

Quay Times



Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

The Newsletter for Supporters of Merchants Quay Ireland

AUTUMN 2025

Hope for tomorrow – and your kindness lighting the way

You're giving Beth the stability and support she needs to heal and rebuild her life

It's almost impossible to have a conversation with Beth that doesn't at some point dissolve into laughter. Beth is a bubbly, slight-of-frame woman who credits her sense of humour with getting her through the darkest times. And unfortunately, Beth has endured many of them.

It's a testament to her incredible strength and spirit that she has maintained her good humour, because her life has been incredibly tough. It's hard to comprehend such strength and resilience in someone so petite and delicate.

"My mother was an alcoholic. I was made to do things at an early age that a child isn't meant to, exposed to things of a sexual nature. Things a child shouldn't even know about."

She told us how she'd had to be

clever and street-smart from a young age. She started drinking as a teenager to cope with her pain and block out her reality, a pattern that continued into her adult life.

Eventually, Beth escaped her

family home and found a place of her own.

But she really struggled to cope with her demons. A young, vulnerable woman living on her own, she became a target of some dangerous and violent men in her community. Just six months ago, after a particularly savage attack, Beth was forced to flee her home again to escape.

Can you imagine how frightened she was? This small, heartbroken woman, beaten, bruised and

"I had to get away and the only place I had to go was the streets."

completely alone in the world.

Beth recovered from her injuries, but the psychological impact of being viciously

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on Page 2*

"I was living on my nerves. If I'd stayed, I don't think I'd be here today."

You are a light in the darkness

continued from Page 1



Thanks to you, Beth is no longer facing her struggles alone.

attacked in her own home is something she struggles with. She knew she couldn't go back; the only security she'd ever had was gone.

"I was living on my nerves. If I'd stayed, I don't think I'd be here today."

Nowhere safe to turn

With no safe family home to return to and nowhere else to turn, she felt she'd no option but the streets. The constant fear and threats forced her to make this huge decision.

Homeless and afraid, she began a new life sleeping rough. She initially found herself sleeping in a tent. But she was heartbroken to return one day and find her tent, the only thing she owned, gone. Since then, she has been sleeping under a plastic tarp on a Dublin beach, a place she chose because she feels safer on the outskirts than in the city centre.

"I'd tell any woman sleeping rough to get out of the city centre. In the city I was afraid to sleep,

I was too wary, on high alert all the time. I felt safer outside the city."

Because of you, Beth found safety

Beth first discovered MOI's Riverbank service as a place where she could get a meal. Through this simple interaction she learned about all the other supports you make possible for people who are homeless.

Thanks to you Beth now has access to critical support like warm meals, showers, and trauma and addiction counselling. Beth's trauma is still raw, and she has been diagnosed with PTSD. She says her brain *"went inside out"* after the recent violent attack brought all her suppressed memories of violence and trauma from her childhood flooding back.

Like many women in her situation, Beth is especially thankful for the safety and sanctuary your generosity provides in our female-only space at Jane's Place. She describes this support as *"Fantastic, a very, very, very important space. Every city needs a place like this for women. Without it I don't know where I'd be."*

Her spirit remains unbroken

Despite everything, Beth's spirit remains unbroken. Every day

she is working hard to overcome her past and build a better future. Considering all she's been through that may take a long time, but thanks to you she'll have the support she needs for as long as it takes.

Right now the thought of living in a house again terrifies Beth. But when you consider everything this young woman has been through, maybe it's not surprising that she has such negative and fearful associations. Many times in her life home was the most dangerous

"Without Jane's Place, I don't know where I'd be. Every city needs a place like this for women."

place she could be.

With your help Beth is getting the support she needs to find a home again. And most importantly, the psychological support she needs to help her feel safe and secure once she is in it.

Your generosity is the strength that keeps MOI's services running and transforms compassion into action.

Thank you for everything you are doing for Beth and all the men and women who come to MOI for help. Your generosity is changing lives. ■



Last winter you made it possible for 27,782 hot meals to be served to people experiencing homelessness and hunger

AT THE COALFACE

A Conversation with Alan Dooley

Alan has been a steadfast presence at Merchants Quay Ireland since 1996. In that time he's developed a deep understanding of the struggles faced by clients and how your acts of humanity offer someone a lifeline.

Can you talk about the challenges of being homeless in Winter?

For someone experiencing homelessness, winter is a particularly difficult time. They face the same cold and rain as everyone else, but they can't simply go inside, have a shower or change into dry clothes. I've seen people in tents who are saturated and freezing cold, and it's heartbreaking.

That's why our MOI donors are so important, as their support is what allows us to offer a refuge

from these brutal conditions.

The Riverbank drop-in service, which is funded by the kindness of our donors, provides support and relief for people in desperate need of it.

My favourite part of the day is the Riverbank breakfast service, where we open the doors at 8 a.m., or even earlier if it's pouring rain.

When clients come in soaked, freezing cold, distressed, and worried, they can get a hot meal and a cup of tea or coffee. This small act of humanity has a big impact, even for a short time.

And it's our amazing donors

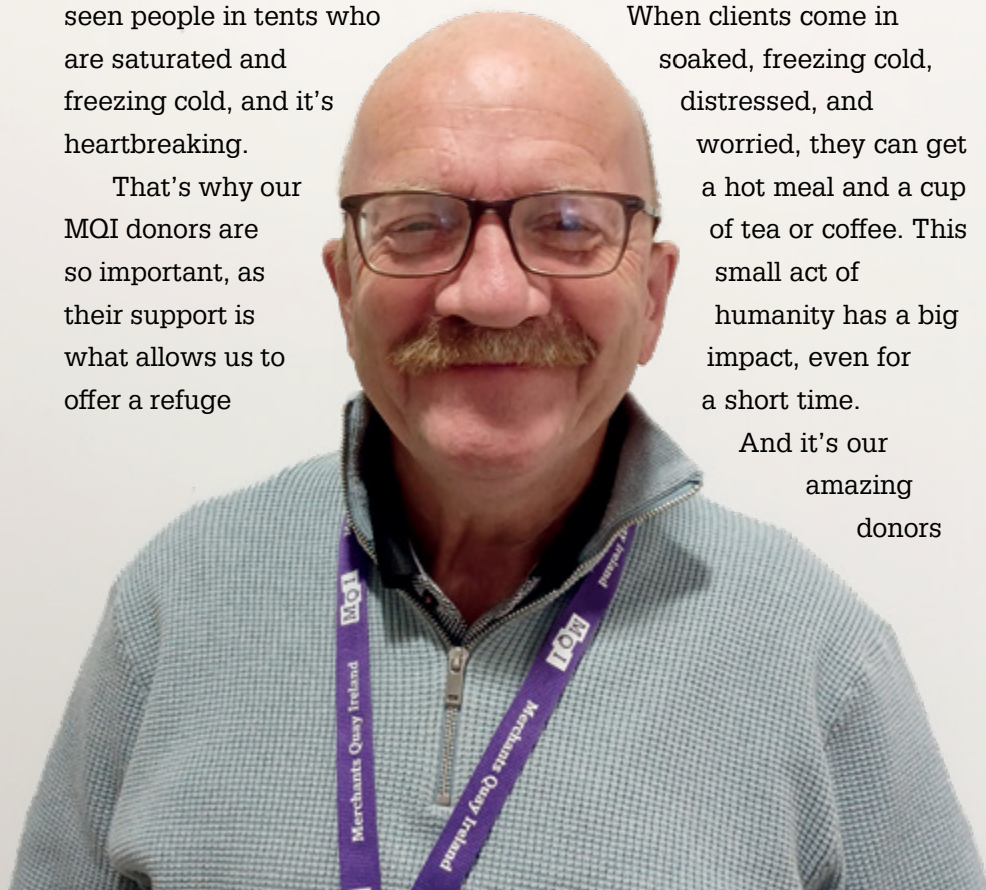
who've made it possible for us to provide access to showers and clean clothes, which makes a huge difference. It's not just about the physical warmth of the building, it's about the warmth of a welcome that treats our clients with respect and dignity, which is not something they always get in their daily lives.

What is Christmas like for clients at Merchants Quay Ireland?

Christmas can be a really tough time for a lot of our clients. For many, it's a stark reminder of what they've lost. Many have fractured relationships with parents, siblings, and children.

They see everyone else celebrating and enjoying themselves, and it just highlights their isolation. You can see a real heaviness come over people in the weeks leading up to Christmas. To help with this, we put a lot of effort into making it a memorable time for them.

continued on Page 4



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7,950 people were helped through the coldest months of last year because of you

We decorate Riverbank and have a special clients' Christmas party. We hope that for the few hours the party is on, it helps our men and women forget some of their struggles and just enjoy themselves. It's an opportunity for them to experience a special day.

How important are MQI donors to your work?

Our donors are the heart of our work. Without their generosity the doors wouldn't open. It's their kindness and compassion that fuels everything, from the first cup of tea poured in the morning to helping someone access medical and dental care, counselling or housing support, it all comes down to the kind hearted people who support us..

It's the donors who help lift that "shroud of unhappiness" that can envelop our clients and give them a sense of dignity and hope. I give thanks for the compassionate people who make our work possible every day.

Every day your compassion, generosity and kindness are giving safety, support and hope to people who really need it. Thank you for caring enough to make a difference. ■

A Christmas Celebration of You



Come and celebrate the powerful impact your generosity is having on people's lives



This Christmas, we're once again throwing open the doors of Adam and Eve's Church for a very special celebration. It is a heartfelt thanks to you. Because it's your unwavering kindness that makes everything we do possible.

Joining us again this year is the Dublin Concert Band who'll be trumpeting your every act of kindness and generosity. Every hot, wholesome meal, every shower, every set of clean, fresh clothes, every time someone gets the support they need to deal with past trauma and build a better future—it's all thanks to you.

Join us, and bring your friends and family, for a wonderfully festive **FREE CONCERT**. Let's come together and celebrate the love and compassion that you have shared all year long.

Event Details:

What: MQI Christmas Gratitude Concert

When: Sunday, December 7th, from 3.30pm to 5pm

Where: Adam and Eve's Franciscan Church, Merchants Quay, Dublin 8

RSVP: We can't wait to celebrate with you! To reserve your **FREE** places, please call us on 01 524 0139 ■



Throughout the coldest and bleakest months of 2024 you helped 136 people access support from our Mental Health Team

Thank you for bringing people in out of the cold.

A Rough Sleeper *Wish List* for people on the streets...

Winter is an incredibly hard time to be homeless. It's a time when rough sleepers often find themselves soaked to the skin and cold to their bones. Having access to the simple essentials can make a big difference in their daily lives. Things like clean, dry underwear and socks, waterproof clothing, shoes and boots are urgently needed to see people through the winter months.

Toiletries like shower gel, shaving cream and

period products are greatly appreciated by those who come to Riverbank in search of a hot shower, human kindness and dignity.

Every gift and contribution is helping to give comfort to someone in the most difficult circumstances. You can drop off your donations at the MOI Fundraising Office or make a financial contribution to help provide hot meals, showers and human kindness. Thank you for your support.



- ✓ Tracksuit pants, leggings, long sleeve t-shirts, fleecy sweatshirts and hoodies
- ✓ New packaged socks and underwear for both women and men
- ✓ Hats, scarves and gloves
- ✓ Toiletries of all kinds: shampoo, shower gel, shaving gel, period products, toothbrush and toothpaste
- ✓ Waterproof jackets and waterproof trousers

You can deliver your items in person to MOI, Merchants Court, 24 Merchants Quay, Dublin 8. From 10am to 3pm, Monday to Friday. Just call us on **01 524 0139** to let us know you're on the way!

✓ *Big Wish*

The main kitchen at High Park is in need of an upgrade!



We need to raise €2,500 for a new cooker at our High Park rehabilitation centre.

For men and women in recovery, learning to cook isn't just about food - it's about dignity, independence, and hope. Many have never made a meal for themselves. One father told us how excited he was to cook spaghetti bolognese for his children for the very first time.

With your help, we can replace the broken cooker and give people in recovery the chance to rebuild their lives, one meal at a time.

If you'd like to help, please call 01 524 0139. Any additional donations will cover the cost of equipments needs we might have in the future.

Thank you!

For being part of the MQI family - thank you.

Would you like to make a lasting difference?

Did you know that a gift in your Will is a way in which your love and support for people experiencing homelessness can continue on?

Leaving a gift in your Will, to a cause you believe in, is a decision that takes time and consideration. But it's also one that will have a real and lasting impact in the lives of people who are homeless.

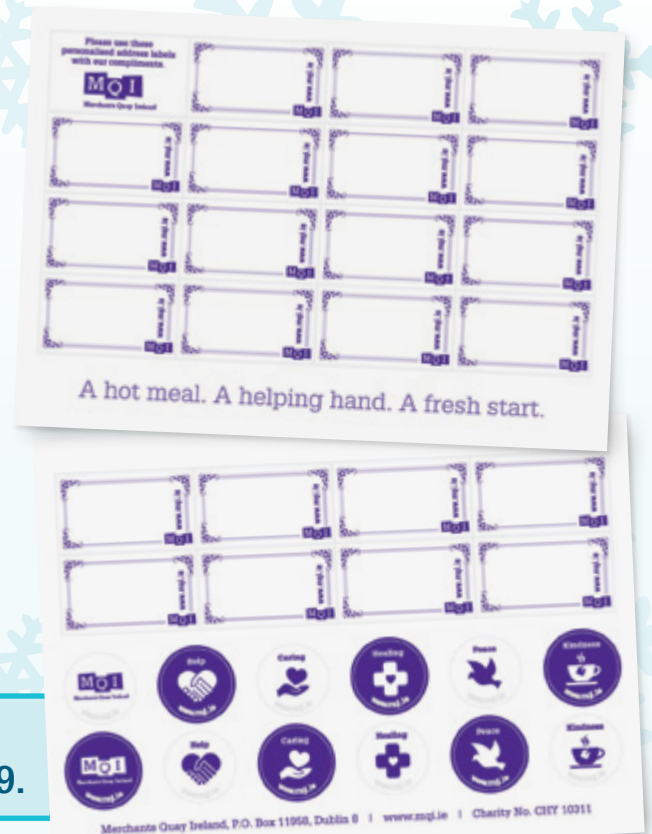
If you'd like to chat about the possibility of leaving a gift for people who are homeless, you can contact Katie Hennessy by calling her on **01 524 0139** or email katie.hennessy@mqi.ie ■



Your MQI Christmas Labels Are Back!

Christmas wouldn't be the same without your special MQI address labels! We know how much everybody in our MQI family loves having these personalised labels for their Christmas post. If you're new to our work or have just run out, we would be delighted to send you a sheet (or two) with our warmest compliments.

The cost of printing your labels is tiny, but the impact they have is huge. By using them, you're not only sending a festive greeting but also helping to spread your message of love and compassion. It's a simple gesture that highlights the crucial work you make possible and reminds people that everyone deserves to be seen and to have an address of their own. ■



To get your free labels, please call your MQI donor care team today on 01 524 0139.



Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

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

Email: supportercare@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.