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Visit our website www.pmvtrust.ie

Peter McVerry Trust Christmas Cards on sale now!

We have a fantastic selection of Irish-designed cards to suit individuals and companies. Please contact us directly at 01 8230776 to place an order, or visit www.pmvtrust.ie to view and order our range of cards online.



NEW EVENT Christmas Carol Concert Sunday, 6th December, 2009

Join Peter McVerry Trust for an evening of celebration in the magical setting of Saint Patrick's Cathedral. Hear your favourite Christmas carols performed by some of Ireland's finest singers with Fr. McVerry as guest speaker.



On Sunday, 6th December, Peter McVerry Trust will launch our first Christmas Carol Concert, hosted by Mary Kennedy. In the enchanting surroundings of Saint Patrick's Cathedral we will hold an evening full of Christmas cheer with an array of carols guaranteed to get you into the Christmas spirit as well as hearing Fr. McVerry's Christmas message.

We will have performances from the extremely talented Guinness Choir, Dolce Choir, Julie Feeney and String Quartets 4 U. Tickets cost €25 each, with special rates available for students, unwaged and senior citizens. Doors open at 7pm, with the event commencing at 7.30pm.

Music has played an integral part in the daily life of Saint Patrick's Cathedral since its foundation in the thirteenth century. The combined choirs of Saint Patrick's and Christ Church Cathedrals sang the first performance of Handel's Messiah at the venue in 1742 and we are sure that the Guinness Choir will perform a stirring rendition at our concert.

We hope that you will join us on this special occasion to celebrate Christmas and remember those less fortunate. All proceeds from this event will go directly to caring for young homeless people.

Contact the fundraising office by telephone 01 8230776 or email fundraising@pmvtrust.ie to book your tickets.

PMVT Services are Referral & Assessment, Open Access, Streets to Home, Emergency Accommodation, Transitional Accommodation, Stabilisation Service, Residential Community Detox, Residential Drug Aftercare & Housing with Supports, Under 18s Residential Service.

Note from CEO Pat Doyle



Welcome to the Peter McVerry Trust Newsletter – Opening Doors. Changes in the economic environment in 2009 meant that, like many other organisations, Peter McVerry Trust had to adapt in order to ensure that the needs of those on the margins continued to be met in the most effective way possible and with warmth and compassion. However, there have also been other environmental changes this year that have required flexibility and imagination from the Trust. One of the most significant of these has been the new approach to tackling homelessness outlined by the Homeless Agency in recent times.

The Homeless Agency was established in Dublin in 2001 in response to the higher levels of homelessness experienced in the city than elsewhere in Ireland at that time. The vision of the agency is that long-term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough will be eliminated in Dublin by 2010. In pursuit of this vision, the agency undertook in 2008 a comprehensive review of homeless service provision in the greater Dublin area to ensure that homelessness was not just being “managed”, but “ended”. That review has been a key factor in leading the agency to co-ordinate a new approach to tackling homelessness with renewed vigour as 2010 approaches. This new approach, known as the Pathway to Home model, is a model of homeless, housing and support provision that has been developed by the Homeless Agency to ensure a more effective way of delivering homeless services in Dublin with better access to long-term housing with supports.

Peter McVerry Trust has always been a willing partner in positive initiatives established through the Homeless Agency and is currently actively engaging with the relevant bodies to play its part in what amounts to a fundamental re-configuration of homeless service provision across the sector. Central to our involvement in this process will be a commitment not only to maximise the benefit for those of our clients who are able and ready to be housed with supports; but also to ensure that those who may be least capable of independently sustaining a housing placement will not be left behind.

On behalf of the Trust, I would like to thank you for helping us to continue to provide our services.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Doyle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pat Doyle

Emergency Accommodation Service

In January 2009, Peter McVerry Trust launched a new Emergency Accommodation Service, the first provision of its kind in Fingal county. This 7 bed facility offers emergency accommodation to young homeless people over the age of 18 years, for a period of up to 6 months.



Our main responsibility is to provide accommodation to those who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless. Among the many factors contributing to homelessness that residents struggle with are substance misuse, mental health related issues and on occasion criminal justice issues.

Our work involves supporting residents in identifying a progression route out of homelessness and to develop a holistic care plan that encourages and enables the individual to access other services, either within the Trust, or in another relevant agency.

During their time in our service, residents work with assigned key workers, who support them in accessing services which will support their move towards independent living such as drug services, legal services, medical services and social

services. The likelihood of sustaining secure future accommodation is enhanced by the involvement of such supports and the team endeavours to ensure that they are in place while also attempting to support residents in identifying appropriate future accommodation.

Since the emergency residential service opened, many participants, by way of the structured support available, were able to stabilise their drug use and progress to drug treatment centers, independent living via housing with support, private rented accommodation, education, training and employment.

Through ongoing access to the full range of services offered by Peter McVerry Trust and intensive personal support, participants have an opportunity to acquire the range of skills necessary to move out of homelessness.

My Story - I believe the Lantern saved my life...

My name is Joe. I would like to tell my story of addiction and how I came to be in the Trust's detox programme – The Lantern.

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to Fr. Peter McVerry for starting the programme and also to all the staff involved in the service. I started taking drugs at a very young age. I was sent to St Joseph's Special School Clonmel, from age 9 to 15 years, and on finishing I immediately started using heroin. I was committing crime to feed my habit. From the age of 16 to 29, I spent 12 years in different prisons. I won't go into my experiences in prison, but it was not nice. From the years 1998 to 2006 I managed to turn my life around. I got clean in prison and continued to stay clean for those years. They were the best years of my life. I met my girlfriend Jane, who is

really special to me and gave me the most special gift of my life, a beautiful daughter. I then went to college and studied to be a fitness instructor. I also undertook Addiction Studies and was fortunate to gain employment in a number of drug rehab programmes in Dublin. I always enjoyed working with people in recovery and seeing them turn their lives around was a major motivation for me.

Unfortunately, I relapsed in 2006, due to a number of reasons, the main reason was losing 5 members of my family, 2 brothers, 2 sisters and my Mum. I then got to hear about the Trust's detox service and its

unique approach to addressing addiction. I can honestly say from the moment I came to the service I immediately sensed a deep spiritual connection.

I thank all those connected to the service for helping me discover my true potential and in turn allowing me to help others in addiction to get out of that miserable existence. Finally, if anyone reading this is trapped in addiction, remember there is a way out and the best way out for me was The Lantern. My only wish now is to be a good father to my son and daughter.

Stabilisation Service

Peter McVerry Trust's Stabilisation Service offers a comprehensive stabilisation programme to people who are homeless, who are attempting to stabilise their drug use and who wish to pursue pathways out of homelessness and drug use.

The service offers a 12 week rolling community based stabilisation programme which provides a safe and stable environment for vulnerable participants who are at a particular stage in addressing their substance misuse. Additionally, the service offers residential accommodation for seven participants for the period of the programme.

The building, which was recently refurbished to the highest standard, consists of 2 double rooms, 3 single rooms, a kitchen and spacious communal areas for relaxation. Residential accommodation is available to participants who have been assessed and accepted onto the stabilisation programme and who need a safe, secure and stable environment in order to participate in it more effectively.

Programme participants who are also accessing residential accommodation attend residents' meetings to organise household activities, participate in a weekly rota for cooking and cleaning the house, and work with staff to identify and improve life skills. They also participate in key working to progress move on accommodation applications.

The Stabilisation Programme is currently available to persons over 18, male or female, who wish to stabilise their problematic drug use and who are willing and able to attend and participate in the programme



Stabilisation Service Team

which runs Monday to Friday over a 12 week period. The programme provides a bridge or a stepping stone that supports drug users to increase their self-awareness and develop new skills, which ultimately will help them make significant and positive lifestyle changes.

fundraising



Gala Ball

Friday 13th November

Join us for an evening to remember! Reserve your seats today for this special event, now in its 3rd year, generously sponsored by Clontarf Castle Hotel.



Corporate Christmas Appeal

We are inviting companies to donate part or all of their Christmas card or gift budget to help people in need of housing and support. For further details please contact the Fundraising Office by telephone 01 8230776 or e-mail corporate@pmvtrust.ie.

Challenge Events Update

Women's Mini Marathon

Thanks to all those who took part, raising more than €10,000 for the Trust. Congratulations to Betty McNally, Rathfarnham - winner of a beauty hamper, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson.

Trek Mount Toubkal, Morocco

Well done to our group of trekkers for reaching the summit of Mount Toubkal, North Africa's highest mountain and for raising much-needed funds for the Trust.



Two Peak Challenge

We held our first Two Peak Challenge in July, which was a great success. Over 40 people took to the hills of Camaderry and Tonelagee in the Wicklow Gap area for a 25km endurance test. Visit www.pmvtrust.ie for details about our next hike in Ireland.

Austin Campbell reaches Istanbul

"After four months and 4,500km sauntering across 13 of Europe's finest countries I arrived in Istanbul, Turkey on August 8th a tired but a happy man.



People ask about the physical effect that a journey of this kind must have but for me the whole thing was much more psychological. Once the first few blisters come and go your body toughens up and focuses in on the new things you learn and the people you meet.

I am honoured to have been able to raise some money for Peter McVerry Trust through doing this walk."

Father and son conquer Kilimanjaro

Thirteen year old Marc Blennerhassett joins an elite group, as only a handful of youths have reached the summit of Africa's highest mountain. Tom, Marc's father, who climbed the mountain 15 years ago, said "The hardest part by far is the last day when you actually take on the summit. It requires a certain amount of endurance and I'm very proud of the way Marc handled it."



News from our Supporters

Calcutta Run

More than 1,000 people took part in the 10km run/walk on 16th May, raising €100,000 to date in aid of PMVT. More details and photos from the event can be found on www.calcuttarun.com



Annual Green & White Dinner

Gonzaga Union raises €23,500 for the Trust!

Christmas fundraising

Annual Belvedere College Sleep-Out

Please support the students of Belvedere who will be collecting in the city centre from 22nd-24th December to raise much-needed funds for homeless services.

Volunteers Needed! Annual Christmas Collections - we are holding a series of collections around Dublin to raise funds. If you can spare a few hours to collect please contact us.

How you can help

For information on ways to donate, volunteer your time, organise a fundraising event or take part in any of our upcoming events please contact the Fundraising Office at 01 8230776 or visit www.pmvtrust.ie.

Tax Reclaim

If you are a PAYE taxpayer we can reclaim the tax on your donations of €250 or more made within a tax year at no extra cost to you. Please contact the Fundraising Office to request a Tax Relief Form (CHY2) or to find out more.

Congratulations to Peter McVerry Trust Board Member Liam Connellan on receiving an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from NUI Galway in recognition of his work in engineering and business sectors. Liam has held many influential roles in his career, most notably as Director General of the Confederation of Irish Industry for a 20 year period and Chairman of the National Roads Authority from 1994 to 2001.



Happy Christmas and New Year to all our friends and supporters.