



Society of St. Vincent de Paul



THE SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL IRELAND

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2020

THE SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL IRELAND

INVESTING TO SAVE

BUILDING AN EQUAL SOCIETY AFTER COVID-19



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

ANNUAL REPORT
2020



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OUR MISSION

Our mission statement sets out the three core principles of what we hope to achieve, namely:

SUPPORT AND FRIENDSHIP

Through a person-to-person contact, we are committed to respecting the dignity of those we assist and fostering self-respect. We always assure confidentiality 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 build bridges of support with others who can provide more specialised support.

WORKING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

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

OUR STORY

... SO FAR

The Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) was established in Ireland in 1844. It is the largest voluntary charitable organisation in Ireland. Our focus is on a 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 home 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.

WELCOME



The Society's ethos is based on our founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam's motivation from his strong Christian faith, spirituality, humanity and a strong desire for social justice. During the year, we continued the work of building the capacity of the organisation of the Society, within Visitation and Special Works, to be effective and efficient in helping those in need.

Having assumed the role of National President in late 2020, my immediate concern was to ensure we had the capacity to provide ongoing support to those we assist and the means to

do so given the significant effects of the Global Pandemic on our ability to generate income.

Thankfully, we overcame such challenges in terms of revenue, and we responded to new challenges in delivering assistance in many innovative, enterprising, and creative ways. The structures that have been put in place in recent years facilitated this approach and allowed for timely and effective activity/functional specific decision making.

The leadership demonstrated by the members

of the National Management Council during 2020 who responded to the organisation's needs in providing governance and oversight throughout the year, meeting many more times than usual to consider in-depth significant proposals and decisions arising from Covid-19 was tremendous. Time after time, they were charged with making difficult decisions, always guided what was best for the people we support, members and our staff.

The effect of the pandemic also took its toll on our members and staff, who often felt isolated in their homes whilst our usual visitation and work patterns changed. I am very mindful of the ongoing psychological impact. I want to ensure the Society does all in its power to recognise this and facilitate a return to normal interaction.

The aim of the Society is to bring support and friendship to people in need and suffering

marginalisation; and this work is only possible due to the passion and commitment of the Society's Members, Volunteers, and staff, and through the ongoing generosity of the people of the island of Ireland which has remained as strong as ever. This generosity was particularly evident in 2020, wherein the absence of Churchgate collections, closed charity shops etc., our donors found ways and means of giving to the Society enabled by the creation of alternative channels and methods. A positive from the pandemic was the noticeable reset in the Irish psyche. A sense of solidarity was manifest in our collective concern for those less privileged and those affected by Covid-19. For the Society in Ireland, our input into Social Justice and Policy has increased significantly over the past number of years. We continue to speak out on behalf of those struggling in Ireland, including those on low incomes and people traditionally regarded as middle-class. who

By September 2020, SVP had received more than 80,000 calls requesting help and support to access the most basic of needs. Calls were up 15% in March compared to the same time the previous year.

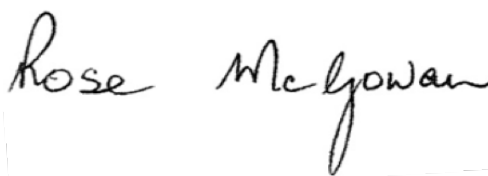


now face significant challenges due to one or more being out of work, coupled in many instances with high debt levels. The general perception that the economy is doing better and consequently people should be in a better position to meet everyday needs is not the feedback from our Members across the country and the level of demand on our resources. In addition, the gap between those who have and those who have not grows ever wider when we have 'consensus' Governments. It is appropriate that our policymakers make some courageous longer-term decisions to break this inequality. Our Members are in a unique and privileged position of being invited into people's homes, which enables us to understand their real needs better, thus enabling the Society, in many instances, to provide long-term solutions and assist people towards self-sufficiency.

Visitation is non-judgemental and underpinned by compassion, dignity and a generosity of time for those we serve. In doing this, our members work closely with other relevant organisations and bodies, and we appreciate their ongoing support and advice.

During this year, we continued to reach out to those in need, including those who may not previously have sought the support of the Society. The experience of 2020 instils me with confidence that we are ready and prepared to overcome whatever challenges and uncertainty we may be presented with as an organisation.

Rose McGowan
National President

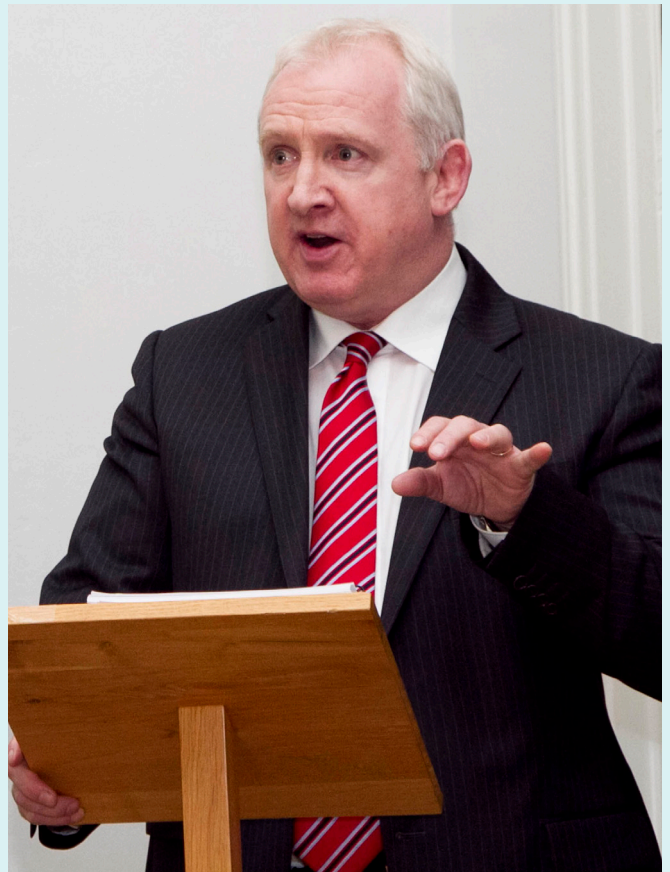


**Access to education
is the key enabler
out of poverty,
yet education costs
are one of the main
reasons people
request help
from SVP**

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S FOREWORD

I am delighted to contribute to the Society's annual report for 2020. Of course, 2020 was dominated by the global pandemic, and Covid-19 impacted on every aspect of the activities of the Society resulting in significant challenges, upheaval, and reduced income. However, due to our ongoing flexibility, enterprise, and innovation in dealing with the many day-to-day challenges presented, together with our comprehensive policy platform and sound governance frameworks all of which have all combined to allow for the mitigation of the potential catastrophic impact of the pandemic.

Following the introduction of national restrictions in mid-March 2020, a Covid-19 Crisis Group was established comprising senior members and staff which met daily for a number of months of the restrictions. This forum made the operational decisions in terms of closures, guidance, and communications, all of which were activity / functional specific and utilised the established and effective communication channels available within the organisation. The Governance framework of the Society was especially important in 2020 given the rapidly changing environment and the need for rapid decision making and



oversight. The crisis group was mandated by the National Management Council (NMC) to manage the situation. However, certain matters were referred to the NMC for decision making and the first full remote meeting of the NMC was held on the 21st of March, followed by five more meetings over the next two months to ensure that the principles of oversight and governance were applied during the period. Additionally, the subcommittee structure of the NMC allowed for activity/functional oversight and strategic decision making.

A number of our Services including Homeless, Social Housing and forms of Visitation did not cease operating, and the fact that Covid-19 cases were avoided in 2020 in both Social Housing and Homeless Services is a significant achievement.

The seamless move to remote working was facilitated by the IT infrastructure already in place, together with existing Human Resources Policies, which had been developed for flexible working.

As the restrictions extended into the summer, the publication of the Government roadmap allowed for the reopening of certain activities, including shops. However, subsequent increases in Covid numbers led to further restrictions, which once again had significant impact. The experience of the earlier shutdowns was replicated, and the structures which had been es-

tablished over the previous six years became invaluable in ensuring systematic approaches across the Society. This was particularly evident in the reopening (and subsequent reclosure) of our shops, where detailed planning allowed for the reopening of nearly 200 shops in a two-week period in June. Likewise, the move to online sales was maximised, which together with recycling sales ensured income during periods of closure.

Income generation was seriously hampered by the restrictions, however a strategic and innovative approach to planning for fundraising



PLEASE NOTE:

How SVP operates within the National Living with COVID-19 Framework

- This guidance outlines what is permitted by the Government's Living with Covid-19 Framework. This does not oblige Members to hold or attend in-person meetings.
- Where meetings/Gatherings are permitted, all guidance is dependent on Members adhering to strict social distancing and hygiene etiquette.
- Pods are self-contained groups of 6 people (max.) that do not mingle with other Pods at a meeting.
- For Conferences in the Northern Region, SVP is presently operating at the equivalent of Level 3. If you have any queries please contact the Regional Office.

Activity	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Conference & Area meetings	Yes	Yes if essential	Video or phone meetings only	Video or phone meetings only	Video or phone meetings only
Assessment of Need	Home visits, phone or video call	Home visits (if essential) phone or video call	Remote assessment only	Remote assessment only	Remote assessment only
Home Visits	Yes	Yes if essential	No	No	No
Hospital/Prison Visitation	Yes, please check with local services	Yes, please check with local services	No	No	No
Drop-offs (food, vouchers, etc.)	Yes	Yes	Yes if essential	Yes if essential	Yes if essential
Church gate collections	Yes using buckets or 'tap to donate'	Yes using buckets or 'tap to donate'	No	No	No
Fundraising Gatherings *	Yes	Yes	No indoor events. Outdoor limited to 15 people	No indoor events. Outdoor limited to 15 people	Online and by post
Area Gatherings	Yes. Up to 100 people, in 'pods'	Yes. Up to 50 people, in 'pods'	Online Gathering only	Online Gathering only	Online Gathering only
Online Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Face to Face Training	Yes. Up to 100 people in 'pods'	Yes. Up to 50 people in 'pods'	No	No	No



appeals during May and Christmas was adopted. This approach was underpinned by the concept of creating alternative channels to Church gate and Local Giving, to a more centralised approach, with subsequent reallocation of the funds raised going to the Area or Conference. Donations and fundraising figures in the financial accounts are testament to the success of those campaigns. Whilst the impact of Covid-19 was significant, day to day activities continued and continuity in Finance, Communications, HR, IT, and Facilities were maintained. Consolidation of 2019 accounts was completed with no significant delays from the schedule. New staff were recruited, inducted and became operational despite the restrictions, whilst various IT pilots and rollouts continued.

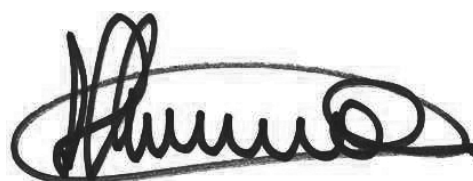
Both internal and external communications were especially important in 2020, and Covid-19 did not prevent us from being a significant voice in advocating for a fairer society, whilst the internal communications channels were invaluable in keeping all up to date and connected. It was truly a team effort in 2020 where Trustees, members, volunteers, and staff all played their part in ensuring the work of the Society continued. The contribution of ancillary services such as Security and Housekeeping should also be acknowledged in looking after our buildings and offices and ensuring safe access and environments for those who continued to work from the office. Additionally, the ability of Facilities to ensure the buildings

were Covid-19 safe readily contributed to the sense of wellbeing for members and staff.

An important aspect of 2020 was the continuation of activity, or function specific strategic planning, to ensure the Society was well placed, with clear direction, for the post Covid-19 environment and beyond. New strategic planning processes in shops and Social Housing were commenced whilst the activities within Child and Family services were given a national perspective through a new NMC subcommittee and National Manager. A Governance committee had been established in 2019 to examine certain matters and preparation for the Charity Regulators Code. This was made a permanent NMC subcommittee in 2020 and has established a work programme which will lead to enhancement of governance across the Society.

I have no doubt that given the experience of 2020 and the response from Trustees, Members, Volunteers and Staff together with our agility and “can do” approach that the Society is well placed to face whatever the future holds for us.

Andy Heffernan
National Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Heffernan', enclosed within a horizontal oval shape.

STRUCTURE & GOVERNANCE

The Society is a member led unincorporated entity, comprising 11,000 + members and volunteers supported by over 1,000 staff. The Society is organised into 1,171 Conferences, organised into 108 areas, which in turn are organised into eight regions North and South.

The Society is governed by a Rule (constitution) which is drawn from an International Rule. The Rule sets out the purposes and objects of the Society and the governance arrangements and internal management of the organisation.

The National Management Council is the directive, coordinating and management body of the Society in Ireland and sets the policy of the Society, consistent with the Mission and Values Statement. It 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

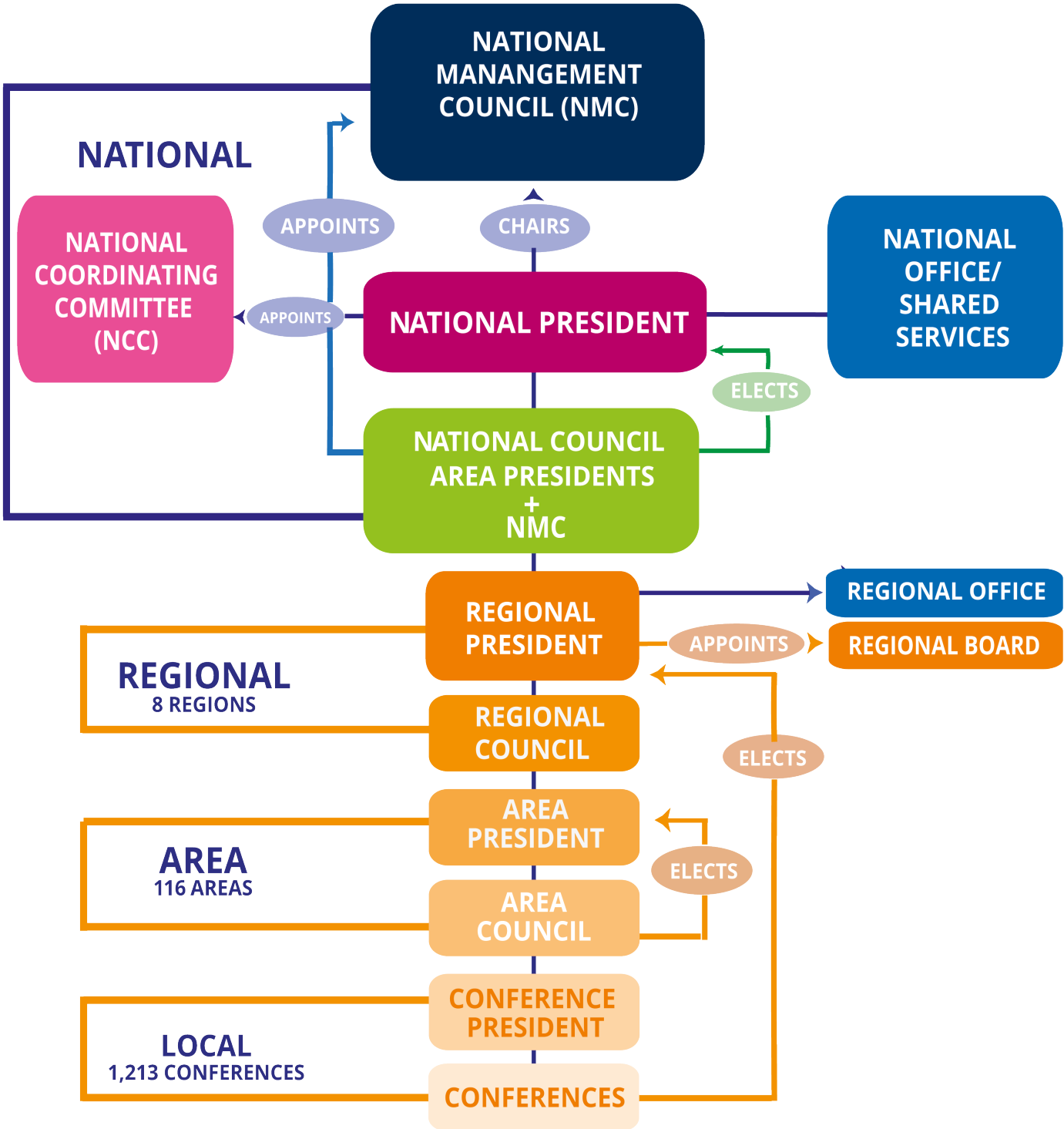
works, implementing its policy consistent with the Mission and Values Statement.

The membership of the National Management Council consists of the National President, the eight Regional Presidents, three appointees (Vice-Presidents) of the National President and the Spiritual Advisor. The National Management Council members are also the trustees of the Society as set out in the 2009 Charities Act.

As set out in the Rule certain matters are outside the remit of the NMC and must be approved by the National Council.

Whilst the NMC normally meets monthly, the National Council normally meets once per year and is comprised of Presidents of the Area Councils and the Members of the National Management Council (NMC).

NATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SVP



SVP TRUSTEES

The National Management Council (NMC) is the directive, coordinating and management body of the Society in Ireland and sets the policy of the Society, consistent with the Mission and Values Statement. It 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, consists of the National President, the eight Regional Presidents, three appointees of the National President and the Spiritual Advisor. National Management Council members are also the Trustees of the Society.



**NATIONAL
PRESIDENT
ROSE MCGOWAN
APPOINTED
AUGUST 2020**



**NATIONAL VICE-
PRESIDENT
JOHN LUPTON
APPOINTED
SEPTEMBER 2020**



**NATIONAL
TREASURER
PETER FITZPATRICK
APPOINTED
JUNE 2017**



**SVP SPIRITUAL ADVISOR
FR. PASCHAL SCALLON CM**



**REGIONAL PRESIDENT
SOUTH WEST
PADDY O'FLYNN
APPOINTED
FEBRUARY 2020**



**REGIONAL PRESIDENT
WEST
MAUREEN MITCHELL
APPOINTED
NOVEMBER 2020**



**REGIONAL PRESIDENT
NORTHERN REGION
MARY WAIDE
APPOINTED
JULY 2020**



**REGIONAL PRESIDENT
MIDWEST
TERESA RYAN
APPOINTED
SEPTEMBER 2020**



**REGIONAL PRESIDENT
NORTHEAST & MIDLANDS
LARRY BUTLER
APPOINTED
2018**



**REGIONAL PRESIDENT
NORTHWEST
ROSA GLACKEN
APPOINTED
JANUARY 2018**



**REGIONAL PRESIDENT
SOUTHEAST
BEN DOYLE
APPOINTED
APRIL 2017**



**REGIONAL PRESIDENT
EAST
MARIE CRONIN
APPOINTED
JULY 2020**



**NATIONAL
SECRETARY
ANDY HEFFERNAN
APPOINTED
JULY 2014**

The National Council and the Trustees elect the National President. Given that the Society is a multi-activity organisation, there are also a number of subcommittees of the NMC which under delegated authority and approved Terms of Reference oversee certain activities. This allows for external skillsets to be recruited at a governance level and provides reassurances through reporting structures to the NMC with each subcommittee having at least one trustee as a member.

Whilst all the roles in both the NMC and the subcommittees are filled by volunteers reflecting the status of the Society, the Society employs a National Secretary whose role is to oversee the national operations and administration of the Society and who reports directly to the National President. Additionally the National Office, Special Works Managers and Shared Services work in partnership with the National Management Council to further the mission vision and goals of the SVP adding value to the volunteer membership through the resources and expertise of paid staff.

STATUS

The Society of St Vincent de Paul is registered in Ireland as a charity.

GOVERNING DOCUMENT

The Society of St Vincent de Paul was established in Ireland in 1844 and is governed under the "Rule", which derives from the International Rule of the worldwide Society.

CHARITY REGULATOR NUMBER

20013806

CHARITY NUMBER

CHY 6892

PRINCIPAL BANKERS

Bank of Ireland 40 Mespil Road St Peters Dublin 4	Allied Irish Bank Bankcentre Ballsbridge Dublin 4
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AUDITORS

Deloitte Ireland LLP,
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Audit Firm
Dublin 2

SOLITICTORS

Kilcullen & Associates 30 Ardagh Grove Blackrock Co. Dublin	McCann Fitzgerald Riverside One Sir John Rogerson Quay Dublin 2
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WHAT WE DO

SVP OBJECTIVES

The relief of poverty, both material and emotional, in Ireland and abroad, without differentiation on the grounds of race, colour or creed.

SVP VALUES

In striving to achieve our mission, we are guided by our values which are:

- Respect
- Love of neighbour
- Joy through mission
- Personal contact with those in need
- Humility
- Empathy

1

Believing that our work and our own lives are enriched by keeping a strong spiritual dimension to all our activities.

2

Respecting the right of everyone to participate economically and socially in society.

3

Ensuring the voice of those we help has a strong role in influencing the supports we offer and the way we provide our services.

4

Valuing diversity and being non-judgmental, caring, confidential and respectful in all our interactions with those we help, our colleagues and members.

5

Welcoming all those who respect and support our Christian values.

OUR VISION

ENABLE...

the most disadvantaged people in our society to participate more fully in the life of their communities by offering them caring and much needed supports, designed around their own needs.

Those needing help will turn to SVP and find us welcoming, accessible and compassionate.

INFLUENCE...

in a Vincentian manner government policy and public opinion North and South.

We will be recognised by policy makers and the public generally as an authoritative voice advocating on behalf of the most disadvantaged members of our society.

We will be respected because of the thousands of people we are known to help, our understanding of their needs, the root cause of their problems and the quality of our analysis.

ACT...

as a large and diverse membership representative of all sections of Irish society.

Members who stay because they find they can make a real difference to people's lives in a number of ways. They find that their own spiritual life has been enhanced and they have come to enjoy the friendship of fellow members.

CONTINUE...

to have a caring, compassionate and energetic organisation of volunteers and staff who share a commitment to our Mission and Vincentian values and who are well supported in their work by good information training and communication.

We will operate to best practice standards in all we do.

OUR GOAL

Our goal is to fight poverty in all its forms through practical assistance to people in need.

SVP offers direct, personal assistance that is non-judgemental and based on the need of the individual or family.

In addition, we provide a wide range of services for vulnerable people through our local offices, shops, resource centres, housing, daycare and holiday schemes amongst other things.



WHO WE HELP

SVP responds to every request for assistance we receive.

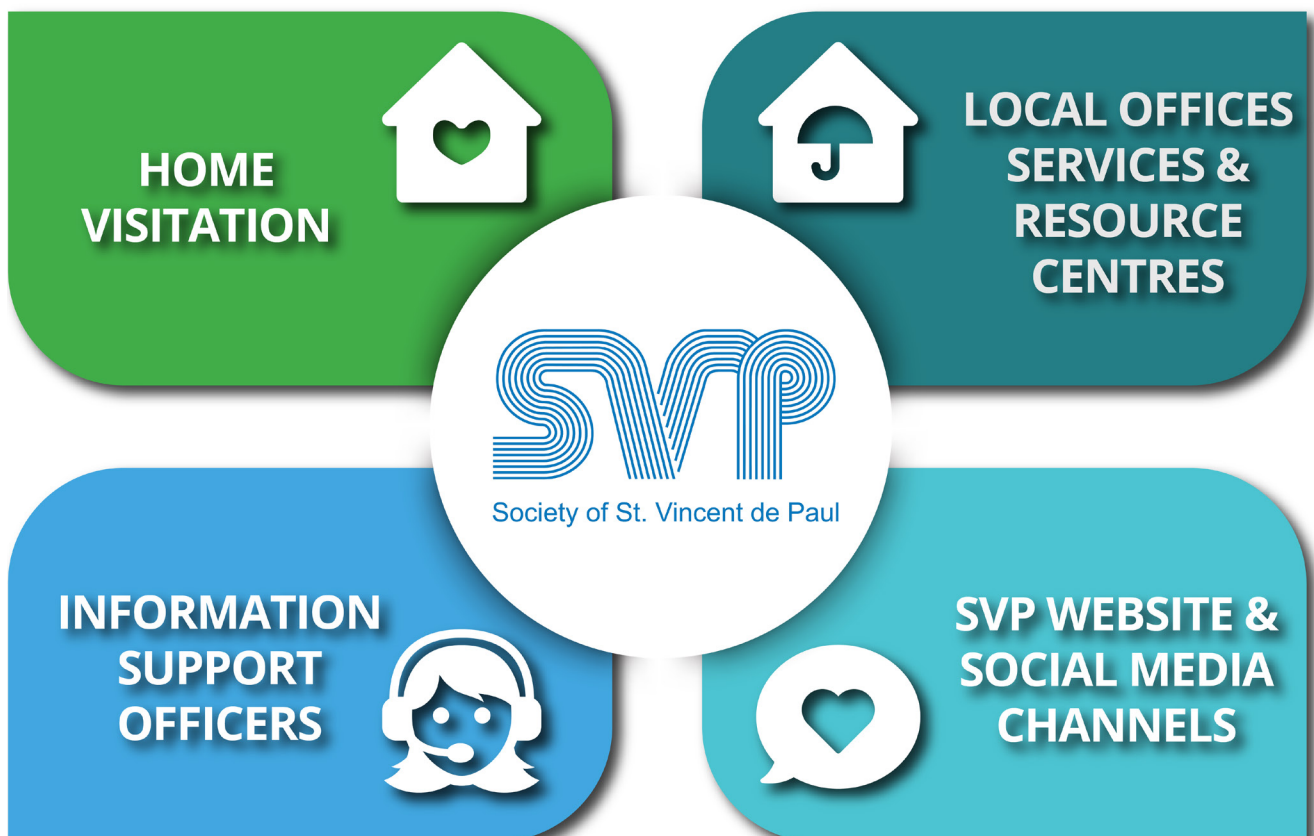
In 2020, requests to SVP for help increased during the pandemic.

SVP members had to adapt how we manage and provide assistance.

Home Visitation support continued via phone, online, through the post and in person when necessary in compliance with government guidelines.



HOW SVP RESPONDS



OUR SERVICES



HOW SVP CAN HELP



2020

AT A GLANCE

In 2020, SVP received

171,004

requests for assistance



In 2020, SVP received

65,741 calls

related to food poverty



9,193
VISITATION
MEMBERS



1,175
CONFERENCES



3,886
VOLUNTEERS



915
SVP FTE
STAFF
&
253
CE
STAFF



1,768
SHOP
VOLUNTEERS

OPERATIONS

2020



**224 CHARITY
SHOPS**



**4 RESOURCE
CENTRES**



**861 SOCIAL
HOUSING UNITS**



**918 SOCIAL
HOUSING TENANTS**



**5 HOLIDAY
HOMES**



10 HOSTELS



**300 HOSTEL
BEDS (per day)**



**9 TWINNED
REGIONS**

In 2020, SVP received

7,236

requests for assistance
with education
busary grants



In 2020, SVP received

53,000+

requests for assistance
during winter months
(November & December)





SVP MEMBERS

Our aim is to bring friendship and support to people in need and suffering marginalisation; this is at the heart of what we do.

SVP Members assist individuals and families challenged by poverty and inequality, and make a real difference in the lives of many. Visitation work is only possible due to the passion and commitment of the SVP members, volunteers and staff, and through the ongoing generosity of the people of the island of Ireland which has remained as strong as ever.

We are however only as good as our members and we continue to need new volunteers to help us to address the issues we encounter in our visitation work. People can contact SVP through our network, offices, by email and phone. People can contact SVP through our regional or national offices by email and telephone.

OUR SVP NETWORK
ACROSS

8

REGIONS



1

EAST REGION

Dublin | Kildare
Wicklow

SOUTH EAST REGION

Carlow | Laois | Kilkenny
Wexford | Waterford

5

2

MID WEST REGION

Clare | Limerick
Tipperary | Offaly

SOUTH WEST REGION

Cork | Kerry

6

3

WEST REGION

Galway | Mayo
Roscommon

NORTH WEST REGION

Donegal | Leitrim
Sligo

7

4

NORTHEAST & MIDLANDS

Cavan | Louth | Longford
Westmeath | Meath
Monaghan

NORTH REGION

Antrim | Armagh | Derry
Down | Tyrone
Fermanagh

8

MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT

Local action with national impact. Visitation is our main volunteering work, offering friendship, support and practical assistance to people and families who request our assistance at a critical time.



As the March meeting of Membership Support Officers drew to a close a head popped around the door and said, "You might want to turn on the television, the Taoiseach is speaking to the nation from Washington".

"I need to speak to you about Coronavirus and Covid19...the World Health Organisation formally described it as pandemic...We have a duty as a society to protect ourselves and above all to protect others... outside of work people should seek to reduce social interactions as much as possible... So, from 6pm today, the following measures are being put in place."

Those of us gathered at that meeting on March 12th 2020, looked at one another and wondered what this would mean for the voluntary work of the members of SVP, and specifically the face-to-face nature of Home Visitation. Things were going to become very different, very quickly.

Home Visitation and Remote Assessment of Need

The speed with which Home Visitation and Conference meetings were suspended was only matched by the speed with how SVP came up with imaginative ways to ensure that the Society's work would, and could, continue.

Meetings began to move online, home visits were replaced with parcel drops, remote assessment of need on telephones was supported with guidance on listening skills and wellbeing.

An Post lent their support by ensuring SVP members could use the postal service to distribute assistance while members ensured

2020 IN NUMBERS

**MEMBERSHIP
SUPPORT STAFF**

+

25

**VISITATION
MEMBERS**

+

9,193

**EXPRESSION
OF INTEREST**

+

1,800

NUMBER OF AREAS WE SERVE:

TOTAL
104

24

EAST
REGION

DUBLIN
KILDARE
WICKLOW

12

NORTHEAST &
MIDLANDS
REGION

CAVAN, LONGFORD
WESTMEATH, LOUTH
MONAGHAN

19

NORTHERN
REGION

ANTRIM, DERRY
DOWN, ARMAGH
FERMANAGH
TYRONE

09

NORTHWEST
REGION

DONEGAL
LEITRIM
SLIGO

09

WEST
REGION

GALWAY
MAYO
ROSCOMMON

13

SOUTHWEST
REGION

CORK
KERRY

10

SOUTHEAST
REGION

CARLOW, KILKENNY
LAOIS, WEXFORD
WATERFORD

08

MIDWEST
REGION

CLARE, OFFALY
TIPPERARY,
LIMERICK

that there was sufficient stock of vouchers and strong envelopes disbursed amongst members. Conferences invested and distributed PPE for themselves and people in need.

Foodbanks became a vital part of SVP assistance in some places, while SVP staff and members became part of the wider

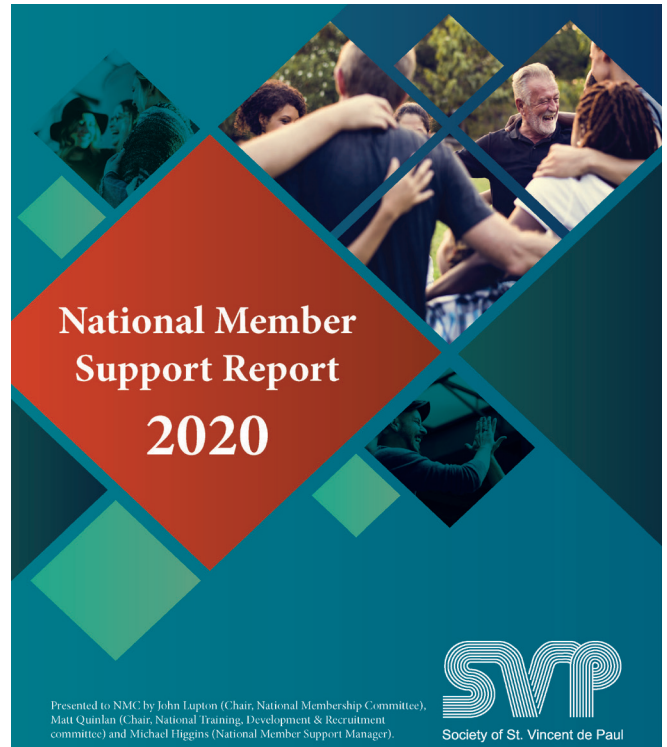
Community Call initiatives. Such was the ever-changing nature of the pandemic, members information needs were met by guidance notes, videos and podcasts, while an online Mass proved a very meaningful solace in such difficult times.

Recruitment & Training

The new phenomenon and terminology of co-ooning led not only to concerns about the possible isolation of existing Members, but it raised the question would we have enough Members on the ground when things improved.

Thankfully, over 1800 people expressed an interest in joining SVP and notwithstanding the uncertainty posed by Covid-19, 547 completed their applications of whom 417 completed on-line training.

The National Member Development and Recruitment Committee. Regional Trainers and Membership Support Officers are working hard to ensure these new members have an opportunity to complete face-to-face training when restrictions allow.



Keeping Members Connected

Three months into the pandemic there was a real sense and fear that our members were becoming isolated from one another. To overcome this virtual Area Gatherings were offered to help bridge that gap. 24 gatherings took place, and these were attended by 686 members.



Supporting Visitation Members in 1,175 Conferences across Ireland.



The feedback on the Gatherings was so good that not only will this format continue into 2021 and beyond, but the Society is in discussion with providers about ensuring that every Conference has access to its own video conferencing account for 2021. Over and above online area gatherings, specialised online gatherings were also offered to members of the education and prison visitation committees.

Members of the eight Regional Education committees and their 10 sub-committees, who are supporting nearly 1,000 students in all aspects of further and higher education, met to discuss the online tools require dot support students. Despite the absence of Prison Visitation, the prison committees met to share best practice and ideas for providing assistance during the pandemic.

**2020
Area
Gatherings**

+

24

**2020
Gathering
Attendees**

+

686

Leadership

The Governance team of the SVP was renewed with the election of a new National President, Rose McGowan. Amongst the National President's priorities is to ensure that leadership at Conference and Area level are supported during the pandemic. By the end of 2020, 84% of Areas had a current or out-going Area President. The Society's ambition is to increase this to 90% in 2021 and to offer Conference Presidents the same level of training and support.

John Lupton was appointed Vice President for Members and Chairperson of the National Membership committee. From the outset, he made Assessment of Need and Quality Visitation a central priority of the committee. John liaised closely with all Regional Presidents and ensured that one member from every region was represented on his committee. Matt Quinlan was re-appointed the Chair of the National member, Training, Development and Recruitment Committee. The Committee understood the challenges posed by Covid-19 and ensured the training structures had the capacity and capability to respond online.

The majority of Gatherings took place via Zoom in 2020 with an 89% satisfaction rate.





SOCIAL JUSTICE

SVP are working to make Ireland a fairer place; where caring for each other and our children, older people and people with disabilities is valued and supported; where individuals, families and communities can participate fully in work and society; and where an adequately resourced state, a strong economy, employment and business support the type of society that we wish to live in.

Working for social justice is one of three key pillars of the Society of St Vincent De Paul's mission and requires us to challenge and address the structures that create or perpetuate poverty in Ireland today. SVP policy and advocacy work is based on the on-the-ground experiences of our Members who work in communities across the island of Ireland providing direct support to people experiencing poverty and marginalisation. Using traditional

and social media, submissions to Government Departments, meeting with Ministers, their advisors, and political parties, and by working jointly with other NGOs, we raise awareness of issues of concern and propose evidence-based solutions. Social justice advocacy continued to be a key activity for the Society throughout 2020 as our role as an early warning system for issues became even more important throughout the pandemic.

SVP SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVITY 2020 IN NUMBERS



*CONSULTATIONS FOCUSED ON ISSUES SUCH AS DIRECT PROVISION, CLIMATE ACTION, CAPPING MONEYLENDING INTEREST RATES, THE NEW NATIONAL ECONOMIC PLAN, AND FAMILY HOMELESSNESS.



GE2020



Society of St Vincent de Paul

NOPOVERTY

Investing in measures to end poverty

2020 began with the publication of our Election 2020 Priorities document entitled, **Investing in measures to end poverty**. The accompanying social media campaign asked general election candidates to commit to introducing a poverty act which would be to make the ambition of the Sustainable Development Goal of No Poverty (Goal 1) by 2030 legally binding. The SVP Election 2020 Priorities also outlined actions in four key areas in relation to housing, education, income, and energy

The Programme for Government published later in the year included a number of welcome commitments aligned with SVP key asks such as delivering a living wage for workers, a new ambitious strategy for affordable and social housing, measures to tackle educational disadvantage, and a focus on the need to address energy poverty within climate policy. Importantly, it also committed to fully implement the Roadmap for Social Inclusion which aims to reduce consistent poverty to 2% or less by 2025.

In February, the Minister for Social Protection appointed SVP as an external member of the Roadmap Steering Group which is tasked with overseeing its implementation. The Steering Group is chaired by the Minister for Communities and includes senior officials from every Government department.

The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in significant societal changes affecting the daily lives of everyone, as well as dramatic changes in employment levels.

As the socioeconomic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions became apparent, SVP quickly engaged with Government and Regulators to ensure supports were in place for individuals and families on low incomes. As a result of our advocacy work, support was provided to help low-income households with extra energy costs through an extension

of the Fuel Allowance period in March 2020, benefiting approximately 375,000 people.

Engagement with the utility regulator provided extra security and support to the one-in-six households in Ireland that experience energy poverty. SVP continued to advocate for a comprehensive package of supports for households struggling with utility and rent arrears throughout 2020 and into 2021.

As a member of the newly formed National One Parent Family Alliance, SVP advocated for the payment of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment in addition to in-work supports for families who lost their jobs due to Covid-19 related closures, protecting the incomes of approximately 20,000 families. The Alliance was also successful in its advocacy efforts

to ensure Government and retail implement family-friendly measures in supermarkets as the decision to ban children in some shops had a disproportionate impact on people parenting alone.

SVP continued to highlight the difficulties faced by households caught in moneylending debt cycles. As a result of engagement with the Director of Consumer Protection in the Central Bank and the Minister for Finance, new regulations on enhanced warnings on all advertising material were brought forward and introduced in September 2020. All moneylending advertisements must now carry a warning and customers who are seeking loans to pay for basics will now have to be referred to MABS. Unsolicited roll-over and top-up loans are now also banned.

**In Ireland, there are
10,264 people
homeless,
including
3,784 children***



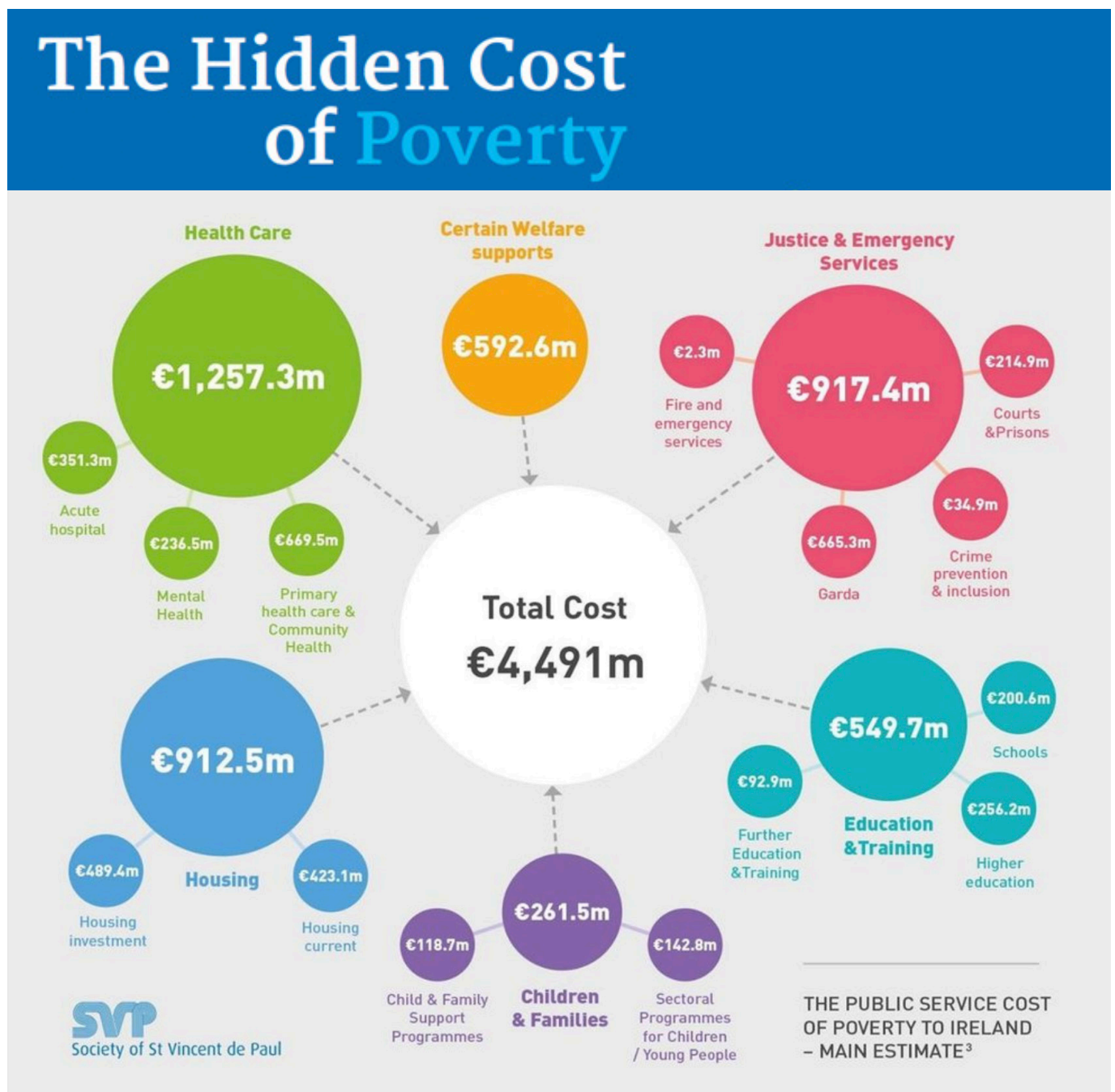
*Homeless figures from February 2020

In June, we published a new report on the **Hidden Cost of Poverty**. The research, carried out by Dr. Micheal Collins from University College Dublin, estimated that dealing with the consequences of poverty costs the State €4.5 billion every year – more than the respective annual Government budgets for housing, justice, transport, and agriculture.

The report received widespread media coverage and continues to be used as an

important advocacy tool for the Society and the wider community sector.

In September 2020, we hosted an online event with policymakers, advocates and child poverty experts from Ireland, Scotland and New Zealand. At the event, we learned about the policy context in both Scotland and New Zealand, the development and introduction of their respective Child Poverty legislation, and the progress and challenges



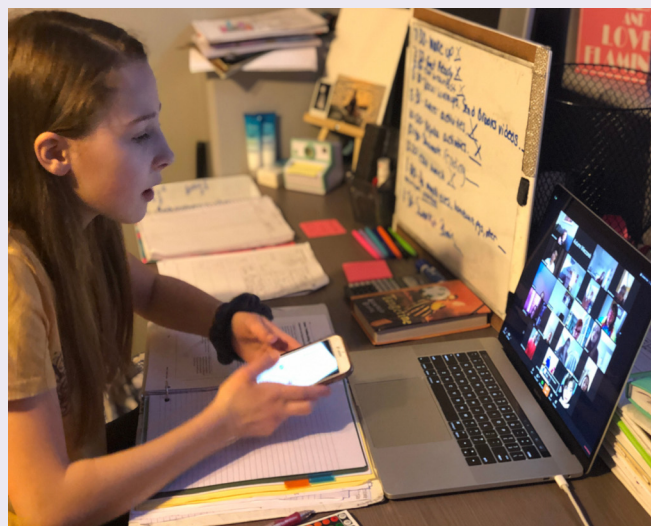
around implementation during the Covid-19 pandemic. The event was well attended by policymakers, NGOs, and SVP members interested in international approaches to tackling child poverty.

Budget 2021 delivered a number of key SVP asks including an increase in payments to children in low-income households, and improvement in supports for working families. We also welcomed an additional €65 million funding for the retrofit of social housing to help those on the lowest incomes experiencing energy poverty. However, for a second year in a row, there was no increase in primary social welfare payments. This decision particularly impacts one-parent households, single adults and people with disabilities who already have the highest rates of poverty and deprivation.

SVP continues to advocate that social welfare rates and the minimum wage are benchmarked against the cost of a Minimum Essential Standard of Living.

In conjunction with Threshold, SVP appeared before the Oireachtas Committee on Housing in December to present the findings from the joint report ***The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP): Making the Right Impact?***

The appearance received widespread media coverage and resulted in the Committee making a recommendation to the Minister for



Housing to review the current operation of the HAP and its interaction with the private rented market. Housing remains a key social justice priority for the Society.

There is a strong sense that after Covid-19, there is an opportunity to do things differently and reimagine a more socially just and equitable future. This year shows what is possible to achieve when all sectors work together, and the Government rightly committed to offering security and stability for individuals and families. We are hopeful this sense of common purpose will continue to shape policy and Irish society after the crisis has ended.

SVP will continue to work to ensure the right policies are put in place to move people out of poverty for good and prevent more people falling into poverty as a result of the pandemic.

Making the right investments now means we can reduce future expenditure dealing with the damage poverty causes.



NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING

svp.ie/safeguarding

The year 2020 saw many changes taking place within the National Safeguarding Office. A new Safeguarding Manager (ROI and NI) with extensive experience in safeguarding both nationally and internationally joined the Society in April 2020.

This was also a challenging time due to the pandemic which involved changing strategies and practices to ensure that safeguarding remained a priority in recruitment and training.

The department had to creatively respond to safeguarding reports within the context of remote working with a particular focus on community and residential based activities for older people, home visitation to vulnerable adults and reviews of fatalities in homeless services.

The key areas prioritised throughout 2020 included;

- The continued rollout of awareness training on safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults for Members.
- Review of training modules for updating online with changes in law and policy in safeguarding.
- Training and capacity building of the Designated Liaison Persons (DPL) network across all regions.





The National Safeguarding Committee which holds responsibility for the Safeguarding Strategy with SVP met throughout the year with a focus on further strengthening safeguarding measures to ensure that the Society remained compliant. One of its main focuses was maintaining a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse of children and adults in keeping with its national policy.

It is planned for 2021 to roll out Awareness Training on Domestic Violence including legislation on Coercive Control - Section 39 of the new Domestic Violence Act 2018.

The Safeguarding Office also supported the international audit of children and family services by Keeping Children Safe (KCS) who awarded Level I Certification to SVP. This audit provided a clear roadmap for the next three years to address areas where there are gaps and deficits in safeguarding measures.

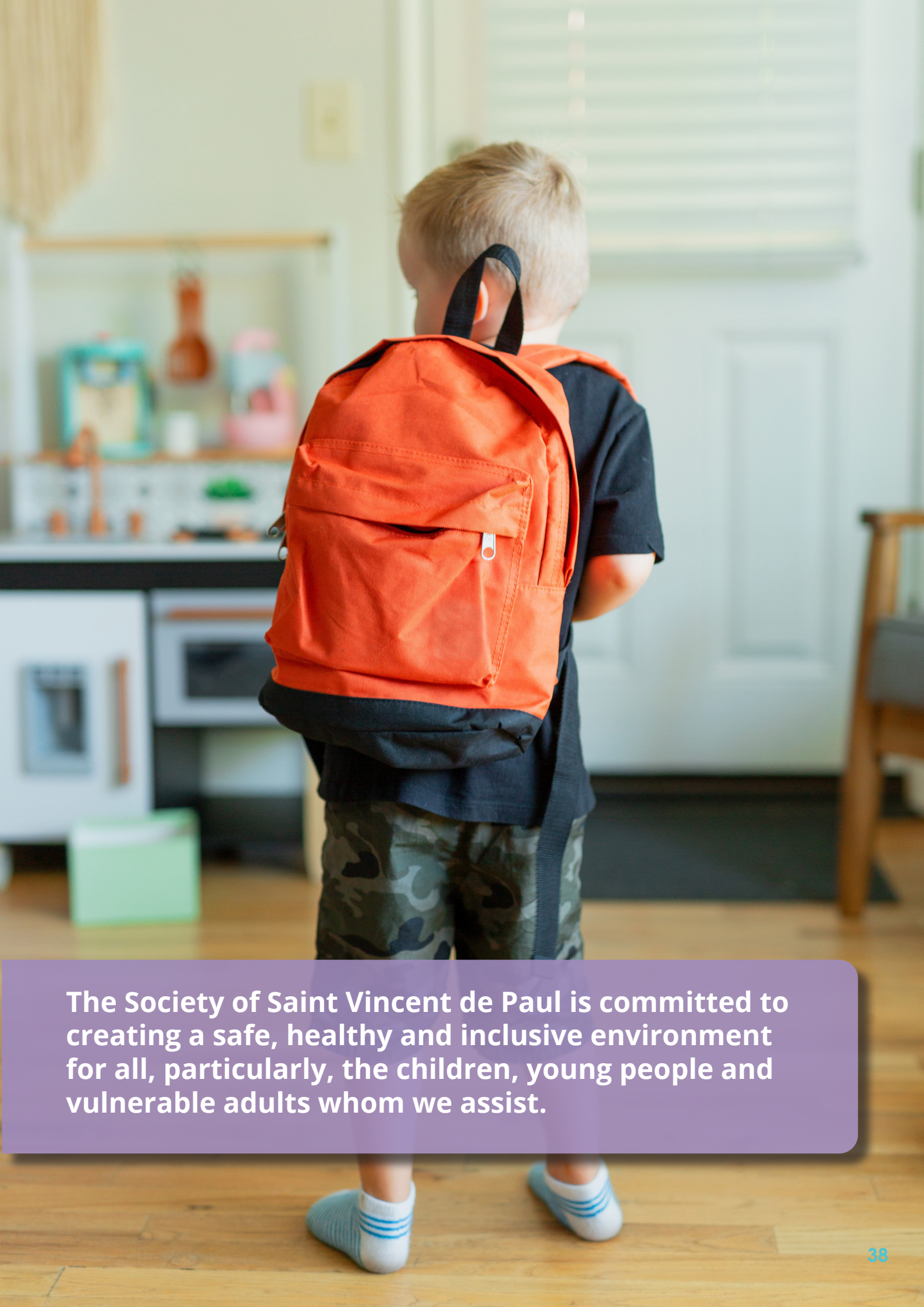
The Safeguarding Manager presented at the KCS international conference in October

2020 on Safeguarding with a particular focus on the role of organisational culture, cultural practices, perceptions and attitudes that can act as barriers to recognising and reporting harm. An example of this might be where Members conduct home visitation in pairs.

As a key safeguarding preventative measure, the risk of slippage will be continuously monitored closely into the future following the pandemic to ensure best standard of practice by our Members. An example of this monitoring is a review of the Prison Visitation Conferences in one region by an external consultant which commenced this year with a view to the recommendations being rolled out across all Prison Visitation Conferences nationally.

The Safeguarding Strategy will continue to build capacity in the DLP network, will review the internal safeguarding notification system with a view to incorporating an agreed timeframe metric in keeping with best practice and a wider centralised system for logging and tracking all safeguarding reports from across all areas of function within SVP.

Despite the many challenges throughout 2020, the commitment to safeguarding by the DLPs, Members and the leadership remained consistent which has resulted in maintaining a strong positive safeguarding ethos within the Society.



The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is committed to creating a safe, healthy and inclusive environment for all, particularly, the children, young people and vulnerable adults whom we assist.



SOCIAL HOUSING

The Society of St Vincent de Paul is a Tier 3 Approved Housing Body. The Society has been providing homes in our communities for more than four decades.

svp.ie/socialhousing

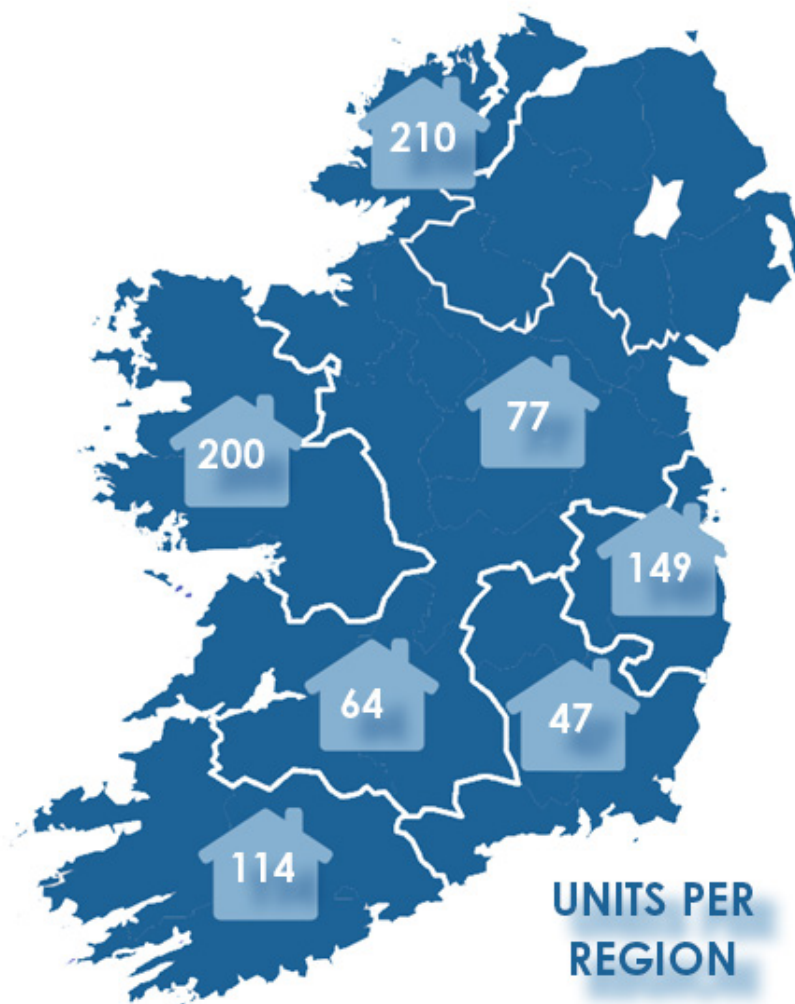
From the very outset of the restrictions and upheaval the Society's focus was on the safety and wellbeing of tenants and across the lockdowns hundreds of calls were made to tenants to check on their welfare and provide support.

Against the backdrop of a global pandemic, the Society's Social Housing continued to deliver on its mission to provide homes for people in our communities managing 861 homes and 918 tenants nationally. In overcoming challenges and demonstrating resilience the year saw the Society adapting innovative ways to meet its social housing service demands.

Forming part of Society's Covid-19 Response Group the Social Housing Team placed

emphasis on business continuity planning ensuring the coordination of efforts including backup support to volunteers through regional and local resources, rolling out up-to-date advice, guidance and procedures to ensure tenants, members and staff remained updated and informed.

The calls enabled the Society to put tenants in touch with local community supports if required and helped to combat loneliness and isolation



New 2020 allocations included eight tenants receiving keys to the newly completed Phase 2 of our Cuan Iosa Scheme in Ballymoate, Sligo

for many. The Society's strong presence across communities nationally was reinforced through successful collaboratively working with wider community/local authority support networks which ensured appropriate coordination of approach to tenant well-being and safety.

A key task throughout the year was to ensure that the Society remained connected whilst staying safely apart, and the Society's staff and volunteers embraced technology and online working which saw social housing meetings across local Conferences, Regional and National Committees taking place remotely.

Meetings with all social housing staff nationally coordinated by the National Team were held weekly to identify risks, address challenges and ensure a common approach to resolution of issues. In terms of financial position, the Society maintained rental income levels consis-

tent to previous years having regard to tenant cohort being unaffected by economic impacts of Covid-19 and the Society maintaining its enhanced focus on performance monitoring in addition to moving towards standard payment methods in some areas. The Society's planned implementation of increased rent rates across tenancies nationally were impacted over the year, however the Society will continue to work towards financial sustainability across 2021 and 2022 in relation to the implementation of increased rates, working in particular to access state rent assistance as applicable through the support of local authorities.

The allocation of homes continued to be a priority across the year, and people were moved into homes where health and safety measures could be adhered to. Innovative solutions were applied in some cases in the form of online interviews and virtual house tours.



REGULATION

The Society continued to engage positively with the Regulation Office during the year and is committed to continuing work across Governance and overall operations to build capacity and tenant service provision. The year saw the review of the Social Housing Risk Management Framework which will assist in guiding our work in achieving a sustainable operational model over the coming years.

TENANT SATISFACTION

The Society's tenant satisfaction levels were highlighted through its completed tenant survey (200 tenants surveyed nationally) with 83% of respondents indicating they had no issues with their home, 79% outlining that they were satisfied that their home is maintained to an appropriate standard and 82% indicating satisfaction with their last repair completed. 87% indicated that living in a St Vincent de Paul home improved the quality of their life.



New allocations included eight tenants receiving keys to the newly completed Phase 2 of our Cuan Iosa Scheme in Ballymoate, Sligo. In terms of our repairs and maintenance service whilst we had to reduce the service for a number of months to cover only emergency repairs, the Society worked to maintain a service to ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

Across the service 96% of our repairs were completed within the target timescales. Despite national restrictions and the close down of the construction sector the Society saw a significant increase in expenditure on planned maintenance work across the year which included substantial refurbishment/energy upgrade works across a number of properties/schemes nationally.



NATIONAL CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

In 2020 the Society of Vincent de Paul developed a new area of function within the national services structure - Child and Family Services.

The Society of Vincent de Paul have this year developed a new area of function within the national services structure - Child and Family Services. This new function now encompasses all of SVP's child and family services throughout the island of Ireland which would formerly have been referred to as 'Specialist Services'.

This is the fifth and final area of function that now encompasses all of the services and supports that we as an organisation offer – Home Visitation, Retail, Homeless Services, Social Housing and now Child and Family Services.

TYPES OF SERVICES

In total we have 41 different services in this area operating in 43 locations across the country. There are 12 different types of services offered and the variety of services in this area include;





VOLUNTEERS

430 Volunteer Members

These services are incredibly well supported with 430 volunteer members working in our child and family services network throughout the year. This number rises significantly during the summer months when hundreds of volunteers join us to support our summer youth projects and our holiday homes across the country leading to us having up to 1,000 volunteers working in this area throughout the year.

Members take on such a variety of roles in our services, acting as role models and mentors to the children in our youth clubs and youth groups, sharing talents and skills in adult education classes, being a listening ear and support to older members of the community in our daycare centres and social activity groups, offering advice and support to people who find themselves homeless, delivering meals to those most in need, having a cup of tea and a friendly chat with sailors who arrive at port or supporting children and families as they visit loved ones in prison.



STAFF

170 Staff Members

We also have 170 staff working in our child and family services across the island of Ireland with 144 staff working in services in The Republic of Ireland and 32 staff working in Northern Ireland.



SERVICE USERS

3,400 Service Users (2020)

When operating at full capacity (before March 2020) all of our members and our staff support 3,400 people across the country who benefit from these services every week ranging from our youngest member aged six months in St Joseph's Childcare Centre in Waterford City, to our eldest member aged 93 in Ozanam House Residential Centre, Bundoran, Co Donegal.

Throughout all of our Child and Family services, the Vincentian ethos of the Society is strong and evident in all that we do. The care and compassion that is central to our mission is witnessed in every classroom, every club, care centre, holiday home and visitor centre in every corner of the country.



NATIONAL CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES MANAGER

To oversee this new area of function, the National Management Committee has established the new role of 'National Child and Family Services Manager'. This post was filled in September 2020 and the new manager is now working to implement and deliver our strategic objectives in child and family services and to comply with our legal, regulatory and constitutional obligations in this area of our work.

Throughout the final few months of 2020 and looking ahead into 2021, the focus for this new role includes the following:

- 1** The establishment of a new 'National Child and Family Services Committee' to oversee and support this work.
- 2** Direct oversight responsibility for all children and family services across the country ensuring adherence to best practice and good governance in all areas of legislation and regulations which apply to our child and family services.
- 3** Working closely with members and staff in creating the support structures and frameworks required to achieve this on an ongoing basis
- 4** Developing a systematic implementation framework to address the recommendations contained in our recent 'Keeping Children Safe' National Children's Services Safeguarding Audit
- 5** Overseeing the development of National Safeguarding Training Programmes in Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Protection
- 6** Developing a cohesive and active network among services sharing wisdom, experience and ideas

The new National Child and Family Services function will allow us to bring together, guide and support our incredible national network of child and family services. It will help us to contribute to the ongoing development of our national structure where members and staff

in child and family services can share their wisdom and experience to enhance the strategic development of our services and to provide the safest and the best quality care possible to the members of our communities who need us most.



HOMELESS SERVICES

svp.ie/homelesservices

In 2020, the Society continued to offer emergency accommodation services across the country in 10 hostel services with additional support services through Tenancy Sustainment Officers in Cork and Limerick city and Outreach Workers in our Carlow and Letterkenny services. The number of spaces available was lower than usual, and this was a result of both fire safety compliance works on a number of the properties and the impacts of the pandemic, as we needed to reduce capacity to create effective social distancing inside the buildings.

In total, we provided 109,812 spaces to our service users in 2020, down 878 on the previous year. This represented an overall average of 300 spaces per day. We liaised closely with our statutory partners to temporarily move individuals into alternative accommodation where social distancing or fire safety projects required it.

634 people were admitted over the course of the year, consisting of 631 adults and three children from two families to our Longford and Letterkenny services. These numbers include 131 additional places for the Cold Weather Initiative in collaboration with our statutory partners in eight separate Local Authorities and five HSE CHO offices.



In 2020, the Society gave our statutory partners 12 months' notice of our intention to exit the delivery of emergency accommodation services by means of a transfer to third party service providers. In the meantime, we continued to focus on implementing the quality standards framework for homeless services, through the ongoing work of our peer-led Quality Standards Implementation Team (Q-SIT).

The Q-SIT's plans to undertake a series of internal quality audits in 2020 to support the ongoing implementation of the standards was disrupted by the pandemic, and has been scheduled for review in 2021.





VINCENT'S RETAIL



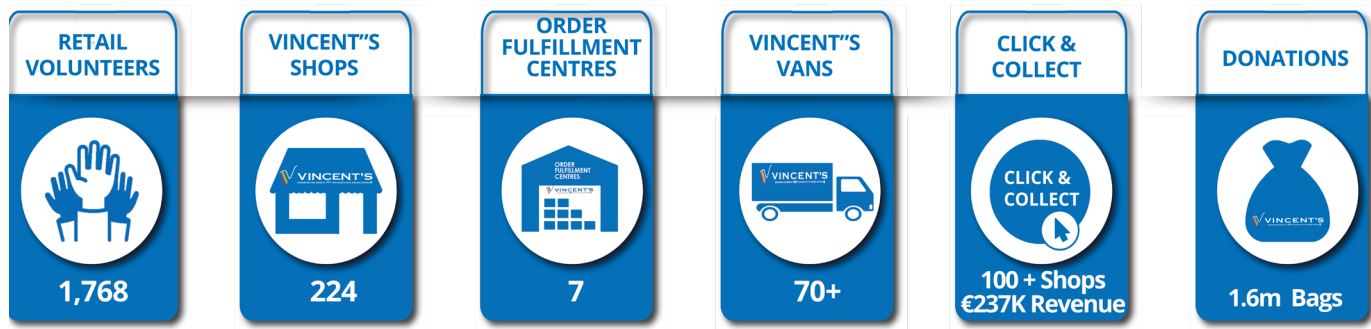
VINCENT'S
SUPPORTING THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL



WELCOME BACK TO VINCENT'S

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

2020: RETAIL IN NUMBERS



Trading in a Global Pandemic

On March 16th 2020, SVP took the precautionary step of closing our charity shops in response to the emerging situation with Covid-19. Full national lockdowns were to follow on March 27th 21st October and again on 30th December, in addition to numerous local restrictions in counties including Kildare, Laois, Offaly, and Donegal.

Despite providing an essential service to customers with limited or no disposable income and those without means to shop online, SVP charity shops were deemed as 'non-essential', requiring them to either shut completely or operate a limited 'click and collect' or 'click and delivery' service. A core of about 80 shops operated 'Click and Collect' throughout the lockdowns of 2020 whilst the OFCs operated 'Click and delivery'. The retail network contin-

ued to generate income throughout 2020 for SVP, albeit at a significantly reduced rate. Online sales peaked at €80,000 a week at the height of lockdown.

Teams across the country continued to offer Emergency assistance from our shops and OFC's to ensure that essential clothing, blankets, and other items got to where they were needed. Shop managers continued to use their shop windows to brighten up our towns and villages whilst communicating key Vincentian messages of hope.

When shops were permitted to reopen between lockdowns, a comprehensive list of social distancing measures, a Return to Business Protocol and a Covid Risk assessment were introduced by the national retail team.

Mitigation measures in the shops and OFCs included:

- Provision of Vincent's Facemasks for all staff and volunteers
- Acrylic Protection guards (sneeze guards) at all tills and workstations
- Social distancing signage
- Hand sanitisers
- Zoned working areas
- Different entry and exit points
- A 72-hour quarantine period for all donated textiles
- Debit / credit card readers for cashless transactions
- Restricted use of changing rooms
- Rosters for cleaning & disinfecting surfaces
- Isolation rooms

THE COST OF COVID-19

Whilst our primary concern was, and continues to be, the health and well-being of our family, friends, and wider community, it became clear that this pandemic and associated lockdown would have a devastating impact on our network of community shops and their fund-raising capabilities in addition to impacting on those who depend on our services. 2019 had seen retail generate income of over €31 million, 38% of total SVP income, whilst we had received an estimated 14,000 tonnes of donated textiles, collected from our shops, OFCs and clothing banks. In addition to reduction of sales in 2020, our shops temporarily lost many experienced

shop volunteers who correctly followed Government advice to shield at home. Whilst this has kept our volunteers safe, it had a profound impact on our ability to operate our shops. It became very clear that our retailing model would need to undergo significant change if it were to withstand the initial impact and multiple after-shocks of this virus. Thankfully, the creativity, resilience, resourcefulness and adaptability of the staff, volunteers, members, CE, and Tus involved with retail has put us back on the front foot. Despite the severe restrictions placed on the business, total sales for 2020 were €24 M, with net contribution was €1.8 M.





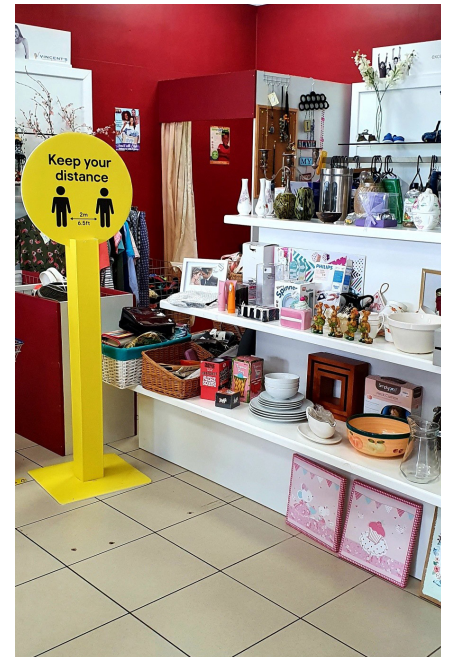
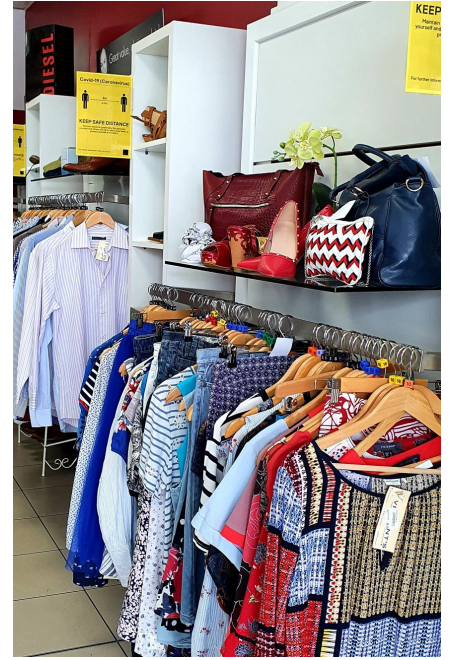
WE ARE NOT CURRENTLY ACCEPTING SHOP DONATIONS

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPLY CHAIN FOR VINCENT'S

When developing the portfolio of SVP charity shops, the ability of a site to generate donations has always been a key consideration however the true value of our supply chain and logistical capabilities became all too apparent when our shops closed during lockdown. Our Order Fulfilment Centres were able to operate a skeleton service throughout as the collection and recycling of clothes is seen as an integral part of waste management, and therefore permitted under Level 5 lockdown. On that basis, our hard-working OFC teams in Dublin, Drogheda, Cork, Nenagh, Tralee and Waterford continued to clear and sort donations from our clothing banks across the country. An additional pop-up OFC was opened by the West Region and

Galway Area with the generous support of Holy Family Church in Mervue.

As we begin to emerge from the shadows of Covid 19 and begin to consider the existential crisis that is Global warming, Vincent's is emerging as an unlikely leader in ethical and sustainable retailer, tackling the parallel problems of poverty and deprivation on one hand and the excessive consumption of fashion on the other. By developing its digital capabilities and 'green' credentials in direct response to Covid -19, the business has established new connections with a more discerning and digitally-enabled global consumer, and in so doing, secured future income, donations, and volunteers for SVP.





toy appeal

Buy this empty toy box to help ensure that children in your community have what they need this Christmas.

Buy this empty toy box and the money will help ensure a child is not left empty handed this Christmas.

€5

toy appeal

SVP
Society of St Vincent de Paul

Kindly sponsored by Smurfit Kappa



Even on the darkest days we keep our lights on for you.



VINCENT'S
SUPPORTING THE WORK OF SVP THE SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL

Shop Online at: **thrifty**



YOUNG SVP

Young SVP is our youth development programme designed for young people attending secondary school/YouthReach and other educational settings; those taking part in youth groups/clubs; and those at 3rd level – be it in college/university. The programme focuses on social action within the ethos and mission of SVP. Young people are offered opportunities to learn about SVP, about social justice and about how to engage in social action in a positive, purposeful and meaningful way.

The Young SVP team is made up of Regional Youth Development Officers (YDO), one National College Support Officer (CSO) and a National Youth Development Coordinator. The team offer ongoing support to all those engaging in the Young SVP programme – whether part of a Conference, class or Young SVP group in various settings. Our CSO and YDO’s visit groups a number of times during the year delivering core workshops and supporting them with their Young SVP action projects.

In the infographic you will see our programme statistics for the 2019/20 academic year when the programme was operating fully across the following regions; East, SouthEast, South West, West, MidWest, North and NorthEast & Midlands. The year was impacted by the abrupt closure of schools in March 2020, when we were all sent into lockdown for the first time due to Covid.

- During this time the Young SVP team delivered a total of 826 school visits across more than 209 different schools and other settings. 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.

- A total of 9,473 young people were reached through our guest speaker visits and over 5,000 chose to engage in our developmental schools programme taking part in workshops and designing action projects throughout the year.

- A total of 283 social action projects were completed by these Young SVP members, in 236 Young SVP Conference/groups this year, helping and supporting many people in local schools and communities.



9473

STUDENTS REACHED

826

VISITS



236

YOUNG SVP GROUPS



209

SCHOOLS ENGAGED



352 social justice w/shops
263 visit to Conference
189 guest speaker talks
22 other



5889

STUDENTS ENGAGED



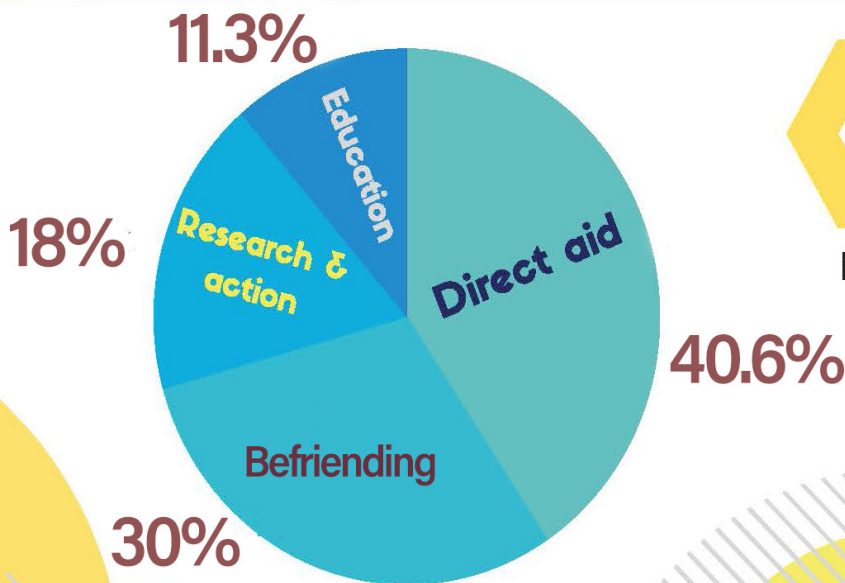
324

GROUPS VISITED

2019/20* IN NUMBERS

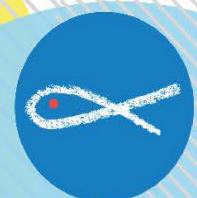


* year impacted by Covid 19 school closures March-June 2020



283

PROJECTS COMPLETED



Traditionally, more projects are completed in the final term of the year, however as we were in lockdown opportunities for these were severely limited.

YOUNG SVP AT HOME

The young SVP team responded to the challenges of the pandemic in a number of ways ensuring that our connections with Young SVP members remained intact and the programme participants completed their Young SVP journey.

Within this we launched a #youngsvpathome programme, we held virtual end of year events and Youth Days and began the process of adapting our resources to be used in new and varied ways, mainly in the virtual and online arena.

Our Young SVP Champions programme was also developed over the summer months in preparation for a pilot to be launched in September 2020. This programme allows individual young people to take part in the programme. It is useful for those who do not have access to Young SVP in school/are interested in learning more about SVP and the social justice issues we address.

Electric Ireland continued to support Young SVP throughout this year, as they have since 2013, and are committed to supporting the programme until at least 2023. Their support is greatly appreciated.



COULD YOU SURVIVE ON

FIVE?

Just €5 a day for all your food and drink costs for five days

Join the SVP challenge and help raise awareness in your community.

Your Help Can Last a Lifetime.

#SURVIVEONS

#SVPireland





HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources coordinates personnel activities for a staff of over 915 full-time (FTE) employees across the Island of Ireland.

Key areas of responsibility include:

- Recruitment & Selection
- Benefits, Compensation
- Policy Development
- Legal Compliance & Reporting
- Change Management Support and advice
- Development and training.
- Employment Relations that promote a positive working environment.

Between the team have more than 140 years of HR experience!

2020: THE YEAR OF CHALLENGE AND BIG NUMBERS

The year started out as any year for SVP employees, full of New Year resolutions, new goals and initiatives. In March, the emergence of a global pandemic and the enormity of its impact began to unfold. In Human Resources, we were navigating through the sea of the emerging information and pivoting from our planned work and strategy to a more reactive environment which was constantly evolving, new demands in order to deliver support and information to employees in relation to Coronavirus and the need to develop quickly well-being supports for employees including new training, policies and options to maintain employment and provide reassurance.



We extended our existing Flexible Working Policy and the use of Microsoft Teams almost overnight to facilitate and enable a large majority of our employees to work safely from home. We increased communication with staff to include everything from regular fact sheets in

SVP HR COVID-19 RESPONSE

	5	788	102	2
MULTIPLE FACT SHEETS	UPDATES TO COVID-19 POLICY	STAFF COMPLETED COVID-19 INDUCTION	LEAD WORKER REPS	RETURN TO WORK FACT SHEETS

COVID RELATED POLICY DEVELOPMENT /AMENDMENTS	NEW ANNUAL LEAVE PROTOCOL	UPDATED WORK FROM HOME HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE FACTSHEET
	NEW SICK LEAVE AMMENDMENT	
	UPDATED SICK LEAVE POLICY	

WHAT WAS DELIVERED IN 2020



**Compensation & Benefits:
aligned across SVP**

PHASE 1: E-Payslips

**PHASE 2: PeopleHR
Regional Offices, East Region,
Retail & NI**

Specialist Survey Review

Warehouse Relocation

**Notice to quit Homeless
Services & TUPE Preparation**

Employee Survey and Actions

**13 New or updated policies
and procedures**

relation to the Coronavirus on how to recognise it and keep safe, an employee survey to better assess needs and gain feedback on what was provided, information on pay and maintaining employment, regular letters with updates from our National President, how to ensure an ergonomic workstation at home which ensured employees Health and Safety to increasing the awareness of our existing Employee Assistance Programme during this uncertain and rapidly changing time.

We utilised the challenge of having our shops temporarily closed to implement a training Academy for our Retail staff to provide additional skills and support, a coaching programme for our leaders to provide support for them and their teams, delivered Covid-19 induction training, trained over 100 Lead Worker Representatives, as well as running a number of well-being programmes and provided opportunities for further leadership development.

Employees were facing innumerable issues including worries about their own and their families health, financial concerns, navigating a new normal of working remotely, being placed on temporary lay off due to government restrictions, social distancing, childcare concerns, changes in family routines and general uncertainty about the future.

Through it all, SVP's employees continued to show perseverance and dedication every day providing exceptional services to the community and those we assist. Human Resources is very proud to support such talented, dedicated and hard-working employees and to work with members who demonstrated Vincentian values at their best.

NEW & UPDATED HR POLICY & PROCEDURES

1 **Grievance: Informal & Formal**

2 **Compensation & Benefits**

3 **Probation**

4 **Performance Management Guide**

5 **Job Abandonment**

6 **Online Communications**

7 **Parental Leave Update**

8 **Dignity & Respect Policy & Procedure: Bullying & Anti-Harassment**

9 **Sick Leave Policy, Procedure & Guide**

10 **Leave Policy**

11 **Retirement Policy & Procedure**

12 **Recruitment & Selection, Policy, Procedure & Guide**

13 **Christmas Gratuity: Introduction of Mastercard**

HR PRIORITIES 2020/2021

FURTHER ROLLOUT OF PEOPLEHR: Automation of Recruitment Process



HYBRID WORKING & Creating the "New Normal"

NEW EMPLOYEE INDUCTION



DEVELOPMENT OF ONLINE TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



SUPPORTING OTHER FUNCTIONS & wider SVP Strategies



2021

IT FUNCTION

When the Covid-19 Pandemic struck in early 2020, SVP employees could continue to work remotely. Online collaboration via MS Teams was quickly adopted, and both employees and volunteer members could communicate and collaborate effectively.

From 2011, SVP began introducing modern IT Systems to support the work of the Society. During this time, the Society has developed a number of cloud-based systems to increase efficiencies in administration generally and keep up with the introduction of regulation for Charities in Ireland and the growing compliance requirements for the Charity Sector.

The cloud-based solutions have been widely adopted within the Society, making it easier to record and store information in a secure, reliable and accessible way.

The IT Department focuses on supporting the Society by ensuring the major cloud-based systems are available to all users around the country.

During 2019, the IT Department had been rolling out Office 365 throughout the Society, so when the Covid-19 Pandemic struck in early 2020, SVP employees could continue to work remotely. Office 365 meant that online collaboration via Teams was quickly adopted, and both employees and volunteer members could communicate and collaborate effectively. The IT Department was instrumental in supporting over 400 Office 365 email users to engage with online solutions and transition from traditional face-to-face to online Teams meetings. From the period April to December 2020 over 8,000 Teams Meetings were arranged.

In 2020, a remote Call Centre Solution was required for the East Region to enable calls for assistance from the public to be answered by employees and volunteers all working from home. The IT Department put in place a solution via Microsoft Teams, and this enabled approximately 15,000 calls for assistance to the Dublin number to be answered during November and December 2020 in the lead up to Christmas.

Cyber threat is increasing year on year, and the Society has managed to improve the cyber security defence to enhance protection on major applications and data assets. This is an evolving threat, and the Society is proactively monitoring and rolling out increased security measures to mitigate against risk where possible.





Back-to-school financial pressures mount

SVP receives almost 300 calls a day from worried parents

[Read more](#)

How you can help

Donate Now

Save someone from a life of poverty.

Become a Volunteer

Join our team and make a huge contribution to people in need.

Fundraise

Do something exciting and help raise money for SVP.

Get help

Are you experiencing difficulties and need a helping hand? [Start here](#)

What we do

Our Services

SVP provide a wide range of services all around Ireland. Choose a type of service or select your area to find what you need.

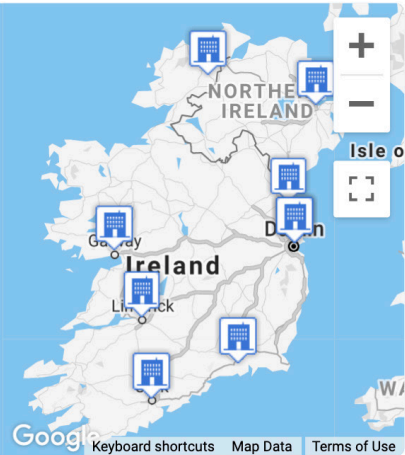
Services by County:

All Counties

Type of Service:

Local Offices

[Search](#)



Who we are

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul exists to fight poverty

We work for social justice and the creation of a more just, caring nation. Through our wide range of services we provide practical support to people in need. Find your local office details [here](#).

[See where your donation goes](#)

Read more on our work, our Governance and impact.

[About SVP](#)

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

2020 WEBSITE CONVERSIONS



Over the last number of years, SVP's National Communications team has strategically increased the Society's presence; brand awareness and digital reach; and created a strong and trusted brand across numerous online platforms.

Throughout 2020 the SVP Communications Department continued to work hard to produce digital content to inspire and motivate members, those we assist and our donors.

The pandemic was most certainly the most significant cause of digital disruption in the charity sector last year. COVID-19 pushed the sector to embrace digital to stay relevant, help more people, develop new ways of working, fundraise and offer services. Championing compelling and thoughtful messaging across our various platforms, the National Communications team regularly collaborated with multiple SVP functions and departments to spread the organisation's key messages to our diverse audiences.

By the close of 2020, users on the SVP website had gone to over 642K users, revenue had reached approximately €5M, and requests for assistance through the website had grown over 126%, with almost 60K people looking for SVP's assistance online.

A COHESIVE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

In 2020, SVP continued to contact our supporters via post, email, social media and telephone to demonstrate and report back on how their fantastic support was used.

Producing digital content and supporting users who usually have access to face-to-face services were among the top challenges for the Society. Social Media plays a considerable part in driving traffic to the website and raising awareness of what the Society does, how it can help, and how the public, in turn, can help the organisation. But this doesn't necessarily happen naturally and takes time, resources and strategic planning to ensure these results.

Facebook has always been an important channel for SVP, even more so over the last year due to all government restrictions. It has provided the Society with the opportunity to reach and engage with people, giving them a chance to be heard and supported by the organisation as well as support us.

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT FUNCTION

Daily, interactive content became a vital channel to reach new donors and encourage those who have contributed to do so again. During the National Lockdowns in 2020, SVP Retail, 100 Vincent's shops reached people who wanted to purchase or donate goods through its Click-and-Collect services. This service generated €237K in Revenue for the society.

In 2020, the SVP Facebook page assisted in increasing online donations and it reached 38,400 followers, the highest online results to date.

The total number of engagements the SVP Facebook pages got in 2020 demonstrated how relevant and important all the strategies and campaigns developed were in assisting different departments such as Social Justice, Fundraising, and Retail reach their goals.



Like

Comment

Share

COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGNS

Throughout 2020 and due to the Covid-19, SVP's website was undoubtedly the most important online channel to the Society to launch its campaigns, share news and continuous updates, call-to-actions, and receive donations.

Faced with restrictions, people changed their habits and started to spend more time online, purchasing products and services, doing business and meeting people. SVP's operations were also massively impacted by the pandemic. People could not come into our charity shops, donate or through the churches. Members could not meet in person. Those requesting help could not do so through our local offices.

The SVP website became an essential tool to communicate, manage requests for assistance and receive donations, specifically during



SVP - Society of St. Vincent de Paul Ireland

23 May 2020

You are one in a million 😊 you helped raise €1million on [The Late Late Show](#) with the fantastic support from Majella and Daniel O'Donnell and of course Ryan Tubridy for the many people struggling in Ireland today. ❤️❤️❤️

24,865 people reached >

Boost Post

513

our first-ever Urgent Appeal in May as well as our Annual Appeal. To put this into context the number of transactions on the SVP website increased by 570% compared to 2019, and a more than 227.50% increase in online revenue, making 2020 the biggest year ever for SVP on-line donations. More people fundraised online in 2020 than ever before, and we predict the trend will continue in 2021 and beyond.

Business, etc., assisted different SVP areas/ functions to build relationships, both internally and externally, which brought in tremendous support and attracted new donors that contributed massively to the Society.

With GA4 (Google Analytics latest version) being released recently and many changes to how cookies operate, 2021 is set to be another busy year for the Society.

The plan is to build a new website in 2022 to become more user-friendly, streamlined and intuitive as the habits of our change.

More than just asking for a donation, the SVP website, its social media channels, Google Ads,

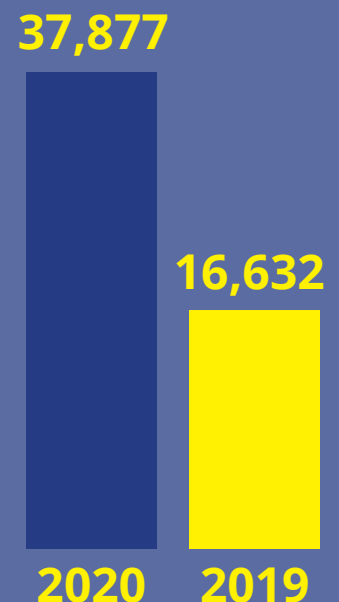
THE FUTURE

EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

2020: EZINES SENT



DONOR EMAILS



NATIONAL FUNDRAISING



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul could not do our work without the support and 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 a 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. You can help save them from a life of poverty.

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 2020, fundraised income for SVP totalled €41,761,000 due to the continued generosity of the Irish public.

These generous donations 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 school. In May 2020, for the first time SVP held an Urgent Appeal to help response to the increased calls for assistance received due to the pandemic. The society received incredible support from the public for this appeal. Central to our fundraising

activities each year is the SVP Annual Appeal in November and December. The SVP Annual Appeal continues to be the main national campaign each year and is responsible for raising the majority of the funds needed. During this time, the Society benefits from a groundswell of support amongst the general public and local businesses and is facilitated by over 11,000 members and volunteers.

Other key channels of fundraising income for the Society are church collections and legacy donations. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and the resulting restrictions, in 2020 church gate collections were significantly down resulting in €3,805,000 being raised, marking a percentage decrease from 2019 of 60%. One of the unique aspects of fundraising within SVP is the large membership base of volunteers in local communities throughout Ireland. Even with the challenges that Covid brought, these volunteers were responsible for raising a significant proportion of the income we received in 2020. All of the donations collected are kept within the community and used to help local families. The Society 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.

URGENT APPEAL



In May 2020, The Society of St. Vincent de Paul launched an Urgent Appeal to help respond to the increased calls for assistance received due to the pandemic. These calls came from people who found themselves struggling financially as a result of losing their jobs or living on reduced income due to the necessary restrictions to combat the spread of Covid-19.

On the 22nd of May, Daniel and Majella O'Donnell were interviewed live on the Late Late Show by host Ryan Tubridy and described the current situation members of the Society were seeing around the country as a result of the pandemic. Asking the Irish public to support the charity, Majella shared a letter from a parent struggling to pay for basic food items after their small business closed in recent weeks:

"When my Covid-19 payment application was refused, I was down to my last few euro and I actually borrowed some money from my children aged 13 and 16 to buy some bread, milk and cheese," Majella read from the letter.

"I felt hesitant to look for help but decided to swallow my pride. The first I thought to contact was St Vincent de Paul. I looked up your local number online and phoned you. I explained my situation (and became a little upset doing so as I hadn't talked to anyone about it). The person on the line was understanding and considerate and promised to have some help for me that very day. I felt a great weight lifted off me immediately. You followed through on that promise and have been a great help over the last couple of weeks."

The Late Late Show plea raised over €1.1m, and SVP sincerely thanks the Irish people for so generously donating. Kieran Stafford, SVP national president at the time, said that in over 20 years volunteering with SVP, the past few weeks had been the most difficult he had ever known.

"SVP has been working very hard to continue our support for the many people seeking help over the past weeks. While our physical visits

to homes, emergency accommodation, hospitals and prisons have been halted we have been working online, by telephone and by post to provide support to those seeking help.

“With the increasing need of SVP services across the country and income drastically reduced from the closure of our 234 shops and the cancellation of church-gate and shopping centre collections, finding public support is more important than ever.

“The response to Daniel and Majella’s call for help, supported by the Late Late Show, has been above all our expectations. We are so thankful to the Irish people who have once again shown their incredible generosity to their neighbours.”

All donations made online or over the phone were able to be directed for use in a local region, county or town. The majority of donations received came with such a request and were a great boost for local SVP Conferences around the country.

WHEN THIS IS OVER, SOME OF US WILL STILL BE TRAPPED

Society of St. Vincent de Paul
National Office
SVP House
91-92 Sean MacDermott Street
FREEPOST FDN5235
Dublin 1

No stamp needed but using one will save us money. Thank you.



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a registered charity: CHY 6892
CRA No: 20013806

to feel
at is unless Jane picks up
ou are there to answer.
A little help at this time could change everything for
those who will still be trapped in poverty. Your
donation today could help the family with basics like
food and fuel. You could help them get back on their
feet. You could give them back their future.
**YOU COULD SAVE SOMEONE FROM BEING
TRAPPED IN POVERTY. PLEASE DONATE TODAY.**

svp.ie/donate



Buy this empty toy box to help ensure that children in your community have what they need this Christmas.

AN ANNUAL APPEAL LIKE NO OTHER

Appeal is the main national campaign each year and is responsible for raising the majority of the funds needed. In 2020, SVP knew that the Annual Appeal would be very different to other years, funds were needed to help continue the work of SVP and to make sure that donations came in locally. As SVP national president Rose McGowan said. *"Our ethos has always been 'what is donated locally stays local' to assure people that when they donate in their area their donation is used for the benefit of those who seek SVP help in the same area."*

To facilitate that the Society had to innovate. The Donate page on the SVP website was updated to allow donations made online from anywhere in the country or abroad to be directed to a specific area within Ireland. Due the increased number donations coming through the

phones, SVP engaged the services of call centre, every donor was asked where they would like to their donation used.

Nearly a quarter of a million blue envelopes were provided to Conferences and areas across Ireland. The front of the envelopes had the details of the Conference or Area on printed on them along with a Freepost address. Donors could fill in their details and enclose a donation which they could return to an SVP member or freepost it back to their regional office.

Blue envelopes were distributed by members at the back of churches, left in shops, cafes, credit unions and many other places for people to pick up. The envelopes allowed Conferences to continue to receive support directly from people in their area.

Due to Covid safety concerns, physical visits to people's homes were not happening, the ability of the Society to deliver food hampers or toys was limited. In a year when so many things were different for us all, Christmas presents under the tree needed to stay the same. So, in addition to financial donations, SVP appealed for vouchers which could be exchanged for food and gifts of all kinds: toys, book, music, clothing etc. The Society partnered with Me2You to provide the vouchers which could be used in a wide range of retail outlets nationwide. Donors were also invited to buy a virtual hamper on the SVP website instead of donating food that Christmas.

Two innovations to generate interest in donating vouchers were the SVP Empty Plate campaign supported by EuroSpar and the SVP Empty Toy box appeal supported by Smurfit Kappa. The Empty Plate Campaign was based on the belief that no child should have an empty plate at Christmas. The campaign invited donations of non-perishable food items to local EuroSpar stores. EuroSpar will then calculate the value of food donated and provide SVP volunteers with the equivalent value in Euro-Spar vouchers. These vouchers were used by SVP volunteers in the location in which they were donated to help ensure that people in that community had the food they need this Christmas and throughout the winter.

People love to donate toys at Christmas, but due to Covid-19 the collection and distribution of toys by SVP volunteers was problematic.

So the SVP Empty Toy Box appeal sponsored by Smurfit Kappa was conceived. People were invited to visit their local SVP shop, there are 234 throughout Ireland, and buy an empty toy box for a suggested donation of €5. Thanks to Irish Life, SVP were given a premises on Henry Street in Dublin the week before Christmas. SVP turned the premises into a pop-up shop where the Empty Toy Boxes were sold. All donations from the boxes were used in the community to help ensure that children and families had what they needed that Christmas and throughout the winter.

Again, SVP received great support from Brown Thomas and Arnotts with a range of different activities. Arnotts partnered with SVP to bring their Christmas windows to homes around the country with a series of limited edition illustrated postcards depicting each window scene. All proceeds of the sales of the postcards went to SVP. Arnotts and Brown Thomas had 'Tap to Donate' contactless-enabled donation boxes throughout their stores. Arnotts had an interactive Christmas 'Selfie Tree', with a contactless enabled donation box in aid of SVP. Brown Thomas and Arnotts also sold facemasks in aid of SVP.

The SVP annual appeal is about more than helping people preparing for Christmas, it allows the society to support people throughout the year. In a year like no other, the generosity of the Irish public, the work of our members and staff, and the support from our partners in 2020 helps the work of SVP to continue into the future.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

	2020			2019		
	INCOME	EXPENDED	NET	INCOME	EXPENDED	NET
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Visitation	41,761	30,423	11,338	37,881	32,041	5,840
Twining	-	440	(440)	-	437	(437)
Fundraising	-	1,184	(1,184)	-	822	(822)
SUBTOTAL	41,761	32,047	9,714	37,881	33,300	4,581
SERVICES						
Hostels	5,620	9,032	(3,412)	5,894	7,713	(1,819)
Social Housing	2,826	3,974	(1,148)	3,301	4,020	(719)
Holiday Homes, Resource Centres, etc.	4,535	6,618	(2,083)	4,812	7,140	(2,328)
SUBTOTAL	12,981	19,624	(6,643)	14,007	18,873	(4,866)
Charity Shops	23,817	22,045	1,772	31,432	23,562	7,870
Governance, Management, Support & Admin	-	9,087	(9,087)	-	8,758	(8,758)
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	78,559	82,803	(4,244)	83,320	84,493	(1,173)
Other gains in the year	1,017	-	1,017	132	-	132
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS IN THE YEAR	79,576	82,803	(3,227)	83,452	84,493	(1,041)

BALANCE SHEET

The Society's Financial Reserves were €151.2 million (M) at December 2020. This is made up of:

RESTRICTED & DESIGNATED RESERVES PROPERTY VALUATION RESERVES GENERAL RESERVES

€25.9 M

€80.8 M

€44.5 M

	2020 €'000	2019 €'000	MOVEMENT €'000
Fixed Assets			
Property, Tangible Assets	100,681	106,124	(5,443)
Investment and Other	48	57	(9)
SUBTOTAL	100,729	106,181	(5,452)
Current Assets			
Stock	9	7	2
Debtors	3,874	3,310	564
Cash at Bank and in Hand			
- Restricted/Designated	25,867	28,205	(2,338)
- General	59,783	56,414	3,369
TOTAL ASSETS	190,262	194,117	(3,855)
Liabilities			
Creditors falling due within 1 Year	(6,906)	(7,642)	736
Creditors and Deeds of Mortgages	(32,206)	(32,098)	(108)
NET ASSETS	151,150	154,377	(3,227)
FUNDS OF THE SOCIETY			
Restricted	5,475	5,402	73
Property Valuations	80,817	80,817	-
Designated Funds	20,392	22,803	(2,411)
General Funds	44,466	45,355	(889)
TOTAL FUNDS	151,150	154,377	(3,227)

SOCIETY HIGHLIGHTS

In 2020, SVP recorded 171,004 requests for help. In response to these, we provided practical support to people in need through our wide range of services

VISITATION

Home Visitation is the core activity of the Society in which the majority of our members partake. 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. Our support can be either non-financial or financial in order to alleviate the impact of poverty and social exclusion.

SERVICE PROVISION

In addition to SVP Visitation work, the Society provides a wide range of services, some government funded, for vulnerable people. Such services include 4 resource centres, 10 emergency homeless services (300 beds in hostels), social housing (c. 862 Units), 5 holiday homes, prison visitor centres, children / young adult services and day-care centres.

CHARITY SHOPS

The Society has 224 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, and the community charity shops provide an income source for the Society, which is reinvested directly back into the community through the Society visitations work.

INCOME 2020

In 2020, total income for the Society
was €78.6 M(2019: €83.3 M)

VALUE €'000
TOTAL: €78.6 M



VISITATION

€42 M

53%

**CHARITY
SHOPS**

€24 M

30%

**SERVICE
PROVISION**

€13 M

17%

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

INCOME STREAMS 2020

The Society has a range of income streams.

VALUE €'000
TOTAL: €78.6 M



CHURCH
COLLECTIONS

€3.8 M



LEGACIES

€4.7 M



DONATIONS

€26.3 M



FUNDRAISING
& OTHER
INCOME

€3.6 M



GOVERNMENT
GRANTS
VISITATION

€3.3 M



SERVICES:
FUNDERS &
FEES

€13 M



CHARITY SHOPS
(BEFORE COSTS)

€23.8 M

We couldn't carry out our vital work without the generosity of our many donors and funders.

EXPENDITURE 2020

In 2020, Total Expenditure was
€82.8 M (2019: €84.5 M)

VALUE €'000
TOTAL: €82.8 M



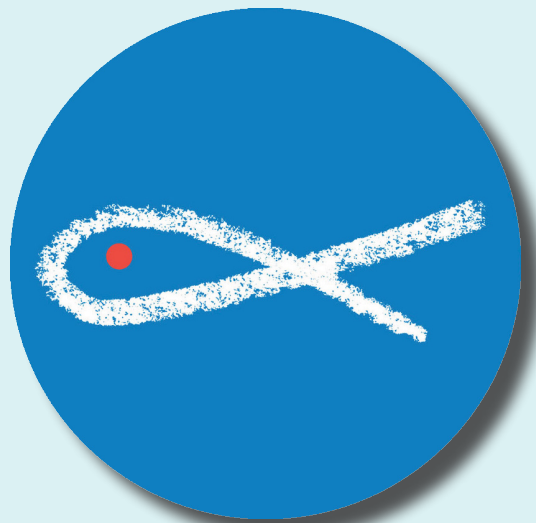
Assistance to individuals can be direct financial support, foods, fuel and support with utility bills. Our Services include social housing, homeless services, resource centres, holiday homes etc.

**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.**



**Thank you to our generous donors,
and to our members, volunteers and staff
who put their generosity
into action everyday.**

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**Charity No: CHY 6892
CRA No: 20013806**



Society of St. Vincent de Paul