



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

**ANNUAL REPORT
2016**



A hand-up Not a hand-out



About The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVP) was founded in Ireland in 1844. It is the largest voluntary charitable organisation in Ireland. During its history it has helped people in need through a Famine, a Civil War, a War of Independence, two World Wars and several economic recessions.

Our focus is on practical approach to dealing with poverty, alleviating its effects on individuals and families through working primarily in person-to-person contact by a unique system of family visitation and seeking to achieve social justice and equality of opportunity for all citizens.

In addition to providing direct assistance to those in need, caring for the homeless, providing social housing, operating holiday homes and other social support activities, the Society promotes community self-sufficiency, enabling people to help themselves. Any assistance offered by the Society is given in a non-judgemental spirit, based on the needs of the individual or family seeking help.

The Society respects the dignity of those who contact us, offering assistance and advice when sought, maintaining their dignity while assisting them towards long-term self-sufficiency in a relationship of friendship, trust and confidentiality.

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Our Mission and Ethos

Our Mission seeks to eliminate the causes of poverty.

We are a Christian voluntary organisation, working with poor and disadvantaged people. Inspired by our principal founder, Frederic Ozanam, and our patron, St. Vincent de Paul, we seek to respond to the call every Christian receives to bring the love of Christ to those in need:

“I was hungry and you gave me food,” (Matthew 25).

No work of charity is foreign to the Society.

We are involved in a diverse range of activities characterised by:

Support and friendship

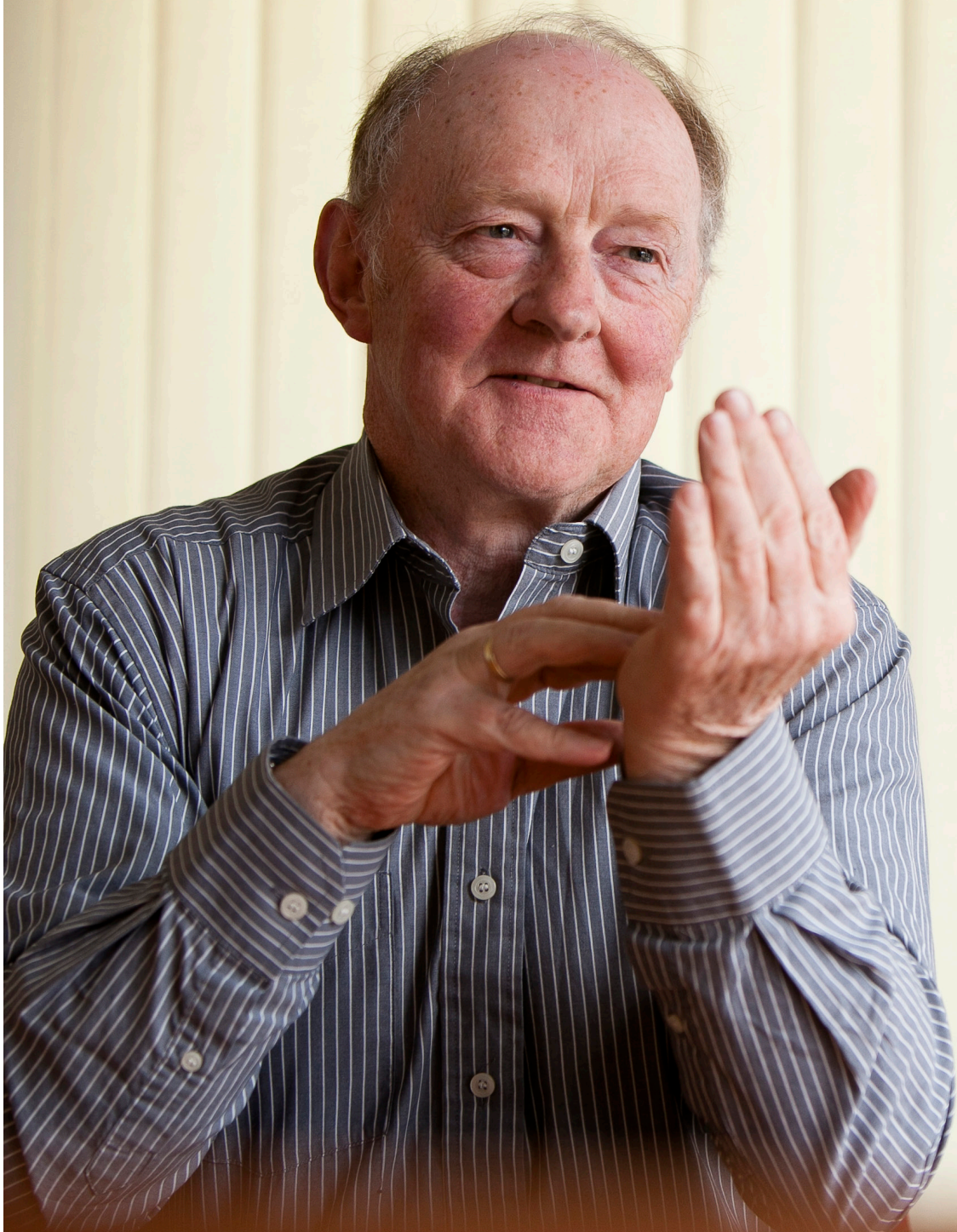
Through person-to-person contact, we are committed to respecting the dignity of those we assist and fostering self-respect. We assure confidentiality at all times and endeavour to establish relationships based on trust and friendship.

Promoting self-sufficiency

It is not enough to provide short term material support. Those we assist are also helped to achieve self-sufficiency in the longer term and the sense of self-worth this provides. When problems are beyond our competence, we enlist the support of specialised help.

Working for Social Justice

We are committed to identifying the root causes of poverty and social exclusion in Ireland and, in solidarity with poor and disadvantaged people, to advocate and work for the changes required to create a more just and caring society.



Welcome

I am pleased to present our Annual Report for 2016. It has been a busy year for the Society and I thank Members and Staff for their ongoing commitment. Members work closely with organisations such as MABS and other advisors and we appreciate their support and advice.

Significant progress has been made in relation to structural changes to the Society. I thank Members and Staff for their work and patience in all that has been achieved. Change is never easy but is essential if our organisation is to meet new demands, a different regulatory environment and a public who expect good governance over their donations.

It is essential that our Society has a pipeline of dedicated people willing to serve as Conference Officers, Area Presidents, Regional Presidents and Trustees. I thank all those involved currently in such roles.

Our input into Social Justice and Policy has increased significantly. We continue to speak out on behalf of those struggling in Ireland. To provide quality visitation, we need to continuously offer relevant training to our Members and have dedicated staff to provide support to our Area Presidents.

Thanks again to our Members, Staff, Donors and so many others who make possible the support that we are privileged to provide to those in our communities who are in need.

Geoff Meagher,
National President

2016 at a glance



130,000 Visits



1,210 Conferences



11,000 Members



135,400 Requests for help



220 Charity Shops



10 Holiday Homes



311 Hostel Beds



1,000 Social Housing Units



7 Resource Centres



8 Regions twinned with
11 African countries

What we do

Visitation

Visitation is the core activity of the Society and involves the majority of our 11,000 members. Our volunteers spend time talking with those who request our help to ensure we fully understand the issues they are facing, which enables us to provide the best support possible.

Special Works

In addition to our Visitation work, we provide a wide range of services for vulnerable people through our Regional Offices, resource centres, housing, hostels, day-care centres, holiday schemes, and prison visitor centres.

Retail

Our Vincent's shops are a very important aspect of the service SVP provides. Not only do they provide people with new and lightly worn items at affordable prices, they also provide an income source for the Society, which is recycled directly back into the community.

Young SVP

Young SVP provides opportunities to engage in social action in local communities and encourages personal and social development. The Programme engages with both school and college age students across Ireland.

Campaigning

Social Justice and advocacy is a key activity for the Society. We work to make Ireland a fairer place, challenging social injustices such as: poverty, homelessness, lack of opportunity, isolation, long waiting lists for health services, the high cost of housing, energy, childcare and education.

Raising Funds

SVP couldn't carry out our vital work without the generosity of our many donors. We raise funds throughout the year via church gate collections, bag packs, fundraisers, online donations and more.

Our Organisation



11,000 MEMBERS

1,210 CONFERENCES

8 REGIONS

116 AREA PRESIDENT COUNCILS

NATIONAL COUNCIL

NATIONAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Structure and Governance

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a voluntary led organisation and its membership is spread throughout the country in over 1,210 Conferences (the basic operating unit of the Society) making up more than 11,000 volunteers.

The Society nationally elects a National President for a three year term with a possible extension of a further two years. Similar elections occur for the eight Regional Presidents, 116 Area Presidents and 1,210 Conference Presidents situated throughout the island of Ireland.

Within the structure of the organisation the National Management Council (NMC) is the directive, co-ordinating and management body of the Society in Ireland and sets the policy of the Society, consistent with the Mission and Values Statement.

The NMC is also responsible for the overall direction, control and management of the activities of the Society at national, regional, area and local level and in respect of the Society's special works, implementing its policy consistent with the Mission and Values Statement.

The membership of the NMC, who are also the trustees of the Society, consists of the National President, eight Regional Presidents, three appointees of the National President and the Spiritual Advisor.

The Society also has a National Council, who is the representative body of the Society in Ireland. It comprises the National President, the Presidents of Regional and Area Councils and a small number of members nominated by the National President.

The National Co-ordinating Committee is a committee of the National Management Council, appointed at the discretion of the National President, the function of which is to assist, advise and support the National President in performing the functions of his/her Office, in respect of the day-to-day functions of the Society in Ireland.

A number of sub-committees support the NMC:

- **Finance Committee**
- **Audit Committee**
- **Social Housing, Homeless & Specialist Services Committee**
- **Fundraising Committee**
- **IT Steering Committee**
- **Safeguarding Committee**
- **Retail Committee**
- **Social Justice & Visitation Committee**
- **Young SVP Committee**
- **Twinning Committee**

Our Trustees



Geoff Meagher
National President
Appointed 2012

Geoff Meagher is an active member of St Canice's Visitation Conference, Kilkenny, for over 30 years where he has served as Secretary and President. At National level Geoff served on the National Board / National Management Council for the past 10 years. He served as National Treasurer and as National President for 5 years.



Kieran Stafford
National Vice President
Appointed 2013

Kieran is a member of St Peter & Paul's Conference Clonmel, Co Tipperary. He was South East regional twinning officer before becoming Regional President in 2007 and was appointed National Vice President in May 2013. In his current role he is responsible for home visitation, social justice, youth, training and twinning in the Society.

Maire McMahon
National Vice President
Appointed 2012

Máire joined her local SVP visitation conference in 2004, and has served as Area Secretary for her Area Council before being nominated to National Management Council and assuming the role of National Vice President with responsibility for governance in 2012. Máire is also Company Secretary to the Frederic Ozanam Trust.



Frank Gernon
National Treasurer

Frank Gernon is from Blackrock Co. Louth. Now semi-retired, he worked for the last 42 years for Total Produce (Fyffes) where he was finance director.

In his role as national treasurer Frank assists the society's accounting personnel and treasurers in managing it's finances in line with current best practice.





Christy Lynch
Regional President
South West Region
Appointed January 2015



Michael McCann
Regional President
West Region
Appointed November 2015



Aidan Crawford
Regional President
Northern Ireland
Appointed September 2012



John Lupton
Regional President
Mid West Region
Appointed April 2015

Margaret Conway
Regional President
South East Region
Appointed January 2016



Liam Reilly
Regional President
North East &
Midlands Region
Appointed May 2013



Geraldine Kelly
Regional President
North West Region
Appointed May 2013



Liam Casey
Regional President
East Region
Appointed July 2015



Visitation and Special Works



Where we work

In 2014/2015 we have more than 11,000 voluntary members working in more than 1,210 Conferences. During 2015, the Society underwent a restructure which saw the boundaries of our regional offices, which support the work of our Conferences, re-drawn to reflect County, rather than Diocese, boundaries. As a result, the Society now operates through 8 Regional Offices, and one National Office.

- | | | | |
|----------|--|----------|---|
| 1 | EAST REGION
Dublin Kildare Wicklow
3,400 Members
240 Visitation Conferences | 5 | NORTH WEST
Donegal Leitrim Sligo
800 Members
80 Visitation Conferences |
| 2 | MID WEST
Clare Limerick Tipperary 1,000
Members
87 Conferences | 6 | SOUTH EAST
Carlow Kilkenny Laois
Waterford Wexford 1,850
Members 100+ Visitation
Conferences |
| 3 | NORTH
Antrim Armagh Derry
Down Tyrone
1,950 Members
180 Visitation Conferences | 7 | SOUTH WEST
Cork Kerry
1,400 Members
100+ Visitation Conferences |
| 4 | NORTH EAST & MIDLANDS
Cavan Longford Westmeath Louth
 Meath Monaghan 1,670 Members
 100 Visitation Conferences | 8 | WEST
Galway Mayo Roscommon
600 Members 60+ Visitation
Conferences |



SVP's Regional Perspective

Meeting the needs of those who experience poverty in the South East



In 2016 the South East Region covering counties Carlow, Kilkenny, Laois, Waterford & Wexford had a membership of 1,850 volunteers assisting people in need.

The Region has 108 active family visitation conferences meeting families each week to provide support and friendship.

Through direct and personal contact with those in need, SVP Members see how inadequate incomes, those on low paid work, and lack of access to quality services damage peoples prospects and lives.

Demand remained steady and unfortunately, in some areas, Members reported providing help to 1-in-9 families in financial difficulty. The challenge to members is to continue meeting steady demand in an ever changing Society particularly fundraising.

Through direct and personal contact, SVP members see how inadequate incomes, those on low paid work, and lack of access to quality services damage peoples prospects and lives.

Members when visiting families in need were faced with presenting issues such as placing food on the table, striving to maintain children's education at primary, secondary or third level and access to affordable energy.

Members also experienced many families coming under financial pressure with high rents, mortgage arrears and those facing homelessness. Some visitation members also met families who experience financial problems for a variety of reasons, some with mental health problems and others with addiction problems.

Demand remained steady and unfortunately, in some areas, members reported providing help to 1-in-9 families in financial difficulty.

During 2016 Christmas annual appeal the theme adopted by the SVP "Your Yes Can Last a Lifetime". Society members who visit many families in need bring hope, create a more just and caring society and aim to give families a life line and get them back on their feet. Many families through the generosity of the public will testify that "yes" does last a life time.

SVP activities in the North East & Midlands Region



The North East & Midlands Regional Council meets 10 times per year on the first Wednesday of each month (except July and August). Meetings typically last two hours and cover a wide range of subject from Safeguarding, finance, governance, capital grants, visitation, CRM, Agresso, Social Justice, training, Youth and Twinning.

Members

There is approximately 2,000 Members (visitation and non-visitation) in the region which covers the six counties of Cavan, Louth, Longford, Meath, Monaghan and Westmeath. We have commenced retrospective Garda vetting of all members. There is separate Area Councils.

Visitation

Visitation continues is a key element of our Regional Council agenda. Quality visitation is re-enforced at all times. In October 2016 Navan Area Council took the decision to request all calls for assistance be directed to the Regional Office and as such feel they had their most organised Christmas period.

CRM / Agresso

96% of the regions conferences are on CRM. Approximate 80% of all conferences are on Agresso. Support is on-going with plans in place for its continued growth in 2017.



Bethany House

SVP Hostels

Bethany House (Women and children's Hostel) continue to participate in the testing of the Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services, which are expected to be finalised in Q2 2017, and submitted to the department for approval and implementation thereafter. St. Martha's (Men's Hostel) have taken up the Quality Standards also, and are running parallel testing (informally) to build preparedness – they have appointed a 'champion' from among the staff team to lead out on the project in their service.

Safeguarding

The region is represented by two members on the national safeguarding committee and have organised various meeting with our Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs)

Social Housing

The Regional Council has established a Regional Social Housing committee with a volunteer chair and volunteer Social Housing Officer. All Conferences have registered with the RTB and have established sinking funds as is required by the Housing Regulator.

The Regional Social Housing committee meet quarterly. As agreed the Regional Council have approved a stock condition survey of all its Social Housing stock.

Youth Development

A region has a very vibrant youth element with several Youth Conferences and a very successful annual Youth for Justice Day was held. So far this academic year there are 20 schools involved in the school programme.

We had a good response to our 2016 Christmas Appeal with all schools undertaking hampers collections or fundraising. Notably St. Louis Dundalk raised €1,500 and Colaiste Ris Dundalk raised €1,700.

Retail

The region has 35 St. Vincent's shops and 1 Order Fulfilment Centre. A number of shops in 2016 indicated their intention to come under the regional umbrella. All shops are undergoing safety reviews. Daily cash sheets, branding, volunteer agreements and customer reviews have all been rolled out.

Regional Office meetings

The Regional Co-ordinator, ISO's, MSO, Tus participants and volunteers who work in the Regional Office meet weekly regarding operations, what needs to be done, status of various activities, e.g. fundraising. All Regional Office staff have quarterly meetings chaired by Regional President.

Twinning

The North East and Midlands Region is twinned with Zimbabwe which is experiencing difficulties in its economy. SVP Twinning projects operated by the SVP in Zimbabwe and supported by the North East and Midlands Region have the primary goal of alleviating poverty and aiding people to become self-sufficient.



Reaching out to Members

Succession Planning

A key aspect of our work together is quality visitation. Together considerable progress was made during the year supporting best practice across SVP Conferences. Significant inroads were made in relation to the rotation and the take up of volunteer officer roles.

The importance of succession planning was of considerable concern at the National Council meeting in October 2016. Following a combined effort from members and staff in identifying new leaders together we succeeded in filling 94% of those roles by the end of 2016. This was an increase of over 35% from 2014 when we had significant vacancies in this area.



Direct support to Conferences

The new and existing Area Presidents became very active in the year and provided an increasing level of support, training, information and guidance to the conferences. By focussing on the role of Area President's and the Area Councils Conference Presidents have been supported in their Conference work. This progress has seen a revitalisation of Area and Conference structures.

Best practice and guidance

With the active support of the volunteers of the National Social Justice and Visitation Committee a number of best practice and guidance notes on emerging and persistent problems encountered by SVP members have been published. These are available for all SVP members on the Society's Conference Portal.

Key priority areas

This year we have identified a number of areas that will need further work in 2017. These include:

- Recruitment of new members
- Specific role descriptions for volunteers
- Member Development and Training

Recruitment of New Members: The continued implementation of standard recruitment practices and procedures for all new Members forms a significant part of the Membership Support Officers work and has helped to identify significant challenges in this area that we will begin to address in 2017. The Society needs to expand its volunteer membership if it is to continue to meet the demands of those who request assistance.

Volunteer Role Descriptions. To assist volunteer members in their work we work with volunteer leaders to provide role descriptions for the different officer roles in the Society. This will help provide clarity to our members in their work on behalf of people in need.

Member Development and Training: Two significant developments in the Area of members development and training took place during 2016. The first of these initiatives involved an internal review of training and the exploration of the need for an SVP Training Strategy, the fruits of this work we hope to see in 2017.

The Society needs to expand its volunteer membership if it is to continue to meet the demands of those who request assistance.

The second was the emergence of 'Member Area Gatherings', a pilot initiative which provided opportunities for networking, reflective practice, sharing learning and self-care for volunteers. This area of work is proving very popular amongst volunteers and there are already many 'Members Gatherings' planned for 2017.



A Volunteer Perspective
by Marie Cronin Area President

2016 was a very positive year for the SVP's Membership Support Team. Our 12 Membership Support Officers (MSO's), began the year reaching out to all Area President's across the country. The role of the MSO is to support 107 volunteer Area Presidents in their work. The overarching focus of the MSO work is to meet with our Members and Conferences, to build relationships and to establish the supports required by our volunteer Members to help them fulfil their role.

The focus of MSO work is to meet with Members & Conferences, build relationships & establish supports.

I am currently serving as Area President in Ballyfermot/Clondalkin and have served as an Area President on two separate occasions in the 90's and again in 00. The MSO role has been a very welcome support to me in my role as Area President. I find my workload greatly reduced by having an MSO to help and guide me.

A reflection of 60 years a member by Eamon Mackey

I remember attending my first meeting of the Dublin Councils in all Hollow's College, Drumcondra. At that meeting, four men were given a special introduction for completing 50 years as members of our Society, which I was in awe of that they had achieved this wonderful milestone. That was in 1955, and I have now passed that milestone.

After school, in my first job, a senior man in the company suggested I join the St Vincent de Paul Society. I was introduced to the Clothing Group in Ozanam House, Mountjoy Square, a Special Works Conference that supplied new clothing to people in need through the Conferences. Around that time a group was forming to become the Salvage Bureau - these two special works were the start of what is now, Vincent's Shops.

I was sent to the Conference of Christ the King, Cabra, where I came face to face with the reality of poverty. I worked in that Conference for many years, spending a week every year in Sunshine House in Balbriggan as was normal with young members.

I got a promotion in the company I worked which entailed a lot of travelling around the Country. President of the Council of Ireland, Bill Cashman asked if possible when I was travelling with work if I could visit Conferences and Councils and report back to him on their needs and progress. I was delighted. Television was not as yet in the Country and not everyone had phones. I didn't drink, so the evenings in a hotel could be very boring. So over the next few years I visited many Conferences and Councils.

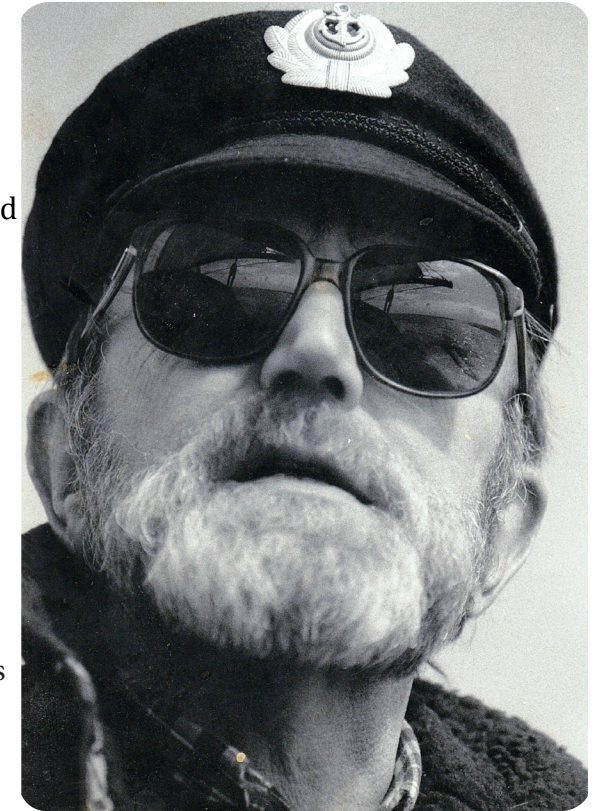
When a National Youth Council formed, I joined and organised an International Youth Meeting for young Vincentian's in Gormanstown

College 1965. During the preparation of this meeting we worked with volunteer typists. One time I was asked to leave one of these girls home; I married her 18 months later.

Around the same time I was called to the Council of Ireland where I worked happily with wonderful people who worked hard to make the Society what it is today. I was asked to manage Public Relations and I finished off my 15 years on the Council of Ireland in this position.

I then joined St Columba Conference, Iona Road, where I later served for a number of years as President.

I moved to Howth and joined the local Conference of The Assumption, for 10 years and proudly received the Ozanam medal in 2005. In time grandchildren came along. We moved to be near them and our children. It has been a fantastic 60 years, I have met many superb people within the Society many of whom I am very proud to call my friends.



In memoriam
May 2017

SVP Retail



Vincent's Charity Shops

SVP shops provide items at affordable prices for the communities they serve & an income source which is recycled directly back into Conferences to support the local area.

SVP charity shops generate much needed funding for SVP projects in the local community whilst promoting the ethos, values and history of the organisation. The shops afford people the opportunity to volunteer their services in the community and protect our environment by facilitating redistribution of clothing and other items which might otherwise go to landfill.

SVP charity shops compliment the home visitation work of SVP and serve as a platform to promote social interaction, social justice, self-sufficiency and value for money shopping. SVP recognises that community focused charity shops can be used to reverse the sense of exclusion felt by many people living in poverty and can serve to reconnect people with society. SVP shop managers are encouraged to run 'customer appreciation events' to facilitate this process of reconnecting people with society.

In 2016, over 120 shops recorded growth in sales. Oranmore in Galway recorded the single highest like-for-like increase with 71% growth. During 2016, the National Retail Management team introduced a number of initiatives to increase team satisfaction, customer satisfaction, compliance checks and business development.

A number of shop openings and refurbishments were also undertaken. It should also be noted that income from export of unsold textiles dropped in 2016 due to a fall in demand linked to volatility in world currencies and falling oil prices.

The Society is making every effort to extract maximum value from the generous donations received at each of our 220 charity shops across Ireland. It operates 5 Order Fulfilment Centres which collect unsold stock from our shops and redistribute these items to neighbouring Vincent's charity shops rather than exporting them. Further Order Fulfilment Centres are planned for 2017.

“The Society greatly appreciates the generosity of the donating public and makes every effort to ensure that all donated items add value to our work.”

Other initiatives introduced in 2016 include the introduction of a new volunteer recruitment and retention programme, a national shop business plan, a coordinated approach to in-store branding and promotion of the 'Vincent's' logo, the initial introduction of bar coding and point of sale technology and the opening of an online store.

SVP recognises that many Irish consumers are technically enabled and derive as much value from the 'experience' of shopping as from the product ultimately purchased. The SVP retail offering is evolving to meet these exciting challenges and opportunities.

Meet Ray, one of our Vincent's shop volunteers



Ray volunteering in Vincent's Charity Shop,
Sean MacDermott Street, Dublin

Ray is a people person, instantly likeable, chatty and interested in your stories and equally happy to share a few of his own. A proud family man and former Garda Superintendent, Ray started volunteering with SVP after early retirement in January 2016. He now works three days a week in the Vincent's Shop on Sean MacDermott Street Dublin, and has never looked back.

Ray puts his warmth and good humour to work every time he volunteers to achieve one of his retirement goals – *“to use this time to give something back.”* And he claims he’s getting it all and more back in return, working with fun people he admires and seeing the effects of his work.

“Staff and volunteers have created a positive culture here where everyone is welcome and treated with respect.”


According to Ray, volunteering is busy and interesting because it’s constantly changing where “no two days are ever the same”. Customers and stock change everyday and he enjoys seeing donations coming, organising and preparing stock and helping customers.

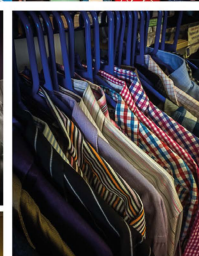
On the shop floor Ray has the opportunity to meet and chat with new people everyday and help them with whatever they need. He recalls one time a homeless man, who with help from another charity, had secured a job interview came to the Vincent's shop looking for interview clothes. Ray helped him find the right outfit. The next day the man called back to he had got the job and to say thank you to everyone.

Being a volunteer gives me a great sense of personal satisfaction, because I can see the impact my work has on peoples lives everyday. When you retire "there's only so many times you can paint the kitchen. To be of service helps you maintain respect and dignity, it's wonderful to have the opportunity to do something that can make a difference."



VINCENT'S

SUPPORTING THE WORK OF **SVP** THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL 



SOCIAL JUSTICE



Social Justice and advocacy

The cornerstone of our work since the Society was established in Ireland in 1844.



BUNGALOW, SWORDS, CO. DUBLIN. POA



PROPERTY DETAILS

Located in a prime location just below the flight path for Dublin airport and within walking distance of transport links, this new to market bungalow is a great option for a couple or family looking to take on a project. Despite appearances, there are possibilities here should the tenants wish to uncover them.

- A blank canvas
- Suits couple or family with all their own furniture.
- Hot water, electricity, furniture not included.

In addition to direct support to those in need in communities throughout Ireland, the Social Justice team in SVP continued to advocate during 2016 on their behalf, drawing from the extensive on-the-ground experience to inform our policies for positive change in the lives of the people we assist – so that people can access services and supports they require to fully take their place in Irish society.

Through direct contact with those in need, SVP members see how inadequate incomes and lack of access to quality services impacts people's prospects and lives. They gain a firsthand perspective and understanding of the housing and homelessness crisis, child poverty, educational disadvantage, and how living on low incomes affects individuals and families.

SVP believes we are called to challenge the social injustices we see, to engage with government and policy makers to propose solutions and to advocate for social change.

In 2016 key issues for the people we assisted included housing affordability & quality, increasing homelessness & changes to the One Parent Family Payment.

SVP also continued to work towards the goal of ensuring all individuals and families have access to quality housing, education, affordable energy and an adequate income.

1. Affordable and Good Quality Housing

SVP members visited increasing numbers of families in emergency accommodation while at the same time working to help families in private tenancies struggling with rising rents. A new East Regional Conference was established to visit and support homeless families in emergency B&B and hotel accommodation.

SVP liaised with statutory agencies to raise the concerns that members were encountering, advocating around challenges that families in emergency accommodation are facing, including travel costs to schools, and food and nutrition issues as well as speedy resettlement into housing.

Additional key concerns and issues that SVP have been advocating on is the urgent need to radically increase the supply of social housing, the overreliance on the private rented sector, and reform of the rented sector to improve rent certainty, security of tenure and standards of properties. This work contributed in part to the Government's 'Rebuilding Ireland' Housing Strategy published in July.



tion to our concern at the housing and homeless crisis and the lack of social housing in Ireland. The 'Hidden Homeless' are people and families in hotels and B&Bs, made homeless by hikes in private rented sector rents and also people making do with cold, damp and poor quality rental units or 'sofa surfing' in the homes of friends or extended family.

'Hidden Homeless' are people and families in hotels and B&Bs, made homeless by hikes in private rented sector rents & people making do with cold, damp & poor quality rental units or 'sofa surfing' in the homes of friends or extended family.

During the campaign, visitors to the window of the SVP Vincents shop on South Great George's street and passers-by saw a different type of estate agency window, with properties advertised in terms of what many low-income families face. Shop visitors and members of the general public were asked to sign a petition calling for Government to:

- Ensure enough social housing is built or bought to meet current and future need
- Improve security, affordability & quality in the private rented sector.

SVP HIDDEN HOMELESS CAMPAIGN 2016



2. Good Quality Early Years Education and Care

SVP has continually strived to ensure children get the best possible start in life through the provision of good quality, affordable early years care and education. In early 2016 the team developed two reports on the early years sector. The first outlined the keys challenges for the sector and the second offered solutions from using SVP on the ground experience.



In the lead up to the announcement of Budget 2017, SVP worked with other organizations calling on the Government for greater investment in the early years sector, including a video input to Early Childhood Ireland's campaign 'Doing the Sums: Estimating the Real Cost of Childcare'.

One of the key successes of this advocacy work was the introduction of a new Affordable Childcare Scheme under Budget 2017. This scheme allows low income parents to access generous subsidies to help with the cost of childcare. SVP will continue to advocate that sustainable and sufficient funding is invested in the early years sector to ensure affordability for parents, good working conditions for staff and quality environments for children.

3. Warm Homes and Affordable Utilities

The submission to, and work with, the then Department of Energy during 2015 resulted in many of our policy positions being adopted by the out going Government in the new Strategy to Combat Energy Poverty launched in February 2016, and which is currently being implemented.

In March 2016, SVP was able to present on the Energy Poverty Strategy during an NGO Meeting with the Department of Energy. Throughout the year, SVP continued to liaising with energy suppliers such as Pinergia on communicating to members about new hardship pay as you go meters available from them.

SVP were also represented at an EU event on Ending Energy Poverty in Brussels in July, helping to feed our experience in Ireland into wider EU strategies.



4. An Adequate Income

An ongoing concern for SVP is the persistent and unacceptably high level of child poverty in Ireland. As part of the Advisory Council on our National Children & Youth Strategy – Better Outcomes, Brighter Future – we worked with other organisations and government departments to develop a comprehensive, integrated plan to decisively reduce the consistent poverty among children. We presented our recommendations to government officials in October 2016.

SVP continued to highlight the negative impacts of the reforms of the One Parent Family Payment. In our Pre-Budget Submission, we included a number of recommendations that would address current barriers to employment and education and training for lone parents. These recommendations were presented at the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection in September 2016.

SVP brought to a national stage the experiences of the people we assist at the annual Social Inclusion Forum run by Department of Social Protection, and a research conference by the Economic & Social Research Institute focusing on the link between poverty and quality of life.

Throughout 2016, we continued to liaise with stakeholders to support the rollout of the Credit Union Loan Pilot (Personal MicroCredit /It Makes Sense) and fed into the evaluation of the scheme. This scheme provides an alternative to money lenders by providing access to low cost credit for people in receipt of social welfare.

Making Ireland a fairer and better place for everyone to live in.

Other Advocacy Efforts

In the lead up to the general election, SVP were active on a number of fronts and initiatives. We joint hosted an Election Hustings themed ‘Stand for Justice’ with Trocaire and Social Justice Ireland in January 2016. SVP also developed eight key policy points that we wanted parties and candidates to commit to in the General Election. Recognizing the growing housing crisis, SVP issued a joint statement with Irish Catholic Bishops, the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, and Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice on the need to make housing a key election issue.

2016 saw the first anniversary of the Sustainable Development Goals. Throughout 2016, SVP engaged in, and supported the establishment and work of, an innovative group of both domestic and development NGOs to develop policy and influencing approaches to the Sustainable Development Goals in Ireland. The group is advocating for an action plan for the implementation of the goals by the Irish Government.



SVP Meetings with Ministers and Departments

- Joint Committee on Arts, Heritage, Regional Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs on the topic of 'Caring for the elderly and disadvantaged in rural Ireland' (December 2016).
- Meeting with Department of Social Protection as part of Community and Voluntary Pillar, raising issue of health and hospital related travel costs in rural areas (November 2016)
- Inputted at the Strategy for the Residential Rental Sector Stakeholder Consultation Workshop (October 2016)
- Meeting with Housing Department on progress related to Rebuilding Ireland (October 2016)
- Attendance at Department of Child and Youth Affairs Post Budget briefing (October 2016)
- Meeting with Minister for Energy (October 2016)
- SVP Budget 2017 policies presented to Social Protection Joint Oireachtas Committee (September 2016)
- Input to European Commission fact-finding mission on social progress in Ireland (September 2016)
- National Economic Dialogue with Taoiseach Enda Kenny and Government Ministers (June 2016)
- Minister for Social Protection, Leo Varadkar, to discuss Social Protection issues relevant to SVP (May 2016)
- Meeting Ministers of Public Expenditure and Reform and Finance on Budget 2017 (September 2016)
- Housing Bilateral Meeting with the Department of Environment, Communities and Local Government, Customs House as part of the Community and Voluntary Pillar (April 2016)
- Meeting with Department of Social Protection officials as part of Community and Voluntary Pillar (March 2016)
- Child Poverty meeting with NGOs and Government Departments at Department of Social Protection (January 2016)

SVP Social Justice Submissions 2015/2016

- Review of The Electricity and Gas Supplier's Handbook & Further Consultation (December 2016)
- Development of a Strategy for the Residential Rental Sector (November 2016)
- Single Affordable Childcare Scheme (October 2016)
- Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme SVP Consultation Response (September 2016)
- Department of Social Protection Statement of Strategy (August 2016)
- Pre- Budget Submission: Building an Equal Nation (June 2016)
- CER- Supplier Handbook Consultation (May 2016)
- Dail Committee on Housing and Homelessness (May 2016)
- National Reform Programme (April 2016)
- Commissioning by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (February 2016)
- Fair Deal Nursing Home Scheme: Additional Services Charge (February 2016)
- National Smart Metering Project (NSMP) - Empowering and Protecting Customers (January 2016)

SVP Research and Reports 2015/ 2016

- Policy Links: Challenges and Priorities for Childcare, Early Years and Afterschool Care (May 2016)
- Policy Links: Current Shortcomings in ECCE, Childcare and After School Care (May 2016)
- Short report on a survey of lone parents who were impacted by the Reforms of the One Parent Family Payment (Internal report, March 2016)

Young SVP



Young SVP Pilot Programme

2015/2016 was the final year of our Young SVP Pilot Programme. This 3-year pilot, supported by Electric Ireland, allowed us to explore & develop the ways in which we, as an organisation, work with and support students at second and third levels to engage in SVP activities in schools, communities & colleges.

Through our Young SVP Programme the work, values and institutional knowledge of SVP will be passed on to the next generation through the delivery of a positively supported package that students and their teachers engage in. The overall aims of this programme are clear – we want to support young people to become better informed, more engaged, conscientious and socially active citizens who will continue to work towards promoting a fair and just society of all in Ireland (and beyond) long after their engagement with the Young SVP programme.

Young SVP provides opportunities to engage in social action in local communities and encourages personal and social development. In 2016 five SVP Youth Development staff helped young people start projects or help Conferences across the regions.

During the 2015/2016 academic year more than 150 schools engaged with us, providing opportunities for 1000's of students at second level, while our college groups spanned 15 campuses across the island, engaging as many as 3,000 students in activities through the year.

The Young SVP schools programme incorporated 5 Regions at the start of the year, with additional regions coming on board through the year, namely East taking on a Youth Development Officer (YDO) in March 2016, and both the West and Mid-West will have officers in place for the coming school year. This means that we will start 2016-17 academic year with a YDO in each of the eight SVP Regions nationally.

In the 2015-16 academic year our YDOs delivered a total of 610 school visits across more than 150 different schools, where they informed students about the work of SVP, explored issues of social justice and supported them in designing and delivering activities to address needs in their own communities.



There were 146 schools registered with the Young SVP Programme, with more than 3,500 second level students engaging in social action project and activities under the name of Young SVP. There were Regional Youth Days and Exhibitions held in 5 Regions in April/May 2016, with a total of 1,700 students attending these celebrations.

Additionally in our third level groups there was considerable activity in 2015/16. With 15 colleges involved in delivering SVP activities upwards of 3000 third level students were engaged, of whom more than 1000 are recorded as active SVP members.

Between the various college SVP Conferences more than 50 weekly activities were coordinated, having a direct impact on hundreds of young people and adults in need across the country.



The opportunity to run this 3 year pilot programme has allowed the Society to design, develop and deliver a National Youth development Programme which will continue over the years to come.

The Young SVP Programme will move into its next stage in September 2016, where schools and college students can be supported in their engagement with SVP in a number of different ways, but all under the one Young SVP umbrella.

This expanded and enhanced programme seeks to engage young people in Schools and Colleges in a manner that provides them with opportunities for personal and social development on a number of levels including:

- Personal and social development for young people
- Developing an understanding of the ethos, mission and aims of SVP
- Developing a better understanding of Social Justice and its importance in society
- Learning how to identify issues and problems
- Developing projects that will address these issues and improve lives of others
- Engaging in social action
- Gaining a positive experience of volunteering

SVP College Conferences run a range of activities from homework clubs, to supporting homeless services, fundraising, social justice projects.

The impact of so many young people being exposed to the concepts of Social justice and making a difference in their communities is very powerful and provides the foundation for a very different Ireland in the future.



electric
Ireland

Young SVP
Ambassadors
2016



SVP Housing



Social Housing and Specialist Services

The Society of St Vincent De Paul/Frederic Ozanam Trust is a registered Approved Housing Body (AHB) with close to 1,000 units of social housing delivered and managed by 60 individual local Housing Conferences nationally.

All properties provided by Housing Conferences are vested in the Frederic Ozanam Trust with the Society recognised as an individual landlord. The development of social housing by the Society was initiated in the mid 70's/early 80's by local individual Conferences identifying an unfulfilled local community housing need who worked to address that need through the acquisition or delivery of new build social housing units.

A significant number of the Society's units have been delivered through the states Capital Assistance Scheme(CAS) funding initiative which provides 95-100% grant funding and in doing so the Society established successful partnership working with local authorities and other external bodies nationally.

The Society has also provided social housing units through bequests and Society own funds.

The schemes delivered nationally vary in size from 1-2 units to larger schemes of up to 30-50 units. A large number of schemes are supported through the work of Housing Conference members with a small number of schemes providing full/part time on-site support. The operating environment for the Society's Housing Conferences as like all other approved housing bodies has changed significantly in recent years with the introduction of housing regulation and the residential tenan-

cies legislation and the Society throughout the year worked closely with local Housing Conferences through the new Regional and National Social Housing structures to set out clear steps/information requirements in terms of meeting the Society's Regulation compliance.

Through our work in 2016 Housing Conferences are aware of the necessity to operate effectively and the need to seek continuous improvement in the management of our housing stock to ensure the delivery of the highest quality services to the tenant.



St. Michaels Housing Project Foxford, Co Mayo

In 2016, St Patrick's Conference, Foxford, Co Mayo commenced building St. Michaels Housing project on a site granted to the Society by St Nathys Trust of the Achonry Diocese. This 1.7-acre site is in a picturesque location overlooked by the nearby mountains and adjacent to St Michaels, the parish church. It is ideally placed for access to local services whilst affording residents a great degree of privacy.

The houses were designed to provide permanent accommodation for elderly people of the community. The Foxford Conference wanted to create a community atmosphere in the development to foster new friendships between occupants. From the outset, the Conference together with the architects, were concerned that the completed project would be wheelchair friendly, require minimal maintenance and low running costs.



St Michaels housing project funded by Mayo County Council under the Local Authority housing programme delivered by Clydesdale Construction contractors was designed by John Halligan Architects, a Mayo Company delivering architecture services from their offices in Charlestown for 35 years. A registered RIAI practice, and a Grade II conservation practice, the office works on a diverse range of projects, including residential, healthcare, education, and hospitality, ecclesiastical and domestic projects.

Houses were designed to provide permanent accommodation for elderly people of the community.

The project sits on a picturesque site located off a service road which terminates in a cul-de-sac, and next to a crèche. The brief was to provide one and two bedroom houses which were to be fully accessible, together with a community building. The development sits well into the landscape of Foxford, with pedestrian connection back into the town from the rear of the site through the church grounds.

In April 2016, the development opened and the Society of St Vincent de Paul, Foxford residents moved into their new complex of eight houses specially designed for the elderly and disabled.

During planning, the Society were aware that they needed a build that would provide very low maintenance both externally and internally. This was achieved very handsomely.

The externals are all of natural slate roofing, local stone frontages and a permanent colour plaster finish with triple glazing throughout. Internally, great care has been taken to ensure comfort and warmth, and all of this achieved at very low running cost.

Tenants are delighted at the level of comfort provided. To date none have had any need to use the solid fuel stoves provided.

The development is a positive step in ensuring that elderly and vulnerable members of the Foxford community are housed in suitable accommodation designed with their specific needs in mind. Occupants have been using the planters and benches at their front doors. This accommodates interaction between the neighbours and encourages friendship.

SVP was delighted when the development won as the 'Housing project of the Year 2016' at the Building and Architects of the year awards.

Paula Kenny, SVP National Manager for Social Housing and Specialist Services said:

"The Society of St Vincent De Paul are delighted to receive the Award. The project demonstrates the excellent work and dedication of the Society's volunteer members to meet a local community housing need and the quality of housing provision that can be realised through effective partnership working."

Members of the Foxford Conference have an immense Vincen-

tian spirit which emanates from all their work in particular their ongoing dedication to the tenants to ensure a sense of well-being and belonging within the Foxford community.

Paula Kenny noted that:

"The strive to achieve high quality standards was key to the successful delivery of the project with the strength of approach further demonstrated in the effective housing and tenant management practices. St Michaels Scheme and the work of St. Patricks Conference can only serve as a good practice model for the Society's housing nationally."

Tenants are delighted at the level of comfort provided.



Joseph Davitt, Chairman Regional Housing West, St. Vincent de Paul, Paula Kenny, National Manager for Social Housing and Specialist Services, Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Maria Kelleher, John Halligan Architects, Jim Loughran, Commercial Director, Kingspan Insulation, John Halligan, John Halligan Architects.

Fundraising



Donor Fundraising

Whether raising sponsorship or selling tickets for an event, SVP provides donors with unique SVP fundraising pages that make it easy to support us.

Fiddle Headshave Fundraiser

The headshave event grew organically from a small idea of doing a headshave to coincide with a significant birthday and maybe be able to help a charitable organisation in the process.

To start, I posted a note on my Facebook profile to let friends and family know that I was intending to do a charity headshave in January. My aunt, Eileen Hegarty, and a fellow Donegal fiddle player, Brid Harper, both contacted me to ask if they could join in doing the headshave too. It had never even crossed my mind that others would be interested in participating but I was delighted.

Brid and I wondered about the possibility of linking the headshave with a mini Donegal Fiddle concert. We set about asking Scoil Gheimhridh Gaoth Dobhair if they'd be interested in hosting the event.

We wanted to ensure the money went directly to St Colmcille's Hostel.

They were delighted despite the fact the festival brochure had already gone to print and we were penciled in for a New Year's Eve mini concert / final festival session at 2pm in Hudai Beag's in Bunbeag where another fellow Donegal fiddler, Martin McGinley, would be Fear an Tí.

Charities throughout the country were suffering, not only from government cuts but also from a substantial decrease in public donations. Homelessness was a major issue at the time but the news headlines seemed to only carry stories about Homelessness in Dublin so we thought we'd search for a charity closer to home and came across St. Colmcille's Hostel (SVP) in Letterkenny.

Mary at the hostel. She was so positive and enthusiastic about St. Colmcille's Hostel that her energy was contagious and we knew we had found the right match for our headshave. We wanted to ensure the money went directly to the local charity and SVP set up a fundraising page where the money went only to St. Colmcille's Hostel.

Local hairdresser 'Hair@TMD' in Bunbeag agreed wholeheartedly to perform the headshaves and everything was ready to go. As the weeks went on in advance of the headshave and the fundraising webpage was launched, donations began pouring in from around the world.

Charity Head Shave Donegal Fiddle Concert

So far I've raised **€4,098**

of my **€2000** target
from **120** donations
with **8** days to go

205%

Please give what you can

[Donate Now](#)



Head Shave
Fiddle Concert



We couldn't believe we'd raised over €2,000 before the event even started. A huge crowd of musicians and non-musicians turned out for the event. Bunbeag traffic came to a standstill and rows of parked cars went on for miles.

Eileen was the first brave soldier to shed her locks. Next Brid and I took out the fiddles and played a few traditional music tunes (with hair) and then the razor turned on me and then on Brid. Brid's headshave was probably the most dramatic of the three of us because she had lots of long curls. But in the end, we were all follicly lighter and I'd like to think we also looked just as pretty, if not prettier.

"We couldn't believe we had raised over 2,000 before the event even started."

Brid and I took out the fiddles for one last set of tunes, this time without hair, and we then joined in with a session of eagerly waiting musicians. The Facebook live-feeds of the headshave were viewed by almost 8,000 people and are available on YouTube and a full-page feature was given to the event in the Donegal Democrat.

The event itself raised a further €2,500 and the donations continued to pour in, both online and to us in person, until around mid March when the final total of €4,098 was tallied up.

The headshave had grown way beyond our wildest expectations. Perhaps it was a bit of an unusual pairing of fiddling and head-shaving but it seemed to capture people's imaginations and support.

Tara Connaghan

Fundraising

Everything we do throughout the Society relies on the generosity of the public. We have seen how one small thing can tip a family into a cycle of poverty and crisis. But the opposite is also true.

A little bit of help at the right time can change everything. By donating to SVP you can be there just when a family needs it. You can stop them from falling into that cycle. Your help can truly last a lifetime.

Income for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is received from three main sources: donations from the public, sales from our community charity shop network and Government grants for special works (i.e. homeless hostels and resource centres). The core work of the Society, home visitation and direct assistance, is funded almost entirely from public donations.

In 2016, fundraised income for SVP totalled €36,792,000 due to the continued generosity of the Irish public. This represented a slight decrease of just 1.5% on the previous year and enabled SVP to carry out our vital work in the core area of home visitation and direct assistance with the costs of food, fuel and education.

The Annual Appeal is our only national campaign each year and is responsible for raising the majority of the funds we need.

Central to our fundraising activities each year is the SVP Annual Appeal in November and December. The SVP Annual Appeal is our only national campaign each year and is responsible for raising the majority of the funds we need. During this time, the Society benefits from a groundswell of support amongst the general public and local businesses, and is facilitated by our membership base.

Other key channels of fundraising income for the Society are church collections and legacy donations. In 2016, church collections remained stable at a level of €10,176,000 marking a percentage decrease from 2015 of just 0.8%. Legacy donations are also an important an important source of income for the Society.

One of the unique aspects of fundraising within SVP is our large membership base of volunteers in local communities throughout Ireland. These volunteers are responsible for raising a significant proportion of the income we receive. All of the donations collected are kept within the community and used to help local families.

SVP also receives support through several corporate partnerships. These partnerships provide volunteers, sponsorship and public awareness that complements the work of our volunteers on the ground and the demand they face in local communities.

The Late Late Show charity album for SVP

In November 2016, The Late Late Show and Universal Music Ireland launched a double-album including 21 performances from the show, to raise money for St Vincent de Paul. “As seen on The Late Late Show” features more than 40 Irish and international acts and includes one-off live tracks drawn directly from the last ten years of the TV show including: Walking on Cars and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra’s ‘Speeding Cars’; Christy Moore singing ‘Delirium Tremens’; Damien Rice featuring the Dublin Gospel Choir performing ‘Trusty & True’; Midge Ure with a solo ‘Vienna’ and Gavin James with ‘Bitter Pill’.

The CD features some of the biggest acts in the world who have appeared on The Late Late Show in the last 10 years including U2, Michael Bublé, Robbie Williams, Ellie Goulding, One Direction, Josh Groban, The Script, 5 Seconds of Summer, and Ed Sheeran’s ‘as Gaeilge’ version of his hit ‘Thinking Out Loud’.

The album featured a specially commissioned Christmas track – Finbar Furey, RTÉ Cor na nÓg and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra teamed up on a unique version of the classic “Little Drummer Boy”. The track was released as a charity single in December 2016.

Host Ryan Tubridy said: “We have had the good fortune to welcome some of the best musicians that this country and, indeed, the world has to offer.

The St Vincent de Paul is an incredibly impressive charity and a very worthy cause and I hope this CD will help them in their work”. All artists and labels involved join RTÉ in donating their profits from the sale of the album to St Vincent de Paul.



SVP National President Geoff Meagher said: “This CD provides a very unique opportunity for people to help SVP provide support for those in need in communities throughout the country. SVP members visit thousands of individuals and families in their home to help those who need financial and emotional support at difficult times in their lives. Unfortunately for many people visited today their living environments are not their homes but hotels and B&Bs. The generosity of the Irish people is essential for this work. The funds raised will benefit and make a real difference to so many in need”.

“When we were approached about “As Seen On The Late Late Show” in early summer, it was without question a project that we would lend our support to,” said Mark Crossingham MD of Universal Music Ireland. Coupled with the great work of St Vincent de Paul and what their volunteers provide - they make a difference.”

Financial Reports



Society Income & Expended Summary 2016

	Year 2016			Year 2015		
	Income €'000	Expended €'000	Net €'000	Income €'000	Expended €'000	Net €'000
Visitation	37,098	30,142	6,956	37,806	32,409	5,397
<i>Twining</i>		514	-514		384	-384
<i>Fundraising</i>		744	-744		941	-941
Subtotal	37,098	31,400	5,698	37,806	33,734	4,072
Services						
<i>Hostels</i>	6,220	6,746	-526	6,003	6,581	-578
<i>Social Housing</i>	2,630	5,288	-2658	2,647	2,874	-227
<i>Holiday Homes, Resource Centres, etc.</i>	5,099	8,690	-3591	4,969	7,921	-2,952
Subtotal	13,949	20,724	-6,775	13,619	17,376	-3,757
<i>Charity Shops</i>	28,262	19,403	8,859	27,362	18,215	9,147
<i>Governance, Management, Support & Admin</i>		8,302	-8,302		8,008	-8,008
Total	79,309	79,829	-520	78,787	77,333	1,454

Our Financial Statements for the Society are available at www.svp.ie/finance

Society Highlights 2016

What we do

In 2016, SVP provided circa 400,000 individual and family supports. We provide practical support to people in need through a wide range of services.

Visitation

Home Visitation is the core activity of the Society. Volunteers spend time talking with those who request help to ensure we fully understand the issues they are facing which enables us to provide the best support possible. Our support can be either non-financial or financial to alleviate the impact of poverty and social exclusion. In 2016, we provided €30.1m to individuals and families. (2015: €32.4m).

Service Provision

We provide a wide range of services, some government funded for vulnerable people including 7 resource centres, 10 emergency homeless services (300 beds in hostels), social housing (c. 960 Units), 6 holiday homes, prison visitor centres, children / young adult services and day-care centres. In 2016 we expended €20.72m on such services accounting for 26% of the Society's total expenditure.

Community Charity Shops

The Society has 220 community charity shops. Our Vincent's shops are a very important aspect of service provided by SVP. Not only do they provide people with new and lightly worn items at affordable prices, they also provide an income source for the Society, which is reinvested directly back into the community.

Members



11,000 +

Individual & Family Supports



circa 400,000

Social Housing & Hostel Units



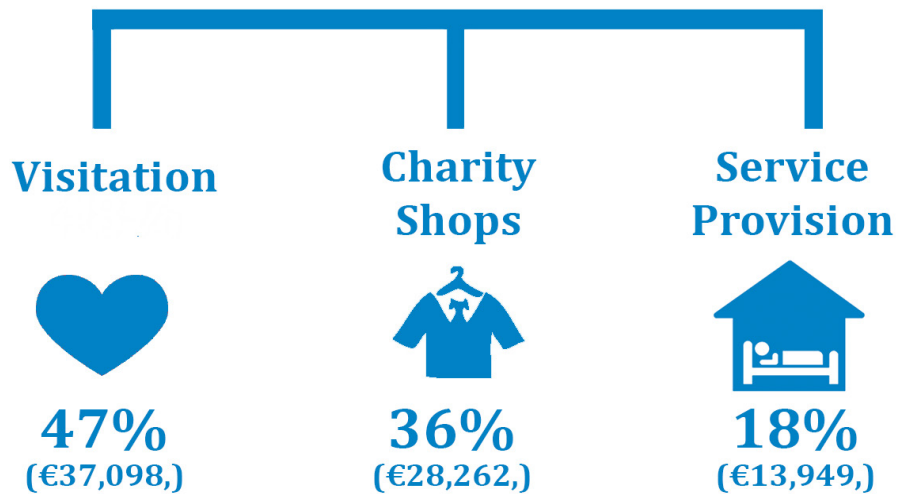
1,240 +

Shop Locations



220 +

Income 2016



In 2016, Total Income for the Society was €79.3 million (2015: €78.8 million). We couldn't carry out our vital work without the generosity of our many donors.

SVP is committed to complying with the standards outlined in the Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public and formally adopted the statement in 2013.

Our Financial Statements for the Society are available at <http://www.svp.ie/finance>

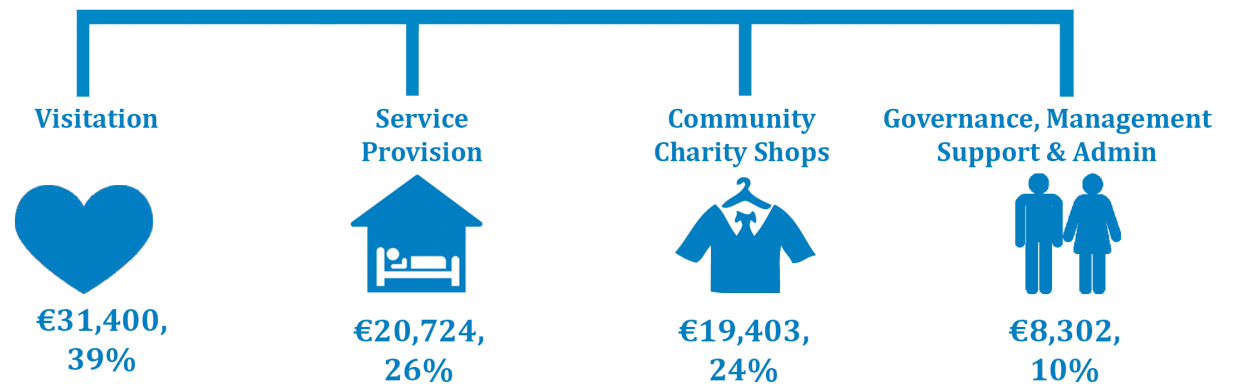
Visitation work includes non-financial support, advisory assistance, befriending and supporting access to social services. Assistance can be direct financial support, foods, fuel and support with utility bills.

Our Services including social housing, homeless services, resource centres, holiday homes etc., accounting for 26% of the Society's total expenditure.

Charity shops account for 24% of the Society's total expenditure with management, support, governance and administration representing 10% of the Society's total expenditure in 2016.

Expended 2016

Value € '000





Society of St. Vincent de Paul

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