rough sleepers or older people living alone, such as the snow with Storm Emma in March and the summer's heatwave.
- 2018 saw the launch of our new website, which has improved, user-friendly features and is a mine of information on all our services. You can also view the resources, blog, video and press releases mentioned above. Please visit www.copegalway.ie

FUNDRAISING



Fundraising for COPE Galway

COPE Galway is committed to raising funds from a diverse range of sources and methods which, in 2018, was broadly broken down into the following areas:



Thank You

Thank you to everyone that supported COPE Galway in 2018.

Whether you donated once, were a regular giver, ran a marathon, sold some cakes, held a coffee morning or shook a bucket on the street, we would not be able to achieve what we do without your amazing support.

Through your generosity and support COPE Galway was able to raise in excess of €846,000 towards delivery of our services and to offer hope and encouragement to those most isolated and vulnerable in our community.

Thank you for your support and thank you for the trust you placed in COPE Galway.

Highlights

We raised €846,071 through fundraising in 2018



53% undesignated funding allowing us to best respond to need

32 Business Sleep Out participants helped raise **€167,999**

€14,727 raised as part of our church plate collection



€144,849 was raised through **214** once off donations



656 regular giving donors raised **€124,428**



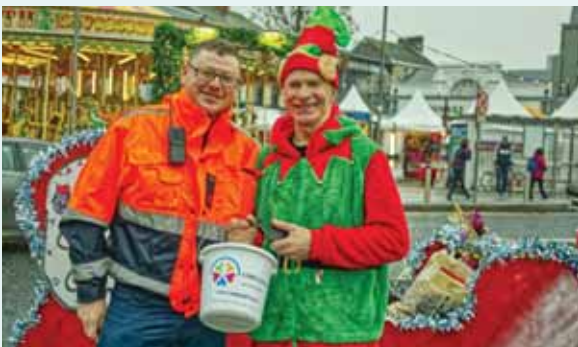
We received a single philanthropic donation of **€100,000**



18 corporate partnerships raised **€36,558**



Over **1,000** people braved the Christmas Swim to help raise **€39,478**



€121,850 raised through community events



Charity Shop

In 2018 we continued to offer quality fashion, accessories and jewellery to the public from our St Augustine Street shop. With the Galway community once again proving extremely generous in their giving, thousands of items of clothes, accessories, jewellery, books, CDs and DVDs were sold to happy customers. These donations, in turn, have helped deliver vital funds which go directly towards supporting our frontline services.

As well as being our face on the high street, our shop acts as an intermediary for enquiries and provides information

on the work of COPE Galway whilst also servicing our clients who may at times require clothes or other supports.

Thank you to everyone that has supported the COPE Galway Shop throughout 2018. Thank you to the dedicated volunteers that give their time to make sure we can provide such terrific service to our valued customers and thank you to those that donated items that allow us to provide such a high quality and diverse range of stock.



Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising

The Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising is a guide to best practice fundraising activities developed by the Irish Charities Tax Research Group in support of the Charities Act (2009). The Statement exists to:

- Improve fundraising practice
- Promote high levels of accountability and transparency by organisations fundraising from the public
- Provide clarity and assurances to donors and prospective donors about the organisations they support

COPE Galway is fully committed to achieving the standards outlined within the Statement and, having considered it, believe we meet the standards it sets out. Our full public compliance statement can be viewed at www.copegalway.ie

We welcome your feedback on our performance and can be contacted about this either in person, via email over the phone.

FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

Governance at COPE Galway



COPE Galway's Board of Management

COPE Galway is a private company limited by guarantee. A Board of Trustees manages the organisation, with operational responsibility delegated to the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of the organisation.

During 2018, COPE Galway's Board of Management held six board meetings with 68% attendance overall. The following persons held the various seats on the Board of Directors and attended board meetings as listed:

| Board Member | Role/Representative | Board Meetings (Eligible) | Board Meetings (Attendance) |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Eamon Bradshaw (Chairman) | Business | 6 | 4 |
| Fr Joseph Roche | Diocesan | 6 | 5 |
| Hannah Kiely | Governance | 6 | 4 |
| Dr Martina Kelly | Health and Safety | 4 | 4 |
| Paudie Cunningham | Staff | 6 | 5 |
| Paul Dilger | Marketing and Communications | 6 | 2 |
| Sean Silke | Human Resources | 6 | 4 |
| John Royliston | Business | 6 | 5 |
| Karen Kilduff | Services | 4 | 1 |
| Deirdre Squires | Older Persons | 6 | 5 |
| Adrian Callanan | Business | 6 | 4 |
| Connie Healy | Legal and Advocacy | 6 | 4 |
| Seamus Lennon | Education and Quality | 5 | 4 |

Five sub-committees of the board continued to operate in 2018 to support the delivery of our Strategy. Various members of the board sit on these sub committees, who met as follows:

| Subcommittee | Number of meetings in 2018 | Eligible Board Member | Number of Meetings Attended |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Delivering Outcomes | 4 | Dr Martina Kelly | 3 (resigned committee in September) |
| | | Karen Kilduff | 1 (resigned committee in August) |
| | | Deirdre Squires | 2 (joined committee in September) |
| Developing our Organisation | 5 | Sean Silke | 2 |
| Advocating for Change | 5 | Paul Dilger | 5 |
| | | Connie Healy | 4 |
| Property and Finance | 4 | Adrian Callanan | 4 |
| | | John Royleston | 3 |
| | | Fr Joe Roche | 1 |
| Audit and Risk | 5 | John Royleston | 4 |
| | | Seamus Lennon | 3 (joined committee in March) |
| | | Hannah Kiely | 2 (resigned committee in March) |

Compliance and Risk Management

The work of the Audit and Risk Committee involved reviewing the effectiveness of the organisation’s internal financial control and procedures; oversight of the external audit process from planning to completion and recommendation of the financial statements to the board for approval. COPE Galway also maintains a risk register. The terms of reference of the committee were extended in late 2017 to include governance and compliance.



During 2018 COPE Galway commissioned an external review of our compliance with

the Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary and Charitable sector in Ireland. This was undertaken by Nicolas Marcoux of the Institute of Public Administration, who confirmed that COPE Galway is nearing full compliance with the governance standards recommended by the Governance Code. Two items were identified that need attention so that the organisation can be satisfied it is fully compliant: letters of appointment of Board Members and improving on the effectiveness of the risk management process. These items were addressed in 2018.



We also complied with the Housing Agency Regulation office.

Retired Board Members



Dr. Martina Kelly held a position on the board for six years. As a mechanical and biomedical engineer with specialist knowledge in the areas of safety and risk management, she held a position on our board representing Health and

Safety and had oversight of our policies, practices and procedures in this regard. Martina was also very generous with her time and expertise in many other areas and we very much appreciate her commitment to COPE Galway.



Karen Kilduff has represented our services on the board for four years and has been extremely generous with her time and involvement in many ways. Most notably Karen has worked consistently in relation to one of our services whereby many supports for women were developed as a direct consequence of her inputs. Karen has been a wonderful advocate for women and has made a lasting impact with COPE Galway.

New Board Members



Seamus Lennon joined our board in February 2018. As Head of Department of Biopharmaceutical & Medical Science at the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) Seamus’s experience with Quality and Risk is a valuable asset to COPE Galway as is maintaining our ongoing relationship with GMIT as a key educational institution and employer in Galway.

Our Board is composed of volunteers who give freely of their time and expertise to help COPE Galway to set out and achieve our Mission. We would like to thank all members of the Board of Management who progressed the interests of COPE Galway during 2018.

Financial Statement

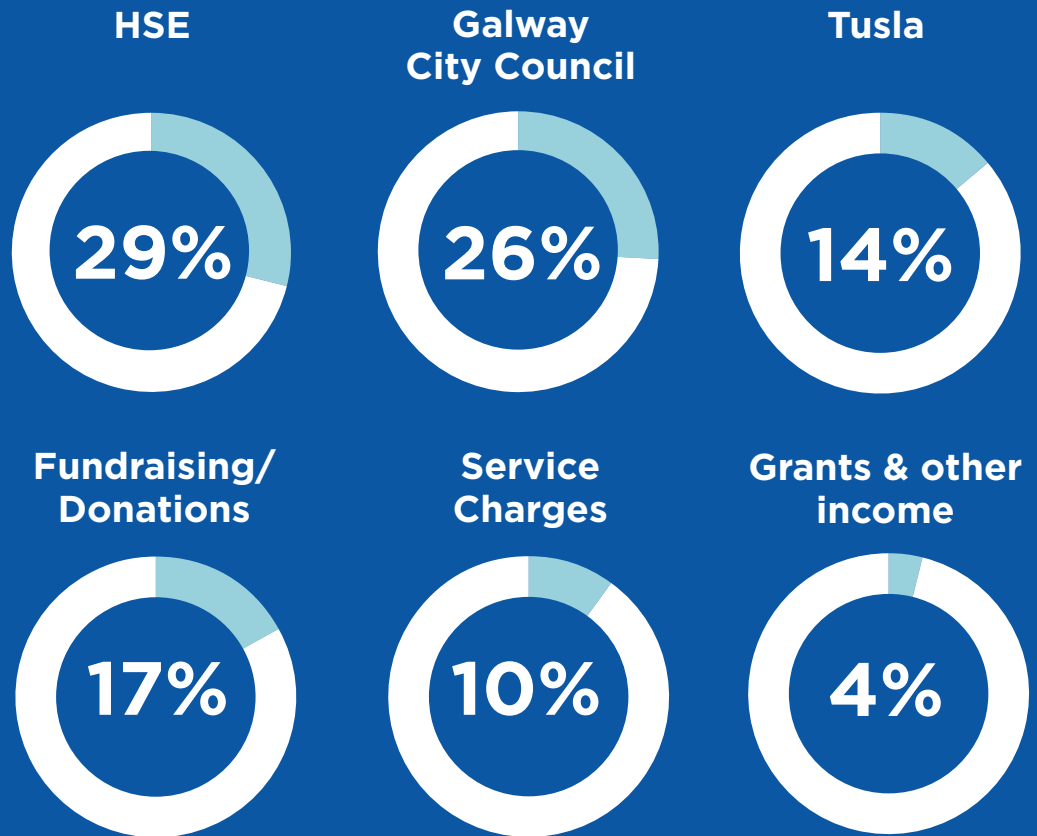
Income & Expenditure Account for year ended 31st December 2018

| | 2018 | 2017 |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Income | | |
| HSE | 1,681,899 | 1,602,375 |
| Galway City Council | 1,525,029 | 1,285,873 |
| Tusla | 824,381 | 803,981 |
| Fundraising/Donations | 995,546 | 858,100 |
| Service Charges | 573,139 | 529,524 |
| Grants and Other Income | 227,679 | 137,117 |
| | 5,827,674 | 5,216,969 |
| | | |
| Domestic Abuse Service Capital Project | 234,637 | - |
| | 6,062,311 | 5,216,969 |
| | 6,062,311 | 5,216,969 |
| Expenditure | | |
| Homeless Services | 2,644,497 | 2,407,972 |
| Domestic Abuse Service | 981,760 | 910,928 |
| Older People Services | 635,833 | 614,363 |
| Fundraising | 375,790 | 281,752 |
| Administration | 437,310 | 478,690 |
| | 5,075,191 | 4,693,705 |
| Depreciation | 59,073 | 55,485 |
| | 5,134,264 | 4,749,190 |
| | 5,134,264 | 4,749,190 |

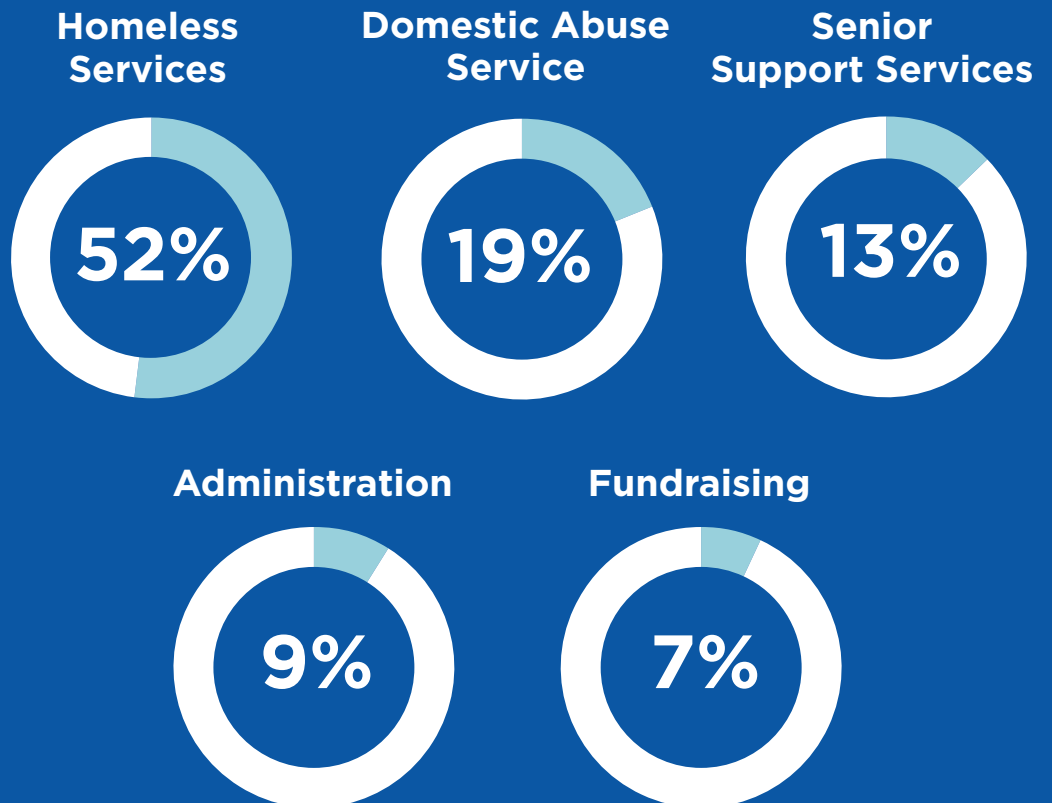
COPE Galway adopted SORP 2014 from 1st January 2015.

Our Audited Accounts are available to download at: www.copegalway.ie/annualreport

Where Our Money Comes From



How Our Money Is Spent



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

2019

2020

2021

2022

COPE Galway Strategy: Beyond 2018

COPE Galway's Strategy, 'Working Together Towards Home and Community' 2013 - 2018 has provided momentum for significant progress across many areas. (Refer to Strategy section at the beginning of this report for details of achievements against this plan).

Throughout 2019 we will work together with our many stakeholders to develop a new strategy in order that COPE Galway can continue to respond to the new and existing challenges both now and into the future, and to allow us to continue to be responsive and flexible in improving the lives of some of our most vulnerable citizens in Galway city and county.

Meals4Health: Supporting Healthy Communities to Eat Well, Live Well, Age Well

Meals4Health is an exciting new social enterprise developed by COPE Galway, which supports older people and others who may need specialised nutritional support, to remain living independently at home for as long as possible.

We created Meals4Health as we were aware that many people do not have access to the type of food they need.



Meals4Health produces and home delivers fresh ready meals that meet the particular dietary needs of older people or those living with or recovering from illness or surgery. All of our meals can be texture modified or fortified for medically related dietary requirements. Of course, our meals are suitable not just for older people, but for those who may need nutritional support such as people recovering from illness or surgery, or those who simply find it difficult to shop and cook for themselves.

All our meals have been developed in partnership with our consultant dietitian, are cooked fresh by our professional chefs and are delivered to people at home.

For more information visit our website at www.meals4health.ie.

Social Enterprise

Meals4Health is a social enterprise which means that our primary objective is to achieve a social impact - supporting people to live independently at home - rather than to generate a profit. Surpluses are reinvested into Meals4Health so that we can continue to develop our range of meals, create employment and fund our senior support services.

Social Innovation

In 2017 and 2018 Meals4Health received funding from the Social Innovation Fund Ireland to support the piloting and development of our social enterprise, and for which we are extremely grateful.

Modh Eile House: The New Home of our Domestic Abuse Service



Our current domestic abuse facility at Waterside House has been in existence since the 1980s and is no longer able to meet the demand or needs of those who ask for support, accommodating just six women and 15 children in single room bedsit type accommodation. There is an obvious need for a fit for purpose, larger domestic abuse service where women and children will have a place of safety away from the violence and abuse in their home.

No. 47 Forster Street was donated to COPE Galway by the Sisters of Mercy and is being redeveloped into a modern state of the art domestic abuse service to meet the needs of women and children in Galway city and county and the wider western region.

The new facility has been named *Modh Eile*, Irish for Another Way. The name was chosen by women who have experienced domestic abuse who believed it would give hope to others to find a way to rebuild their lives and create a better future for their families.

Our vision is that Modh Eile House will provide a safe space where lives are rebuilt and women and children can be free from violence and abuse within their relationships, and supported by communities to access their rights to safety and security.

Modh Eile House will provide:

- a refuge with nine self-contained apartments, each with bedroom, bathroom, living and kitchen facilities with the capacity to accommodate at least nine women and 20 children
- a fit for purpose childcare unit with facilities and sufficient space to work with children aged 0 to 18 years
- one-to-one consultation rooms, a group meeting/training room and office space for outreach services
- office, communal spaces and meeting rooms attached to the refuge to facilitate support work with women and children resident in the refuge

€1 million to go

The cost of construction and redevelopment is just over €4 million. To date, we have received a government grant and philanthropic donations of €3 million and in 2019, we will be asking the people of Galway for your support to help raise the final €1 million.

Development will be complete in December 2019 and Modh Eile House will open to women and children who need our support early in 2020.

Family Hub

Family Hubs are part of a Government initiative as a response to the emergency accommodation needs of families who are homeless and have been developed as an alternative to hotels and B&Bs. COPE Galway has been contracted by Galway City Council to operate the first such Family Hub in Galway which will be operational from May 2019.

Over the past four years one of the major challenges COPE Galway has faced is responding to the growth in family homelessness. A range of initiatives have been undertaken at a local level in cooperation with Galway City Council to address family homelessness. Local hotels, B&Bs and other tourist accommodation providers have, and continue to play an important role in the efforts to ensure that families have a place to stay when homeless. A number of property owners have also made self-contained accommodation units available on a short term basis for this purpose.

The Family Hub will represent a welcome addition to these responses as it will provide a secure and stable placement for families on an on-going basis unlike the insecurity of hotels, B&Bs and other tourist accommodation especially during peak tourist and holiday periods.

A staff team has been recruited to operate the service and to provide the one to one support required by families that will be accessing the hub. This team will be involved in intensive work with families and assisting them in their search for permanent housing and will support those families to practise and further develop the independent living skills required to sustain independent living into the future.

The Family Hub will comprise of 12 ensuite bedrooms, shared kitchen areas with cooking and dining facilities and laundry facilities. Communal spaces and a meeting room will be available to facilitate support work with families; and children resident in the Family Hub will have access to designated play areas. The aim of this new service will be to support families in achieving the vision of 'improved quality of life in a home of their own'. Meanwhile, COPE Galway is committed to finding local solutions to offer more appropriate accommodation for families in emergency situations.

**'Improved quality of life
in a home of their own.'**





COPE Galway
Let's help together





COPE GALWAY SERVICES

1 Community Catering

Location: Unit 5 Ballybane Industrial Estate
 Email: communitycatering@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 700 800

Community Support Services

Location: Unit 5 Ballybane Industrial Estate
 Email: seniorsupport@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 700 800

Meals4Health Social Enterprise

Location: Unit 5 Ballybane Industrial Estate
 Email: info@meals4health.ie
 Phone: 091 354 000

2 Sonas Day Centre

Location: 1-3 Walter Macken Flats, Mervue
 Email: sonas@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 753 402

3 Bridge House

Location: Dyke Road, just past the bridge
 Email: bigoe@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 730 969

4 Fairgreen Hostel

Location: Fairgreen, beside train/bus station
 Email: fairgreen@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 568 818

5 Domestic Abuse Service

Location: Undisclosed
 Email: waterside@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 565 985

6 Teach Corrib Day Centre

Location: Seamus Quirke Road, Newcastle. Adjacent Enable Ireland
 Email: daycentre@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 525 259

7 Resettlement and Tenancy Support

Location: 12a Ruxton Court, Dominick Street Lower
 Email: mfeeney@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 533 959

8 Osterley Lodge

Location: 140 Lower Salthill
 Email: osterley@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 521 301

9 COPE Galway Charity Shop

Location: Saint Augustine Street
 Email: acurrah@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 569 715

10 Head Office

Location: Calbro House, Tuam Road
 Email: info@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 778 750

Family Support Services

Location: Lower Ground Floor, Calbro House, Tuam Road
 Email: familiessupport@copegalway.ie
 Phone: 091 527 571



COPE Galway

Let's help together

COPE Galway,
Calbro House, Tuam Road, Galway, H91 XR97
t: 091 778 750 e: info@copegalway.ie

Company No: 248134 | CHY 6339 | CRA 20011314

www.copegalway.ie

