

Quay Times



Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

The Newsletter for Supporters of Merchants Quay Ireland

“There is a waiting list of people ready to go” —

Housing Crisis, Hidden Side: Up Close with CEO Tony Geoghegan

News of Ireland’s housing crisis is everywhere you turn. And for men and women left homeless, your support makes a massive difference to frontline services like food and emergency shelter. Yet there is a hidden side to the homelessness crisis. It’s one of the top initiatives MQI CEO Tony Geoghegan hopes to tackle with you by his side in 2018...

It’s a staggering statistic. At Merchants Quay’s High Park, nearly one out of every two clients who complete their drug free rehabilitation come out of homelessness. And in this housing crisis many have no choice but to return to homelessness and the threat of relapse. Your donations help these men and women as best as possible, from extensions at MQI’s aftercare housing right down to the Night Café emergency shelter when all other options were exhausted.

But after nearly thirty years as CEO of MQI, and a man who is passionate about practical solutions, Tony Geoghegan is not waiting for changing policy to provide answers while clients struggle for survival on the streets.

Urgent request: housing needed
“It’s untenable that someone comes out of treatment, ready for a new start, that they end up back on the



streets. **In 2018 we want to directly increase the amount of supported housing units that our clients have access to, and I’d be calling on any of our donors that have or know about properties that could be donated or that we could rent or refurbish. If our donors have properties available, MQI will provide the support and expertise.** There’s a waiting list of people ready to go.”

This isn’t the first time Geoghegan has turned to supporters to bring about tangible change for

100% Funded... By You!

The following programmes and services for people in dire need were 100% supporter-funded in 2017 – thank you!

- **Dental care for homeless clients** (MQI dentist Niamh is 100% donor-funded)
- **Support and a way out of homelessness for people aged just 18 to 25** (MQI young person’s supporter worker Antoinette is 100% donor-funded)
- **Help for homeless people struggling with mental health issues** like depression and anxiety (MQI’s mental health team is 100% donor-funded)

There was no other funding available for any of this help that was provided. Donors like you made it all possible.

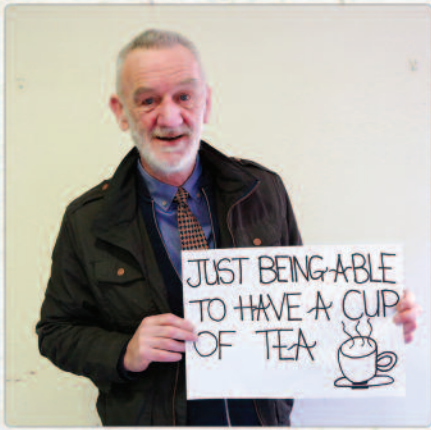
And for every tomorrow made that much brighter as a result, we thank you.

people in need (see “100% Funded By You,” above). “Last year we added five beds in aftercare housing for our clients. It may sound small
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MQI staff hold words of thanks from real clients you are helping: OPEN ➡

Your support is a second chance and a ray of hope to so many. Thank you for the good you do...

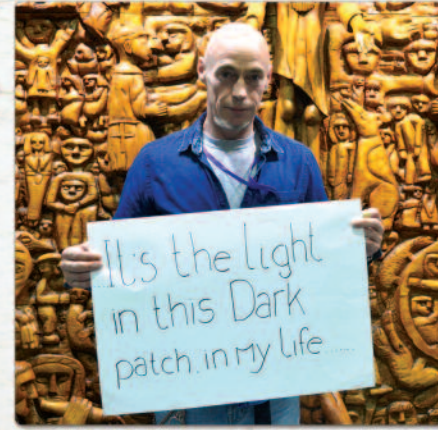
MQI staff hold words of thanks from real clients you are helping:



Tony Geoghegan, CEO

“As soon as I get the money for a safety pass, I can find a job. But at Merchants Quay I have a roof, a place to sleep, some food, some tea – thanks to God I haven’t needed a doctor, but I know I can find one here. It’s a great place.”

— Alex, Riverbank homeless centre client



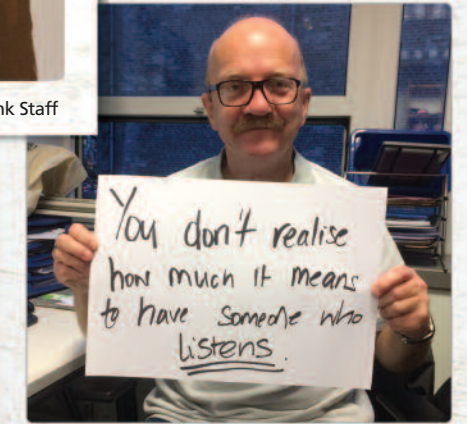
Vincent, Night Café Staff

“I did my detox and rehab at St. Francis Farm. I’m two years drug free. A fella I was in the programme with, he relapsed, and the first thing he did was ring me. I said, ‘C’mon and we go to a group meeting.’ He’s back on track now. We’re all good support for each other.”

— Ella, former St. Francis Farm client



Rebecca, Riverbank Staff



Alan Day Services

“To see the clients getting something like socks, underwear, shower gel, toothbrushes, toothpaste – I see a glow in their faces. The things we all take for granted mean the world to them.”

— Martina, Open Access staff



Lynda, Family Support Team



Seán, Night Café Staff

“At MQI we talk for hours with clients that are lonely, that have mental health problems, that have never even registered as homeless. Every donation is for somebody here.”

— Christine, Outreach staff



(L-R) Paul, Amy, Eoin, Riverbank Homeless Centre Staff



Thank you
for helping MQI in 2017.
You are our hands, our strength,
our hearts. xxx

“I haven’t had the chance to stay at the Night Café yet, but it’s good to come in and get a bit of breakfast and a cup of tea or a sandwich. I just live from day to day. The staff here are trying to help us the best they can.”

— Paul, Riverbank homeless centre client



Martina, Riverbank Staff

With love for all you do this year and every year, from your Merchants Quay Ireland family.

A new path, another day... thank you.

Housing Crisis...

(continued from cover)

but it is five people that will have come through treatment and won't have to move."

Not numbers or theories

What it comes down to, in Geoghegan's mind, is meeting people where they're at – houses for the homeless, food for the hungry, a chance at a drug free life for people battling addiction. These are not numbers or theories to him, but men and women he knows well. "I have a kind of grá for our Riverbank homeless centre. I pass through it a lot because I get to meet people. On a practical level, you see that it's about big gifts – like if anybody wanted to buy or donate housing – and small ones, like how many cups of tea €5 or €10 can provide for people who are cold, you know? Almost every client I meet would like to get their life back together. Knowing supporters are behind us, it's really important."

If you have a property that could help house Merchants Quay clients ready to make a fresh start, we'll provide the support and expertise. Contact **Emma on 01 524 0965** or **Emma.Murphy@mqi.ie** for details. Thank you, today and always, for caring. ■

WINTER Wish List

Your kind gift of an item or two could help restock our shelves for raw days ahead:

- ✓ Warm, waterproof jackets (men's and women's)
- ✓ Hats, gloves, and scarves to keep heads and hands from freezing
- ✓ Thermal underwear and t-shirts for layering
- ✓ Track pants for men (size M)/leggings for women (size S/M)
- ✓ New, packaged women's underwear and (smaller size) bras
- ✓ Runners/trainers and sturdy warm boots (men's and women's)
- ✓ Shampoo, shower gel, toiletries (including feminine hygiene products)
- ✓ **BIG WISH!** €1,320 for a new commercial clothes dryer for High Park



If you live in Dublin and have wish list items to donate, our own Emma Murphy will come round to collect them for you, complete with the MQI photo album if you'd like! To arrange a time that suits, ring Emma on **01 524 0965**. You can also drop off items in person at 24 Merchants Quay from 9:30am to 5pm Monday to Friday. **For every wish you make come true, thank you!**

Henry and the Housing Crisis:

"Come January I'll have to find somewhere to live, so I asked MQI please could I have some more time here over Christmas. And you know what it's like for all the homeless people out there – it's a huge struggle. To anyone who needs help, it's the first place I mention. I'll never forget Merchants Quay."

— Henry, MQI aftercare client



For all of Christmas, for the gift of time, we thank you.



Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

Merchants Quay Ireland
24 Merchants Quay,
P.O. Box 11958, Dublin 8

To make your gift by phone: please ring us on **01 524 0139**.

- ☎ **Telephone:** 01 524 0139
- 👤 **Volunteering:** 01 524 0128
- ✉ **Email:** info@mqi.ie
- 🌐 **Website:** www.mqi.ie
- 📘 **Facebook:** Merchants Quay Ireland
- 🐦 **Twitter:** @MerchantsQuayIR

At MQI we respect everyone who turns to us for help – and many are just beginning their fresh start in life. So while client stories are genuine and true, names are changed and stock photographs of models are used for illustrative purposes and to protect client privacy. Thank you for your understanding.