

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

THE CORK FOYER &  
BISHOPSGROVE  
SUPPORTED STUDENT  
ACCOMMODATION

Cork Foyer and Bishoptsgrove  
are Cork City Council  
Transitional Supported  
Housing Initiatives





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# MISSION STATEMENT

Cork Foyer is a unique homeless service that offers its residents quality affordable accommodation with education and training at the heart of the Project. We strive to develop independent living skills through integrated training programmes and clear-cut support plans, empowering young adults to realise their full potential and take their rightful place in the community.

## OUR VALUES



COMPASSION



RESPECT



INCLUSIVENESS



HONESTY



JUSTICE



EMPOWERMENT



EXCELLENCE

# WHO WE ARE

The Cork Foyer and Bishopsgrove Supported Student Accommodation are key components of Cork City Council's commitment to addressing youth homelessness and supporting young people in their transition to independent living. Both projects, while distinct in their focus, share a common mission: to provide safe, supportive, and structured environments where young people can build the skills and confidence necessary to achieve personal and professional success.

## CORK FOYER

Cork Foyer is a residential project located in the heart of Cork City, designed specifically for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This project offers much more than just a place to stay; it is a comprehensive support system aimed at empowering residents to take control of their futures. With the capacity to accommodate up to 20 young people, Cork Foyer provides tailored support through access to education, training, employment assistance, and life skills development programmes. Residents are encouraged to engage actively with these opportunities as part of their journey towards independent living. The facility, housed in a thoughtfully renovated convent on Assumption Road, is staffed 24/7 by a dedicated team, ensuring that each resident receives the guidance and support they need.

As the only accredited Foyer in Ireland, Cork Foyer adheres to the highest standards of the Foyer Federation's quality framework. This commitment to excellence has been recognised with multiple accreditations, most recently in 2020. Cork Foyer is not only a vital resource for its residents but also a vibrant part of the wider community, offering amenities such as a garden café, a bicycle repair workshop, and communal spaces that foster interaction and integration.

## BISHOPSGROVE

Bishopsgrove Supported Student Accommodation, a sister project of Cork Foyer, extends this ethos of support to students. Situated in a secure, gated complex near the MTU Cork Campus, Bishopsgrove offers 39 modern accommodation units designed to meet the needs of students who require additional support. In partnership with TUSLA Aftercare Service, Liberty Street Out of Home Service, and Focus Ireland, Bishopsgrove provides a unique living experience where students not only have access to high-quality amenities but also receive ongoing support from Key/Social Workers. This holistic approach ensures that students can focus on their education while being supported in their transition to independence.

Together, Cork Foyer and Bishopsgrove embody Cork City Council's proactive approach to preventing homelessness and supporting young people. By offering integrated services that address both immediate needs and long-term goals, these projects play a crucial role in shaping a brighter future for the youth of Cork.



# CHAIR STATEMENT

## *Adrienne Rogers*

As Chair of two progressive and unique award-winning services, owned and managed by Cork City Council, I once again have the pleasure in introducing to you the Cork Foyer and Bishopsgrove Supported Student Accommodation Annual Report. I hope you find this report both enjoyable and insightful.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge and welcome the rollout of the Youth Homelessness Strategy 2023-2025 by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien. This is the first Youth Homelessness Strategy in two decades, and it sets out distinct actions to prevent young people entering homelessness, to improve the experiences of young people in emergency accommodation and to assist young people to exit homelessness.

In January 2023, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) reported that 1,423 young people aged 18-24 were officially homeless, living in emergency accommodation funded through Section 10 of the Housing Act. This compares to a figure of 640 in January 2016, a 122% increase in just seven years. While it is an absolute priority to both prevent young people from becoming homeless in the first instance and to ensure prompt exits for those who are in emergency accommodation, the Strategy recognises that consideration must also be given to improving the experiences of young people currently accessing homeless services.

Following a consultation process with homeless young people, they advised that standard emergency accommodation can feel unsafe and unsuitable in some cases, largely due to sharing a space with people of different ages, who may be long-term users of homeless services and who may have complex mental health or addiction issues. The Strategy, therefore, supports the establishment of dedicated homeless accommodation for young people, such as the Cork Foyer, that has sufficient and appropriate designated spaces to allow for visits from family members, and that can facilitate the holding of workshops and information sessions tailored specifically to young people. The Strategy also sets out measures to help those exiting homelessness to move towards independent living, maintain tenancies and fulfil their potential.

Specific actions within the strategy aim to help those at risk of becoming homeless and who are disproportionately represented in the young homeless population i.e. people who have left formal care settings, people with disabilities, young parents, members of the Traveller Community, members of the LGBTI+ community and young people leaving prison. With this Strategy firmly in mind, it is reassuring to see that both of these Cork City Council services are so instinctively aligned to this Strategy in their mission, present operations, and direction.

As the financially difficult times continue, it is imperative that we take every step to minimise the financial impact on these services and protect their end users, by ensuring their licence fee remains affordable and their wellbeing remains paramount. The need to scrutinise our 24/7 operations and make the astute and necessary budgeting choices, whilst working very closely with our key stakeholders has never been so important. To this end, I would like to acknowledge the unwavering and generous core funding provided by the Health Service Executive, Cork City Council, Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government and Cork City Education and Training Board to which we are truly grateful.

I also wish to thank the Cork Foyer Management Committee Members and all the staff for their dedication and hard work throughout the year. Their advice and vision have been invaluable and continues to contribute enormously to these successful services.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the 6th anniversary of Bishoptsgrove Supported Student Accommodation. This wonderful service has provided an educational pathway for young people to exit homeless services, and arguably, it has potentially prevented up to 161 vulnerable young people from entering costly emergency accommodation in a time of housing need. Without Bishoptsgrove, some of these vulnerable young people would inevitably become entrenched in the longer-term cycle of homelessness which is hugely damaging and very costly on the state. I am sure that you will agree that this is a fabulous and well-founded service for the marginalised young people of Cork.

**“Without Bishoptsgrove, some of these vulnerable young people would inevitably become entrenched in the longer-term cycle of homelessness which is hugely damaging and very costly on the state.”**

I hope you enjoy the celebrated achievements of our service users outlined in this report. They certainly continue to challenge and inspire all who are involved with the projects.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adrienne Rogers".

Adrienne Rogers  
Chair



# RACHEL'S STORY

When I first arrived at the Foyer, I found it incredibly difficult to adjust. The environment was new, and I felt a sense of isolation that made it hard for me to connect with others. It took time for me to feel comfortable, but the unwavering support from the staff played a crucial role in helping me come out of my shell. The activities they encouraged me to participate in were more than just ways to pass the time - they were opportunities for me to build relationships, develop new skills, and slowly gain the confidence I had lost.

As I began to settle in, I realised that the Foyer was not just a place to live but a place where I could start to rebuild my life. The staff encouraged me to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to me, which led me to enroll in external training courses. Initially, I was nervous about going back to school and unsure if I would be able to succeed, but I was determined to make the most of this chance. I spent hours studying, and when exam time came, all my hard work paid off - I was thrilled to receive distinctions in all my exams. This achievement was a pivotal moment for me; it was the first time in a long while that I truly believed in my own potential.

Buoyed by this success, I decided to pursue my passion for helping others by enrolling in a Nursing programme at college. The transition from the Foyer to college life was challenging, but the skills and resilience I developed during my time at the Foyer helped me navigate this new chapter with determination. Nursing is demanding, but it's also incredibly rewarding. Every day, I feel like I'm making a difference, not just in the lives of my patients but also in my own life as I continue to grow and learn.

However, the path to where I am now wasn't smooth. I faced some deeply personal challenges along the way, struggles that tested my strength and resolve. There were times when I felt like giving up, but the Foyer was always there for me. The staff, particularly my Project Worker, were a constant source of support and encouragement. She understood what I was going through and provided the guidance I needed, whether it was helping me deal with personal issues or connecting me with resources to support my mental health.

One of the most significant milestones in my journey was when my Project Worker referred me to a housing association. After months of waiting and hoping, I was finally offered my own place. Moving into my own home was an incredible feeling - it represented not just independence, but also a new beginning. Having a space that is entirely my own has given me a sense of security and pride that I've never felt before. It's a place where I can relax, study, and dream about the future.

Looking back, I see Cork Foyer as much more than just a temporary solution - it was a crucial stepping stone that set me on the path to a better life. The experiences I had and the support I received have shaped me into the person I am today. I've learned to embrace challenges, to trust in my abilities, and to never lose sight of my goals. The Foyer gave me the tools I needed to build a future for myself, and for that, I will always be grateful.

***"Looking back, I see Cork Foyer as much more than just a temporary solution - it was a crucial stepping stone that set me on the path to a better life."***

Now, as I stand on the brink of completing my Nursing degree, I am filled with a sense of optimism and excitement about what lies ahead. I know that the journey won't always be easy, but I'm ready for whatever comes next. Cork Foyer has shown me that with the right support and determination, I can achieve anything I set my mind to. I'm looking forward to the future, confident that it holds even bigger and better things for me.

*Rachel*

# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & ACTIVITIES DURING 2023

The Foyer Garden Café, operated by Churchfield Community Trust CLG, along with the toddler play park, allotments, and bicycle project, continue to be invaluable assets to the Foyer. These thoughtfully designed initiatives engage people of all ages within the community and provide Foyer residents and learners from disadvantaged backgrounds with meaningful interactions with the public. It is essential to Cork Foyer and its residents that the service is perceived positively by the public, helping to dismantle any misconceptions about young people or the Cork Foyer project itself.

These initiatives offer a wide range of opportunities - from working in the café and attending courses to organising and participating in community events. The process of planning and executing successful community events fosters motivation, boosts self-confidence, and instills a deep sense of pride in the participants. The success of these events is measured not just by attendance or outcomes but by the personal growth of residents as they harness and develop their talents in creative and productive ways.

Through improved self-confidence in their communication skills and abilities, residents cultivate a genuine sense of belonging within the Foyer and the broader community. Regular participation in these social activities is crucial in reducing social isolation among young people, opening their minds to new experiences, and fostering a more inclusive and positive outlook on life.



## BALLYHASS LAKES

In 2023, some residents embarked on an exhilarating trip to Ballyhass Lakes for a day of adventure and bonding. Ballyhass Lakes, known for its extensive range of outdoor activities, was the perfect setting for our group to unwind and challenge themselves. This year, we dove into the excitement of the inflatable aqua park—a highlight that everyone was eager to try. The day was filled with laughter as we tackled the towering slides, navigated inflatable obstacle courses, and launched ourselves into the quarry's clear waters from trampolines. The energy and enthusiasm from both residents and staff made it a memorable experience, and it was a fantastic way to build camaraderie. After such a successful day, we're already looking forward to planning another trip in the near future!



## BOWLING IN AIRTASTIC

During 2023, some residents enjoyed a lively outing to Airtastic in Little Island for a fun-filled evening of bowling. The atmosphere was buzzing with excitement as everyone eagerly put on their bowling shoes and prepared for some friendly competition. Strikes and spares were celebrated with cheers, and even the occasional gutter ball brought about plenty of laughs. The trip offered a perfect blend of relaxation and excitement, allowing residents to bond over a shared experience outside the usual day-to-day activities. The sense of community and camaraderie was palpable, making the outing to Airtastic one of the highlights of the year. It's safe to say that bowling has become a new favourite, and we look forward to more strikes again soon.

## ESCAPE ROOM

A group of our residents took on the thrilling challenge of 'NoEscape' in Cork City – a themed escape room experience. This immersive escape room experience tested their problem-solving skills, teamwork and quick thinking as they worked together to solve puzzles and uncover clues. The excitement and intensity grew with each passing minute as the group navigated through the intricately designed rooms, striving to beat the clock. The experience not only provided an adrenaline rush but also fostered strong bonds among the participants as they collaborated to escape in record time. The challenge was a fantastic way to build trust, sharpen minds, and create lasting memories, making it a standout event in our activity calendar for 2023.





# CORK COMMUNITY & STREET LEAGUES 2023

The Cork Community League, organised by Cork Foyer team member Paul, continued to grow in strength throughout 2023. This league takes place every Friday from 7:00 to 8:30 pm at The Glen Resource Centre in Cork City, running for 42 weeks each year.

The league builds upon the success of the Cork Street League, which Paul also coordinates. The Cork Street League is a collaborative effort, involving The Big Issue, the Irish Homeless Street League, the FAI, The Glen Resource Centre, Glenvera Direct Provision Centre, Cork Foyer, Cork Health Action Zone (HAZ), and various homeless services and marginalised groups across Cork.

In 2023, the Cork Community and Street Leagues saw participation from 60 individuals aged between 16 and 45, representing 15 different countries. The leagues serve not only as a sporting outlet for current Foyer residents but also as an informal outreach and social event for former Foyer residents, as well as past addiction and homeless service users. Participants came from a variety of services in Cork City, including The Family Hub, Simon Community, Traveller Visibility Group, Glenvera IPAS, Kinsale RD. IPAS, and Focus Ireland.

Chris O'Brien, the new CEO of the Irish Homeless Street Leagues, visited the Cork Street League in April. Notably, the Cork Street League remains the most well-attended league of its kind in Ireland.

In April 2023, two teams from the Cork Street and Community League participated in the All-Ireland Street Leagues at The Postal Hub, Tallaght, Dublin. Teams from Glenvera Direct IPAS, Wellington Road, Cork City, and Cork Foyer and Friends competed alongside players from across Ireland. Over the years, the Cork Street League has seen three players (including one former Cork Foyer resident) represent Ireland in the Homeless World Cup, held in Scotland, Mexico, and Wales.

The Cork Community and Street Leagues have always featured a diverse array of players from various social and marginalised groups. These include individuals in supported accommodation, those at risk of homelessness or formerly homeless, former addiction service users, residents and former residents of direct provision, members of the Travelling community, as well as people from the Polish, Italian, Croatian, Serbian, Dutch and Spanish communities. Unemployed young men from Cork's northside, members of the LGBTI+ community, support workers, journalists, and more have also taken part.

In addition to organising the league Paul, who is also a fine art photographer, is working on a participant-driven photo series with players from the Cork Community League. Titled 6-a-side, the series captures first-person, in-game action, highlighting the often-overlooked moments of small-sided football. It emphasises the power of football to unite diverse communities in a changing and dynamic Ireland.

The 6-a-side series is scheduled to be exhibited next year in Cork City as part of Cork's Culture Night activities.



# WHAT WE DO AT CORK FOYER

At Cork Foyer, we are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where young people can unlock their potential and embark on a journey toward independence. We believe that every individual is talented and unique, and our mission is to help them discover and develop these talents by providing access to the resources, opportunities and guidance they need.

Our approach is holistic, recognising that each young person's path to independence is different. We offer a space where residents can build resilience, learn to navigate life's challenges, and take advantage of the opportunities that come their way. This is achieved through a combination of tailored support sessions, day and night access to assistance, and a focus on building trust with each resident.

A key part of our work is the Talent Bond initiative, made possible through the generous support of our donors. Talent Bonds provide direct financial investment in our residents, empowering them to explore new interests, develop existing skills, and enhance their overall well-being. Over the years, these bonds have enabled residents to pursue a wide range of passions from enrolling in courses and purchasing work clothes to acquiring musical instruments and laptops.

In addition to Talent Bonds, we offer various internal education and training programmes designed to meet the diverse needs of our residents. These programmes include:

- **Great to Train:** A programme focused on building job skills and enhancing CVs.
- **Independent Living and Wellbeing Modules:** Courses designed to prepare residents for independent living.
- **Garden Project and Woodcraft:** Hands-on projects that teach practical skills and foster creativity.
- **Adult Education & Training:** Opportunities for further learning and personal development.





# BISHOPSGROVE SUPPORTED STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

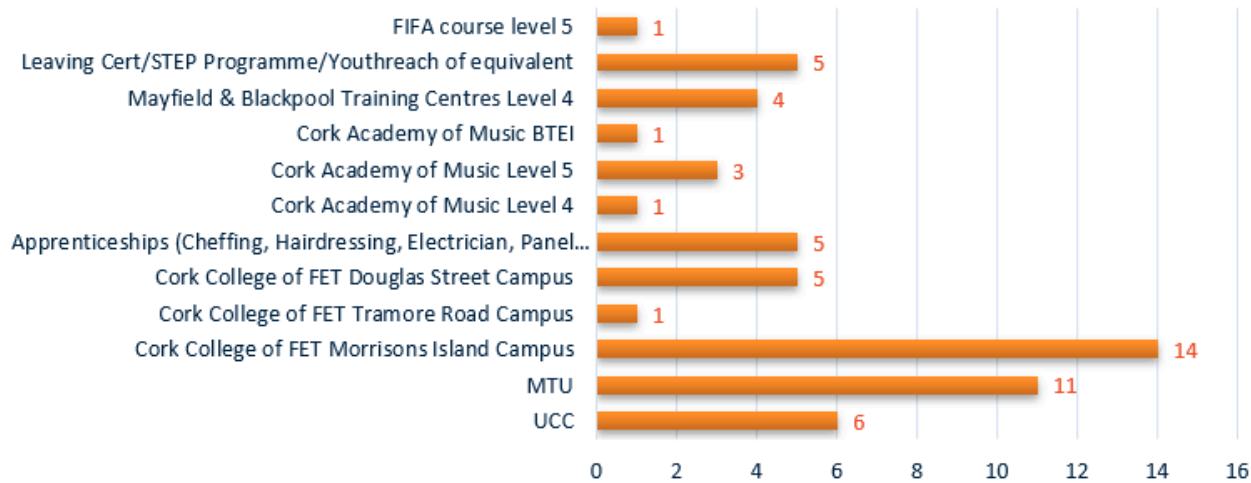
For residents looking to advance in their education or training, our sister project, Bishopsgrove Supported Student Accommodation, offers a unique pathway. Bishopsgrove provides a stable, supportive environment for young people pursuing higher education, helping them achieve long-term aspirations while freeing up space at Cork Foyer for those in more immediate need.

Working closely with partners like TUSLA, Liberty Street House for Young People Out of Home, and Focus Ireland, Bishopsgrove also targets young individuals at imminent risk of homelessness, offering an alternative to emergency accommodation and helping to break the cycle of homelessness.

At Cork Foyer, our work is more than just providing shelter - it's about investing in young lives, helping them to build the skills, confidence, and resilience they need to thrive in the future. We are proud of the positive impact we have on our residents and the community, and we remain committed to empowering the next generation to lead fulfilling and independent lives.

Throughout 2023, Bishopsgrove provided housing and comprehensive support to **56** young people, guiding them on their journey toward independence and academic achievement. With the backing of a dedicated multi-agency team, Bishopsgrove offers a nurturing environment where students at various stages of personal and educational development can thrive. These students are enrolled in a wide range of colleges and training centres, reflecting the diverse paths they are pursuing. The support provided by Bishopsgrove is tailored to meet the unique needs of each individual, ensuring they have the resources and encouragement necessary to succeed in their studies and beyond.

## Students by Colleges Attended



# ABOUT 2023 APPLICANTS

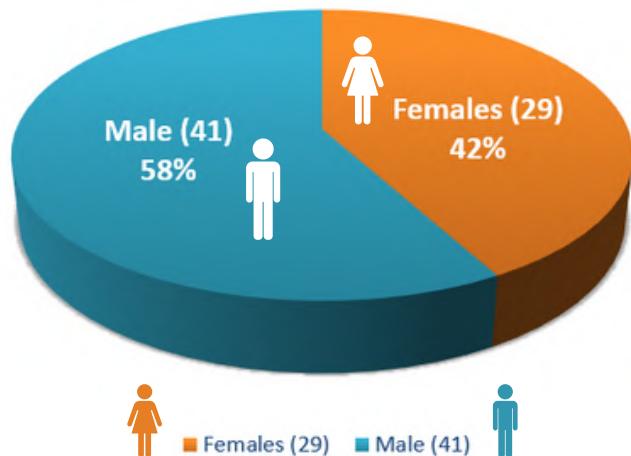
In 2023, Cork Foyer experienced a significant surge in the number of accommodation applications, reflecting the growing pressures on young people in the current housing crisis. A total of 70 applications were submitted throughout the year, marking an 80% increase compared to 2022. This dramatic rise was most notable among 18-year-old age range, with a corresponding increase in referrals from TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency.

The sharp increase in applications highlights the broader issues facing young people in Ireland today. The ongoing housing crisis, particularly the scarcity of affordable private rented accommodation, has affected young people, students, and those lacking the financial means to afford the increasingly high rents. For many, Cork Foyer represents one of the few viable options, providing crucial support and housing to individuals aged 18 to 25 who are at risk of homelessness.

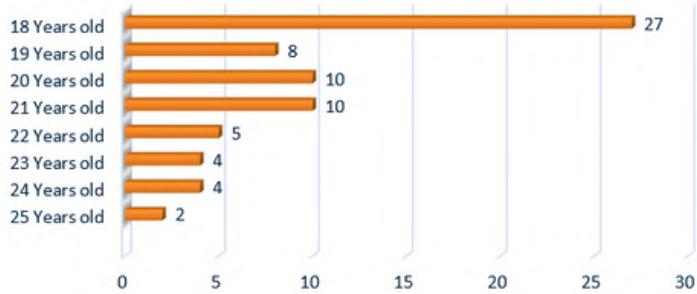
This trend also underscores the critical gap in dedicated homeless accommodation for young people. As the only service of its kind in the region, Cork Foyer uniquely caters to the specific needs of this age group. The significant rise in applications in 2023, clearly demonstrates the urgent need for more targeted services for young people. It also highlights the changing demographics of homelessness in Ireland, calling for a renewed focus on creating sustainable solutions that address the unique challenges faced by young adults.

As we move forward, these statistics serve as a powerful reminder of the increasing demand for specialised support services like Cork Foyer, and the importance of expanding our capacity to meet the evolving needs of Ireland's youth.

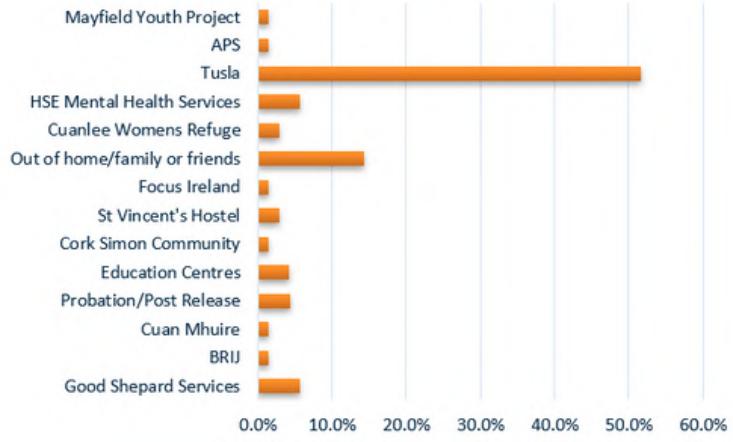
## 2023 Applicants by Gender



## 2023 Applicants by Age



## 2023 Applicants by Referrer



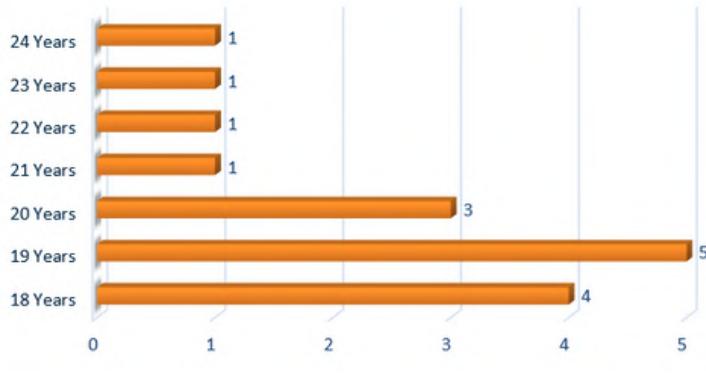
# ABOUT 2023 RESIDENTS

In 2023, despite a significant rise in applications, the number of new residents entering Cork Foyer remained consistent with previous years. Sixteen new residents joined the service, a slight increase from the 15 new residents in 2022. This consistency highlights the selective process by which we admit new residents, ensuring that we continue to provide tailored support to those who need it most.

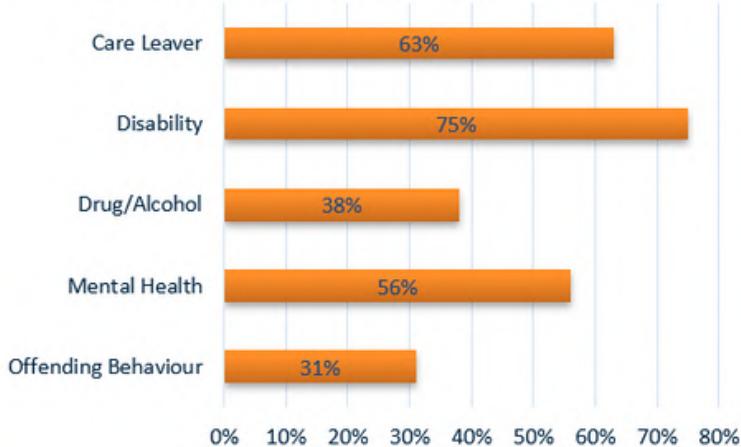
The demographics of our new residents have been directly influenced by the trends observed in the applications received. Notably, there has been a marked increase in applications from males and those aged 18, leading to a corresponding rise in the number of new residents fitting these profiles.

One of the most significant shifts in 2023 was the increase in the number of young people with disabilities entering the service. These disabilities range from mental and physical to intellectual and developmental challenges. In fact, 75% of the new residents in 2023 had a disability in one or more areas, reflecting a growing need for specialized support within this demographic.

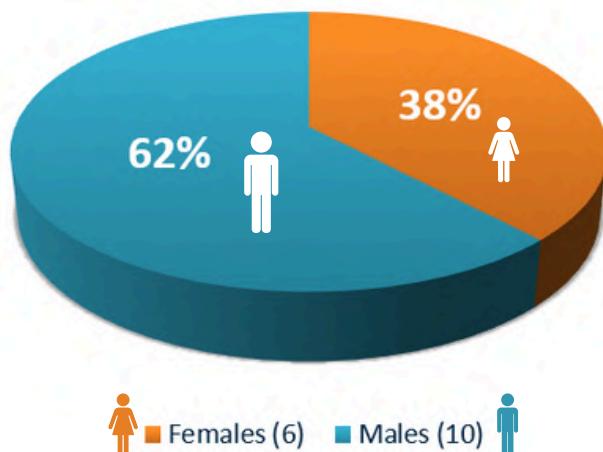
**2023 Residents Age on Entry**



**2023 Residents Main Support Needs**



**2024 Residents by Gender**



Another notable trend in 2023 was the rise in the number of young people applying for accommodation and support who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Of the total applicants, 11% had an ASD diagnosis, underscoring the importance of adapting our services to meet the evolving needs of the population we serve.

These statistics not only provide insight into the changing demographics of our residents but also reinforce the importance of our mission to offer inclusive, supportive, and tailored services to young people at risk of homelessness. As we continue to adapt to these trends, our focus remains on empowering each resident to achieve independence and lead fulfilling lives.

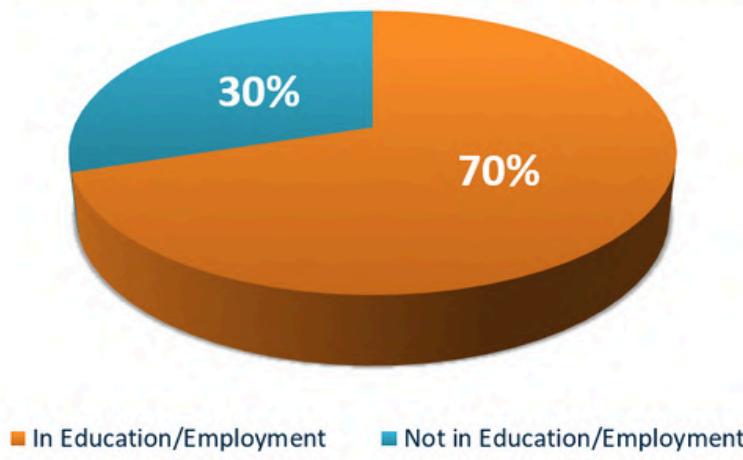
# ABOUT 2023 RESIDENT'S PROGRESS

In 2023, 15 young people transitioned out of Cork Foyer, with 14 of these moves being planned exits. These numbers are consistent with the previous year, reflecting our ongoing commitment to supporting successful transitions into more permanent living arrangements. Notably, there has been a slight but positive increase in the number of individuals moving on to Approved Housing Bodies or sharing accommodation with friends or family.

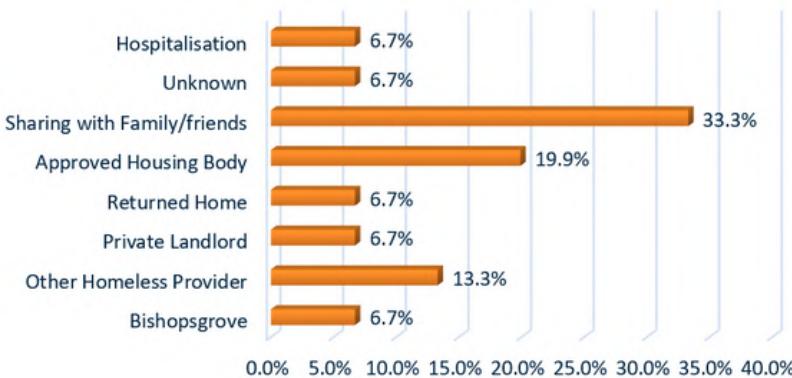
However, the low numbers of those transitioning into private rented accommodation continued in 2023, underscoring the significant challenges young people face in securing affordable housing, even with the assistance of Housing Assistance Payments (HAP). This ongoing issue has been recognised by Cork City Council as a critical area to address in 2024. The Council is already placing greater emphasis on expanding accommodation options for young people leaving homeless services or at risk of homelessness. We are optimistic that this focus will result in more young people moving into independent accommodation in the coming year.

A particularly encouraging trend in 2023 was the increase in those transitioning to their own independent accommodation while being actively engaged in education, training, or employment. This figure rose from 60% in 2022 to 70% in 2023, highlighting the effectiveness of our support services in equipping young people with the skills and opportunities they need to thrive beyond the Cork Foyer.

**2023 Former Residents Participation on Leaving**



**2023 Former Residents by Move on Type**



# WHAT OUR RESIDENTS SAY

“I had my interview in Bishoptsgrove at the end of the Summer and I was delighted when a room became available a few weeks later in the beginning of that September, just before I was starting my course in the College of Commerce. It was a relief to have secured accommodation while I started my course and worked in my part-time job. It is great for me to have the support that Bishoptsgrove offers when I need it. As this is my first time living independently and on my own, I am responsible for all my own finances. It is great to have the support from my Project Worker for budgeting and money management. Bishoptsgrove was there for me when I really needed it.”

TRISHA

## ALLY'S STORY

“I moved to Cork Foyer in February 2023. At the start I felt nervous about moving from one residential place to another. It took me awhile to settle in, but I did eventually. I was given a keyworker to help me with different tasks. I found it hard to meet with her at the start because I did not know her, and I find it hard to trust people. After awhile we got to know each other, and we started getting on well. She brought me to look at different courses and I started doing an evening course doing nails. I really like the independence I have in the Foyer but also having someone there if I need it. I have my own bedroom and bathroom. I also enjoy getting tasks done with Jessie. I also started meeting the new Life Skills Coach, Sam, and she is nice, and I really enjoy talking to her. I feel I can go to staff about anything, and I do not feel judged. I really like living in Cork Foyer.”

— “ “I applied for a Talent Bond in my final semester of college, where I'm studying for a degree in Popular Music. With everything now online, I needed equipment to complete my work but couldn't afford it. The Talent Bond provided me with a MIDI keyboard, a mic stand, and a Rode light and mic set, which are essential for my online classes and Community Music Project. Without this support, I would have struggled to keep up with my coursework. I'm very grateful for the Talent Bond, as it has helped me stay on track and achieve my goals.”

TIMMY

” —

# A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

In May 2023, Cork Foyer bid farewell to Barry Waddingham, who retired from Cork City Council and his role as manager of The Cork Foyer. Barry's journey with us began in 2005 when he moved from England to help establish the service, bringing with him years of experience working in Foyers across the UK. Recognising his expertise, Cork City Council identified Barry as the ideal person to bring the Foyer concept to Ireland, and he officially became the Manager when we opened in 2006.

Barry's leadership provided a stable and knowledgeable presence during our formative years. Under his guidance, Cork Foyer achieved accreditation with the Foyer Federation within just two years - a remarkable accomplishment. As the service grew, Barry continued to innovate, forging crucial partnerships with Churchfield Community Trust to expand the garden project by adding polytunnels and transforming the glasshouse into the vibrant Garden Café. His vision was further realised in 2016 with the official opening of Bishoptsgrove Supported Student Accommodation, our sister service. Barry was instrumental in setting up Bishoptsgrove and establishing vital connections with TUSLA and Focus Ireland, contributing to yet another groundbreaking initiative. Barry's nearly 20 years of dedicated service to Cork City Council have been marked by success, leaving behind two thriving services as his lasting legacy. In July 2023, John Calnan succeeded Barry as manager of Cork Foyer. John has already demonstrated his commitment to maintaining the high standards set by Barry while exploring innovative ways to further develop the service.

2023 also marked the retirement of Dave Cody from the Cork Foyer Management Committee. Serving as Chairperson since our inception in 2006, Dave worked closely with Barry to shape the service into what it is today. Dave brought a wealth of experience, knowledge, and practical wisdom to Cork Foyer, proving invaluable over the years. His guidance and encouragement have been a cornerstone of our success, and he leaves behind a well-established and flourishing service.

Adrienne Rodgers has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the Management Committee, nominated by Niall O' Donnabhain, Director of Housing. Adrienne, formerly a Director of Service for Cork City Council, brings a wealth of knowledge and capability to the role. We are fortunate to have someone of her caliber to continue building on Dave's work over the past 19 years.





## STAFF FEATURE:

### John Calnan

Manager, Cork Foyer & Bishoptsgrove

### EMBRACING A NEW CHAPTER: MY JOURNEY TO CORK FOYER AND BISHOPSGROVE

After three decades of dedicated work in the voluntary and community sector, I was honoured to be appointed as the manager of Cork Foyer and Bishoptsgrove in 2023. My career has taken me through various roles in homelessness, housing, addiction services, and the disability and charity sectors, but stepping into this position felt like a natural and fulfilling progression.

Prior to joining Cork Foyer, I served as Operations Manager at Tabor Group, where I was deeply involved in supporting individuals on their journey to recovery and stability. My time there was incredibly rewarding, and it provided me with valuable experience in managing complex services and working closely with people facing significant life challenges. Before that, I worked as Services Manager at the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Homeless Services, where I developed a profound understanding of the struggles faced by those without a place to call home.

Transitioning to Cork Foyer has been a deeply satisfying experience. The opportunity to work directly with young people at risk of homelessness and support them on their path to independence is something I am passionate about. The Foyer's holistic approach - encompassing accommodation, training, life skills, support and advice, jobs, and learning - aligns perfectly with my belief in providing comprehensive care and support to those in need.

As a graduate of University College Cork (UCC), where I earned an honours degree in Youth and Community Work, followed by a master's degree in Voluntary and Community Management, I have always been driven by a commitment to community service. My academic background, combined with a diploma in Employment Law from King's Inns, has equipped me with the skills and knowledge necessary to lead effectively in this sector.

Beyond my professional life, I remain an active voluntary member of St. Vincent de Paul, working closely with those in need within the community. I also serve on the SVP Regional Finance Committee, where I contribute to the organization's financial planning and oversight.

Taking on the role of manager at Cork Foyer and Bishoptsgrove has not only been a professional milestone but also a personal joy. The chance to make a tangible difference in the lives of young people, helping them to build brighter futures, is incredibly fulfilling. I am excited to continue building on the strong foundation laid by my predecessors, and I am committed to exploring new and innovative ways to develop and enhance the services we offer.



# WHAT OUR RESIDENTS SAY

“

“My time in the Foyer was very beneficial to me in many ways. Through working with my Key Worker on a weekly basis on an issue that arose, right down to the friendly support of my peers and other residents. Although I would have considered myself to be independent on entering the Foyer, my Key Worker still assisted me when needing to fill out forms such as social housing and also stayed in contact with the Housing Officers to help track my application and progress which then helped me to avail of the HAP scheme.

If I could give any future resident's advice on how to progress onto independent living it would be to not give up, work with your Project Worker, and ensure you are consistently looking on websites every day for privately rented accommodation through HAP or even house shares. You cannot expect all the work to be done for you!

KYLE

”

“When I moved to Cork from Donegal to continue treatment for my drug and alcohol abuse, I always knew at some point that I was going to have to find a place to live once I finished in the treatment centre. I had just turned 19 and hadn't a clue how to live on my own or even look for a place to live. While I was still in treatment, I had linked in with a Drugs and

Alcohol Abuse Task Force Worker named Conor who got me in touch with Focus Ireland and my keyworker to be, Vinnie. I had heard about Bishoptsgrove through my Drugs Worker and when I started working with Vinnie, I mentioned it to him because my plan was to go on to 3rd level education and almost instantly Vinnie started the application process with me. Every week I turned up to my appointments with Vinnie and eventually I had my interview with Ruth and when I got to look around the complex, I knew this is where I wanted to be.

After a successful interview, I was granted a place in Bishoptsgrove and I moved in May. I will be forever grateful to Focus Ireland and Bishoptsgrove for being able to provide me with such an incredible service that always places my needs miles ahead of their own”.

O.K.

”

*I am ever so grateful to Bishoptsgrove, a space that has allowed me to flourish, to progress, to believe, a space that I hope at once I've had some part in contributing positively too, just as it has contributed positively to me, my life and my livelihood”.*

MATTHEW



# MAINTAINING QUALITY

The Cork Foyer takes quality assurance very seriously and views it as vital to the running and development of the service. Through ongoing assessment of our service we can clearly identify the areas that are working well for our residents, whilst also identifying new legislation that needs to be reflected in policies and new ideas that can be implemented to improve the service offered to our residents. The comprehensive monitoring of data collated can be used to identify trends so we can proactively tackle new or increasing challenges.

## HSE Service Arrangement

Each year the Cork Foyer signs a Service Level Agreement with the HSE. This agreement holds the Cork Foyer to strict conditions around policies & procedures, support provision, financial controls, governance, health & safety, and is linked to the annual grant we receive. The HSE Agreement provides helpful guidance each year on new legislation and how this needs to be incorporated into our policies and procedures; it also sets key performance indicators which need to be reported back on a regular basis.



## Foyer Federation Accreditation

Deservedly, Cork Foyer is fully endorsed by the Foyer Federation with an assessment result of Strategically Strong and Operationally Strong. This is the highest grade possible under the quality framework.



## National Youth Council Health Promotion Quality Mark

The National Youth Council of Ireland developed the Health Quality Mark as a health promotion initiative, with a view to enhancing best practise and a high standard of quality in all aspects of health promotion in youth organisations. The HQ Mark is a set of quality standards in youth health promotion.



## National Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services in Ireland

The National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) outlines the standards that all homeless services should be trying to achieve when offering support and accommodation to their service users, and as such, can only be of benefit to the service users. This involves a comprehensive self-assessment, improvement action plan, site visits by the Local Authority and quarterly reporting of statistics.



## Annual Service Review

Each year, the Cork Foyer undertakes an Annual Service Review. This review involves residents, stakeholders, referrers and staff. The aim of these service reviews is to review all aspects of the service, see what is working well and see where changes can be made that have a positive impact on the service provided to residents.



# CORK FOYER & BISHOPSGROVE INCOME & EXPENDITURE SUMMARY AS OF 31ST DECEMBER 2023

## Cork Foyer & Bishopsgrove General Accounts

INCOME	TOTAL	FOYER	B'GROVE
Rent	€298,534	€86,350	€212,184
HSE	€294,850	€294,850	-
Department of Environment, Community & Local Government	€226,923	€226,923	-
Miscellaneous Income	€13,000	€10,000	€3,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>€833,307</b>	<b>€618,123</b>	<b>€215,184</b>

EXPENDITURE	TOTAL	FOYER	B'GROVE
Payroll	€527,783	€477,168	€50,615
Transfer to Capital Budget Provision	€66,683	€16,683	€50,000
Cleaning/Waste	€27,127	€11,264	€15,863
Heating & Lighting	€65,786	€49,201	€16,585
Maintenance Repair, Parks, Materials	€17,599	€11,543	€6,056
Non-Capital Equipment Purchases / IT	€5,601	€4,250	€1,351
Miscellaneous	€750	€700	€50
Other Operational Expenses / Minor Contracts	€16,008	€11,156	€4,852
Professional Fees	€13,545	€12,578	€967
Telephone, TV & Postage	€5,455	€2,727	€2,728
Design, Printing, Stationery	€5,580	€4,925	€655
Travel, Training & Subsistence	€2,338	€270	€2,068
Night Security / Security Property	€70,152	€4,460	€65,692
Minibus / Other Vehicle & Machinery Expenses	€8,900	€8,000	€900
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>€833,307</b>	<b>€618,123</b>	<b>€215,184</b>

# Capital Accounts

## RESIDENT HARDSHIP / PARTICIPATION FUND:

Balance as at 31st December 2022	€12,124
Income	€0.00
Total Income	€0.00
Expenditure	
Participation, Activities, Equipment, Talent Bonds & Hardship	€6,242
Total Expenditure	€6,242
<b>Balance as of 31st December 2023</b>	<b>€5,882</b>

## CAPITAL REPLACEMENT / DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT

Balance as at 31st December 2022	€277,696
Income	
Transfer Capital Budget Provision	€66,683
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>€66,683</b>
Expenditure	€0.00
Total Expenditure	€0.00
<b>Balance as of 31st December 2023</b>	<b>€344,379</b>

Certified by:



Barry O'Hare  
Management Accountant, Cork City Council

# CORK FOYER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

## ADRIENNE ROGERS

**Chair**

Director Community Culture  
and Placemaking (Retired)

*Cork City Council  
Anglesea Street, Cork*

## JOANNA MACCARTHY

**Admin Officer**

Housing Department  
Cork City Council

*Anglesea Street, Cork*

## JOE KIRBY

**Co-ordinator**

Homeless Services

## Health Service Executive

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare

*Kinvara House  
Dublin Hill, Cork*

## AILEEN O'BRIEN

**Admin Officer**

**Homeless Officer**

Housing Department

*Cork City Council  
Anglesea Street, Cork*

## KEITH MURPHY

**Adult Education Officer**

Cork ETB

*21 Lavitts Quay  
Cork*

## DENIS MANNING

**Admin Officer**

Housing Department

*Cork County Council  
County Hall, Cork*

## JOHN CALNAN

**Manager**

Cork Foyer and Bishopsgrove

*Assumption Road  
Blackpool, Cork*

## DENIS FITZGERALD

Member of Blackpool Community  
Co-operative Service Centre Ltd

*90 Great William O'Brien Street  
Blackpool, Cork*

## GARDA JACQUI WHITE

An Garda Síochána  
Community Policing

*Watercourse Road  
Blackpool, Cork*





THE CORK FOYER & BISHOPSGROVE  
SUPPORTED STUDENT ACCOMMODATION  
**2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

Cork Foyer, Assumption Rd, Blackpool, Cork, T23 FDT4

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