

# Quay Times



Merchants Quay Ireland  
Homeless & Drugs Services

The Newsletter for Supporters of Merchants Quay Ireland

SPRING 2024

## You listened, you cared... and you made Jane's Place happen.

*This spring we welcomed the first clients into Jane's Place new permanent home in the heart of Dublin – an oasis of peace, calm and support for vulnerable women. Susan, MQI's Women's Service Co-ordinator, walks us through the new service.*

"Women in homelessness often say they feel safer out of sight, hidden," Susan tells us. "It can be a very frightening and extremely dangerous struggle to survive. Our research showed they have a life expectancy of just 38 years. When we listened to women, they told us how desperately they needed support in a female-only setting. Now kind MQI supporters have been helping to steadily build the service ever since."

### A safe haven

When a woman arrives at Jane's Place, she immediately knows by the soft surroundings, and even the colours on the walls, that she's safe. "She has everything right from the very basics like a hot shower and new underwear," Susan explains.

Your kindness is there to support her every need. "With the Mental Health Nurse, there's help if she's in crisis and struggling emotionally. She can see the GP or Nurse for her physical health. Or she can mend her broken self-esteem and boost

her confidence by having her hair and nails done.

She can come back again for a workshop on legal issues or find out about community detox options."

### A place to heal, hope and be you

Susan has already seen the Jane's Place pilot programme in action and knows how powerful this service tailored for women will be in helping to rebuild their independence.

"The women here amaze and inspire me. Despite the difficult hand they were dealt, they continue to get up and keep going. The challenge is helping them to look after themselves, because they often ignore their own needs in order to look after others. They often believe they are not good enough, or that the life they dream of is not within their reach. It's helping them to realise their dream of safety, security and independence is theirs for the taking."

Thanks to your courage and compassion, there's now a safe space for women to heal, grow and live life to the fullest again.

*Thank you*



**"When even one woman reclaims her life... that's the impact of your love by supporting Jane's Place."**

Susan, Jane's Place  
Co-ordinator

# Celebrating Jane's Place for vulnerable women...

Sit back and celebrate the dream you made real... because Jane's Place couldn't have happened without you: MQI's service just for women, a place where female clients with complex needs can heal and hope. You've brought that vision to life and opened the doors to Jane's Place for women. Follow the timeline and see how your love created stepping stones to safety for women like Joanne and Rose.

Stepping stones to safety for women

2019

Frontline staff at MQI notice far fewer women than men are accessing drop-in services

2020

Research with University College Dublin shows what women need to feel safe and supported

2020

Jane Pfeiffer leaves a legacy, and the dream of Jane's Place begins

## Thank you for opening your caring heart to women like Joanne

Joanne's voice was a quiet and powerful call for change – and you listened. Now your love continues to help women just like her.

Joanne was one of the first women to tell us how she needed a female-only place to heal. She was just a child when she lost herself to drugs. Coping with childhood trauma often drives women into addiction. Many have also experienced sexual abuse but hide it because of stigma.

But now, because

you helped MQI to establish Jane's Place, more women like Joanne can get support sooner.

"I carried a lot of shame and avoided services because they were full of men. I was terrified to tell anybody what had happened. Without a shadow of a doubt, I would have used a women's only centre."

These days, Joanne helps other women in addiction recovery. She knows how hard it is to start again. "Women in addiction suffer complete and utter shame for what led them into homelessness, or that their children were taken away. It's wonderful that Jane's Place is here for women now." ●

"There is so much more expected of women... and when you're in addiction, at rock bottom, you can't even look after yourself."

– Joanne, MQI client

... built by you on a foundation of love.

## The help at hand in Jane's Place



### Showers

A warm shower and fresh clothes will restore dignity and confidence.



### Kitchen

Somewhere to make a cup of tea, have a chat or have fun cooking a nourishing meal together.



### Doctors & Nurses

Specialised care for women, without shame, stigma or stress will be onsite and available for all.



### Emotional Support

With the mental health nurse, women are free to open up or release their past trauma.



### Friendship

Finding comfort in a support worker, or meeting other women who understand them, will help to build a caring and nurturing community around women in Jane's Place.

**2021**

An outpouring of love from MQI supporters fund specialised female support workers, a nurse and mental health nurse

**2022**

The MQI women's service pilot project is a success

**Spring 2024**

Jane's Place opens its doors in its permanent home in Dublin city

**Now**

Your love is shaping a better, safer future for women

"There's a lot of work to do now, but I am looking forward to being part of a change in how we treat women in Ireland with experiences of addiction, homelessness and trauma. We have this amazing opportunity to do something differently."

– Corina, Support Worker



For a first look inside Jane's Place, take our virtual tour here.

# You're helping Rose's confidence to blossom again

After experiencing traumatic violence, Rose has Jane's Place to help her rebuild her life again.

Rose was one of the first women to join the Jane's Place pilot programme in 2022. Fleeing from domestic violence, she says, "It was like a grenade went off in my life. I was suddenly alone in the city, with no idea who to turn to." Thankfully, her support worker at Jane's Place offered professional and caring guidance. "She just used to let me cry or let me talk, or not talk if I needed it. She really helped me with not getting down on myself again."


Now in the new building, Rose says Jane's Place is more than a drop-in centre. For women in crisis, it feels like a home. "I've found somewhere where I can be kind to myself again, through meditation and visiting the salon here." explains Rose. "I've survived physical trauma, so it took time for me to open up to self-compassion."

With time and steady support, Rose has slowly regained her confidence and

rebuilt her life. She now has secure accommodation and is working towards re-entering her former career as a nurse. "I'm finally at the point now where I feel healed enough to begin healing others again."

It's your generosity and support that has opened the door to Jane's Place... where the most vulnerable women with very complex needs can find wrap-around help. Your kindness waits here for women. Without judgment, and with understanding and compassion.

Thank you for giving women Jane's Place, where they can heal, hope, and start again. ●



"Even the sound of Jane's Place makes me feel safe."

– Rose, Jane's Place client

## What our female clients want you to know

### Safety

"I was nervous the first time I came here. I didn't know what I was coming in to, but I love Jane's Place. It's been like hands holding me. Coming from my background, my anxiety was so high, I was watching over my shoulder but I'm safe here."

– Judy, Jane's Place Client

### Help and Support

"The mental health team is amazing, everyone has been so supportive, I love it here. I'm in the second week of the exercise programme, I'm doing a knitting class, and art. It's helping me so much because I was very isolated before."

– Olga, Jane's Place Client

### Women-Focused

"I'm a year and a month out of addiction and I just want to be around women. All the girls are so inspiring, I can't praise Jane's Place enough. It gives me an uplifting feeling. We're all women and we understand each other, that's what drew me to Jane's Place."

– Tricia, Jane's Place Client

### Health and Wellbeing

"I have a fractured leg and I've needed crutches, so the physio here is really helpful. I was on two crutches on Monday and now on Friday I'm only on one crutch!"

– Tilly, Jane's Place Client

“I want to say thank you. This safe space exists only because donors believed in women and made it happen”

Susan, Jane's Place  
Co-ordinator



## You're invited...

We warmly welcome you to come and visit Jane's Place on Friday, June 28th, when the service is not in use by clients. Come and see for yourself all you have made possible for women. Please ring 01 524 0139 for more details.

## Walk, jog or run for MQI in the Dublin Women's Mini Marathon

We're getting ready for the VHI Women's Mini Marathon on Sunday, June 2nd - will you join us? Contact Shauna on 01 594 0139 or email [communityfundraising@mqi.ie](mailto:communityfundraising@mqi.ie) to take on the challenge and support MQI. We hope to see you there!



## Leave a legacy of love: Add your kind words and wisdom to the MQI Book of Love

Leaving a legacy gift in your Will to Merchants Quay Ireland is a wonderful way to continue this healing work and pass on your cherished values. While leaving a legacy is not possible for everyone, you can give your wisdom, experience and words of hope to MQI clients today, in the MQI Book of Love.

Please, share your stories of the heart with MQI clients in the Book of Love. Copies are kept at Riverbank drop-in centre, Jane's Place, St. Francis Farm and all our recovery and aftercare locations. Your words will help clients to always remember that they are loved. There's also a copy kept in Adam and Eve's Franciscan Friary, so your story lives on forever.

Send back the page enclosed, and we'll post you your own copy of the 2024 MQI Book of Love in time for Valentine's Day next year. If you would like more information on leaving a legacy, please call Emma Murphy in confidence on 01 524 0965.



In 2019, Jane Pfeiffer, a cherished American supporter of Merchants Quay for many years, passed away leaving a gift in her Will to support our work into the future. This gift was life-changing, and means Jane's Place can continue to help women long into the future.

## Big Wish – A garden gazebo for Jane's Place

There's a little bit of space available for a garden, but first the ladies have asked for a timber gazebo shelter to enjoy even in wet weather. If you can help with a gift of €2,500 please ring us at **01 524 0139**. Anything raised about this amount will be used to support MQI services, where it is needed most.

*Thank you*



**Merchants Quay Ireland**  
Homeless & Drugs Services

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Dublin 8

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

 **Telephone:** 01 524 0139

 **Email:** [supportercare@mqi.ie](mailto:supportercare@mqi.ie)

 **Website:** [www.mqi.ie](http://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.