

Quay Times



Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

The Newsletter for Supporters of Merchants Quay Ireland

WINTER 2026

How your kindness helped Rhys cross the finish line

Rhys's smiling eyes dance when he talks about running. It's hard to believe that just a few years ago this warm and determined young man was on the verge of giving up on life.

"Finishing in High Park was such a special moment for me," Rhys says, "It is part of who I am - my story and my recovery."

Taking part in MQI's Road to Recovery challenge, Rhys ran 80km from St Francis Farm detox centre in Carlow, to High Park, our residential rehabilitation service in Dublin. But the finish line at High Park was far more than the end of a run to Rhys. It symbolised a deeply personal journey of resilience that wouldn't have been possible without your kindness.

Growing up, Rhys never had the love, stability and safety that every child deserves, *"I was surrounded by drug use from an early age. My home life became unstable, and I was put into care."* After years of struggling with his mental health, carrying deep emotional pain from childhood, he believes that drugs became his way of coping.

A turning point

As his addiction reached breaking point, Rhys met Noel Dowling, an MQI Addiction Counsellor who spoke to him passionately about the possibility of recovery. This conversation gave Rhys the spark of hope and the courage he needed to start treatment

continued on Page 2

Your kindness means Rhys is the loving father he always wanted to be



Running makes me feel free,
it is what I was destined to do."

A Way Back for Rhys Thanks to You

continued from page 1

in High Park. This life-saving service exists thanks to your compassion.

Surrounded by the kind and caring staff at High Park, Rhys found a safe, non-judgemental and compassionate space to begin healing.

"I was meant to be there, you know, to get my confidence back ... to learn more about everything I was carrying for years."

He also started running – which gave him a sense of purpose, and the new start he desperately needed.

"I think running just makes me feel free. The hardest part is literally getting your runners on, getting out the door. But suddenly I was meeting people... there was a new life for me!"

Rhys took part in MQI's Road to Recovery last September. He ran the 80km to High Park to raise money for a vital service that changed his life. He also ran to show others who are struggling with addiction that they are not alone, and that there is hope for a better future.

"For many people, the hardest thing is putting their hands out and asking for help. I hope my story inspires someone else to get the same help I did."

The loving dad Rhys always wanted to be

Today Rhys has a full-time job and he's the stable and loving dad and partner he always wanted to be. He beams with pride when he talks about his three children, *"I love seeing my kids at the finish line. I'm so proud of them and they're proud of me. I can be there for them now... it's the little things that were impossible before recovery."* He is grateful to be there for the birthdays, communions, the sports matches and dancing shows, cherishing the small, everyday moments that once felt so out of reach.

And there is no end to his running journey, in fact he plans to run a 200km race this year in support of MQI. The staff at High Park, and the entire MQI family are so proud, and so grateful to Rhys.

His incredible journey shows the power of your compassion. And he is so thankful to you. *"Without people's donations, places like High Park simply wouldn't exist."*

Your generosity is changing lives by giving people the chance to heal and start over. Thank you. ■



A warm welcome to High Park

Will you run for Jane's Place? Join us on May 31st for the VHI Women's Mini Marathon!

Grab your sister, your friend, your colleague! Join the MQI family and walk, jog or run the streets of Dublin for the VHI Women's Mini Marathon. All funds will be ringfenced for Jane's Place, our dedicated women-only service. Join us for one of the most exciting events of the year, while supporting vulnerable women to begin their journey of recovery.

To join Team MQI, please call Shauna on 01 524 0139 or visit mqi.ie/mini-marathon



Another year of your care

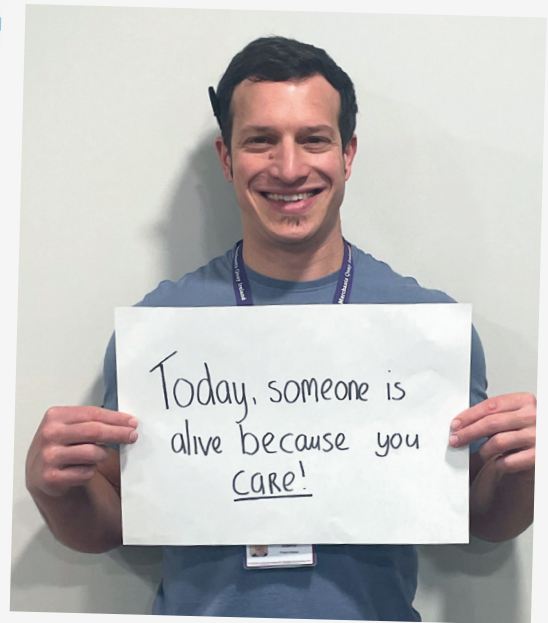
What you made possible in 2025

Every day you opened the doors to food, warmth and comfort at our Riverbank homeless centre

Your kindness and care helped to provide 2,723 hot showers to warm and refresh tired, weary bodies and restore dignity.

"It was around Christmas week. I was in a sleeping bag out in the rain. The staff here were worried I would catch pneumonia because I was soaked to the skin. So, they brought me to Riverbank for a shower and gave me hot food. It was wonderful."

Thomas, Riverbank homeless centre client



Aron, Riverbank
Project Worker

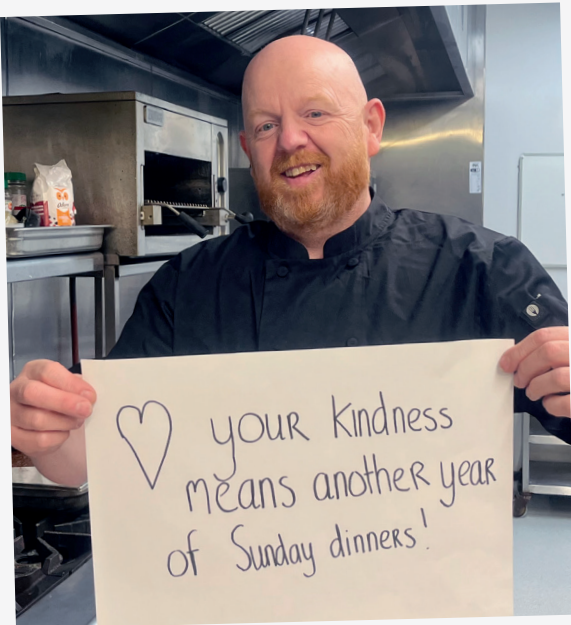
You kept the Sunday Dinner Service going

Your love served 62,654 hot, nourishing meals to sustain people through the hardest times.

This weekly service offers clients so much more than a meal—it's a reminder of childhood comfort and belonging. Prepared by Chef Dave and made possible by you, these meals mean so much to the people who rely on them.

"I come down for the Sunday dinner, for the company. I have the chat, the laugh with them. The staff in Merchants Quay are like my family."

Ciaran, Sunday Dinner Service client



Dave, longtime chef
at Riverbank

Our passion

You provided a safe haven for women at Jane's Place

Thanks to you, the number of women using Jane's Place continues to grow, showing the trust they are placing in us.

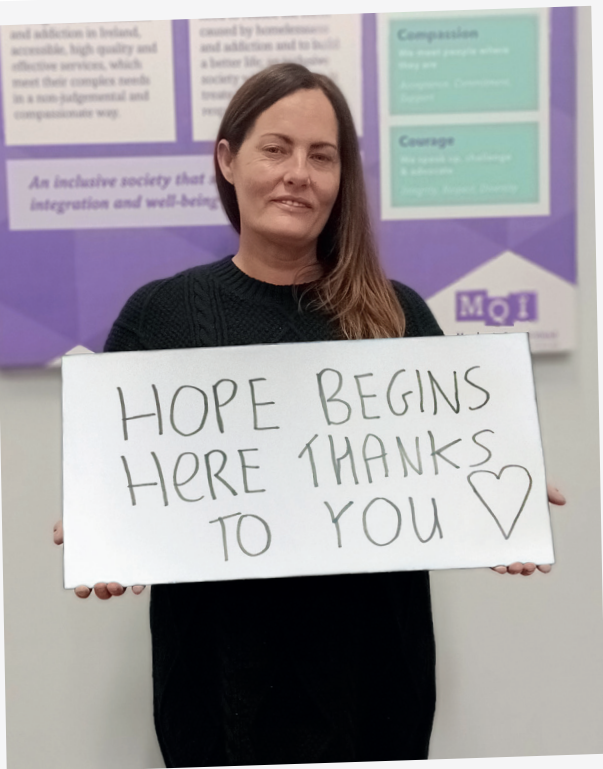
In 2025, your kindness made it possible for 255 women to get the peace, care and support they need at Jane's Place. The number of women using the service continues to grow, because it is somewhere women feel safe enough to heal and rebuild their lives.

"At Jane's Place, you're treated with dignity, like you're a person. Just knowing I can see the doctor here, and stay calm for a few hours, it's an absolute blessing."

Coleen, Jane's Place client



*Susau, Service Co-ordinator
at Jane's Place*



*Helen, Manager
at High Park*

You showed compassion for men and women in recovery

You opened your heart to someone beginning their journey of recovery, providing a safe space to heal from the trauma underneath their addiction.

"I was able to leave the chaos of the streets behind. Having a safe bed to sleep in every night, access to good food and the unbelievable support of the staff was exactly what I needed to make a fresh start."

Eileen, High Park Client



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

www.mqi.ie

A Chat with Eddie

A chat with our CEO, Eddie Mullins, reflecting on the past year, his aspirations for 2026 and the power of your kindness.

What gave you hope in 2025?

Every day, caring people like you send in notes, letters and even poems for me to share with our clients. I love reading these messages of encouragement, compassion and hope. Many of you have opened your hearts by sharing personal stories of close ones who have experienced homelessness or addiction. Knowing that you, and all our donors, care so deeply inspires us every day.

One of the most uplifting moments of the year for me was the Road to Recovery challenge in September, and seeing so many of you turn out in solidarity for our many men and women in recovery. I know it helped people like Rhys to really feel seen, encouraged and less alone.

Behind the doors of MQI there is always hope. Our staff work tirelessly to make sure every man and woman who comes to our door feels welcome, loved and respected. We simply couldn't be there for them without you. The opening of the Medically Supervised Injection Facility (MSIF) last December has created a respectful, health-led space where lives are being saved, and people are treated with the dignity they deserve. Each client is someone's much loved son or daughter. They are the heart of everything we do, and their resilience in the face of desperate hardship is truly inspiring.

What are your aspirations for 2026?

I'll be honest, next year will be challenging. As you know, the number



of people in homelessness is growing year on year. But thanks to your generosity, we are working hard to adapt and improve MQI services to meet the needs of our clients. In 2026, I want to make sure that we don't have to turn anyone away who needs our services. Whether it is the gentle care of a nurse, the dignity of a shower or a warm meal on Sunday.

“ I hope that we can all stand together as a family, offering care and compassion to those who need it.”

What message do you have for donors?

It's simple, thank you from the bottom of my heart. You don't just support our work; you make it possible. Because of you, someone living on the streets knows there will always be a welcome, a hot meal and a warm shower waiting for them at Riverbank. Thanks to your kindness, women have a sanctuary at Jane's Place – a place they can feel safe, cared for, and where they can rebuild their self-esteem. Your compassion is saving lives every day in the MSIF, in a safe and supportive environment where men and women can begin their journey of recovery.

My hope is for an Ireland where the most vulnerable are met with the same understanding and kindness that you show every day. Thank you. ■

“ You don't just support our work, you make it possible.”



See Your Cup of Kindness In Action

Will you join us for Tea and a Tour at our Riverbank Drop-in Centre?

On the first Thursday of the month, there is a window of time where the centre is not in use by clients. Come and see your compassion in action. Meet the staff and witness first-hand how you are changing lives. **Please call Shauna on 01 524 0139 to arrange your visit.**

A Winter Wish List for people on the streets...

As the cold and dark weather continues, your kindness will brighten the most difficult days. If you find yourself with extra to spare, the following items would make a massive difference to someone who is homeless this winter.



- New, packaged socks and jocks to restore dignity.
- Waterproof rain pants so leg wounds can heal.
- Shoes and boots for frozen feet.
- Hats, gloves, and scarves for warmth.

If you can drop off any items in person to the MQI fundraising office, Monday to Friday, we'd love to see you!

Big Wish Could you provide a Washer-Dryer for people in recovery at St Francis Farm?



We urgently need a new commercial washer-dryer, to ensure clients in our working farm in Carlow have clean and dry clothes. Can you help us raise the €2,500 needed? **Please call Mark on 01 524 0139.** Any additional donations will cover the cost of equipment needs we might have in the future.



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:** supporter@mqi.ie

🌐 **Website:** www.mqi.ie

📘 **Facebook:** Merchants Quay Ireland

✂ **X:** @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.