

Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign Annual Report: 2023



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Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign - Annual Report 2023

Supporting the involvement of communities in the National Drugs Strategy

Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign is a national network of community activists and community organisations that are involved in responding to Ireland's drugs crisis. Set up in 1995 by the Inner City Organisations Network (ICON) to bring together Dublin communities that were struggling with the heroin crisis, we now work nationally linking communities across the country dealing with a range of substance issues.

We work to promote and support a community development approach to the drugs problem - this means involving the people who are most affected by the problem in dealing with the problem – people who use drugs, their families and communities.

Citywide is a company limited by guarantee. Our board of directors come from the community, voluntary, statutory and private sectors. We are funded through the National Drugs Strategy by the Dept of Rural and Community Development and by the Rowan Trust

Key pieces of work undertaken during 2023

Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use



A Citizens' Assembly on Drugs Use was established to consider the legislative, policy and operational changes Ireland could make to significantly reduce the harmful impacts of illicit drugs on individuals, families, communities and wider Irish society. The assembly met for the first time in April 2023, the last meeting was held in October 2023.

Citywide comprehensively engaged with the Citizens' Assembly to ensure a strong community voice. We held meetings with our networks and produced a series of position papers based on this consultation, we developed a submission from the community sector to the Citizens' Assembly calling for the decriminalisation of the people who use drugs and the re-establishment of an independent Combat Poverty Agency. We participated in a panel discussion at the June CA meetings and provided information for the assembly members at a stall in Dublin Castle. Below are some of the key activities connected with the CA and links to our position papers and presentations.

2023 February – Citywide comment on TOR OF THE Citizens’ Assembly:

<https://www.citywide.ie/resources/citywide-comment-citizens-assembly-on-drugs-terms-of-reference/>

March – A Citizens’ Assembly Section was included in the Citywide website. It contains recordings of the Assembly meetings, Citywide submissions and position papers, and Community Drug Project submissions <https://www.citywide.ie/news/citizensassembly.html>

April - Cathal O’Regan, Secretary to the Citizens’ Assembly, met with the Citywide networks of Community Drugs Projects and DATF community representatives. A further meeting was held to discuss and promote engagement in the CA.

May -Citywide was invited to participate in the second weekend session of the CA. We worked on an information Stall in Dublin Castle to engage directly with members of the CA and discuss issues with them

May -Citywide Submission to the Citizens' Assembly called for the decriminalisation of people who use drugs. It also called for the re-establishment of an independent Combat Poverty Agency that is resourced to tackle the well-established links between poverty and drug harm: [Download here](#)

June – Citywide was invited to participate on a panel on innovative supports for families and communities at the 3rd meeting of the CA. Video here: <https://youtu.be/2Mm-FLxy-qs>

Dec – The final statement issued by the CA in October set out the recommendations that were to be included in its report to government. Citywide issued a response. [Response to the recommendations of the Citizens’ Assembly here:](#)



Time to Assemble Video & Untold Stories Podcast

A short video **Time to Assemble** and a podcast series **Untold Stories** were both launched on Sept 5th 2023.



Untold Stories Podcast

As a society, we are adding to the burden of our policy failures on key social and economic issues with an approach to drugs that increases blame, shame, stigma and criminalisation.

To help us to understand why it is not working and what kind of change is needed, we invited people to hear the stories of people who are living with the impact of our current approach, people who use drugs, their family members and community activists, who are working together to bring about change.

Untold Stories Podcast includes five episodes, where five activists from across different communities tell their own stories of how our current approach to drugs has impacted on them and how it has led them to working to bring about change. Our community activists include people who use drugs, their family members and members of the wider community, working together in solidarity to bring about change.

Time to Assemble Video

As the Citizens' Assembly on Drugs considered how Ireland should respond to the drugs issue, Time to Assemble invited people to take the opportunity to be part of the conversation around change.

https://www.citywide.ie/assets/files/mp4/citywide_time_to_assemble_web_size_small.mp4

More info about the Untold Stories Project here: <https://www.citywide.ie/what-we-do/untoldstories.html>

QQ1 Level 5 Community Representatives Training Programme



Eleven people started the Community Representatives Training (QQI Award (Minor) Level 5) in November 2023

Urrús in partnership with CityWide designed this programme to support community engagement with Local and Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Forces and to support people in representing local community issues.

The programme was open to those who are currently community representatives on Task Force structures, and those who would like to develop their knowledge and skills to become a community representative.

Course Structure

- The National Drug Strategy and the national structures that support its implementation.
- Local and regional drug and alcohol task forces – development and functions.
- Community representation – roles and responsibilities.
- Problem solving and conflict resolution.
- Decision making and strategizing.
- Community drug issues – emerging trends and current responses.
- Community development – principles and practice.

The course concludes on January 22nd 2024

- [DATF Community Reps Network Meetings](#)

CityWide facilitates the DATF Community Representatives Network. The network meets a number of times each year to exchange information, to identify key policy issues and develop responses and to discuss issues specific to the role of community rep

Three joint meetings of the Community Reps network took place during 2023 to discuss issues linked to the Citizens' Assembly on Drugs.

Community Drug Projects

Community Drug Projects provide a range of services and supports to people who use drugs, their families and to the wider community. Citywide provides a network for Community Drugs Projects and for Drugs Rehab Projects (CE) and represents the Community Sector at NDS policy committees

Three meetings were held of the CDP projects network. An emerging issue for a number of projects was the support needs for clients who are neurodiverse. A proposal to undertake research in 2024 into this issue was developed.

Drug Rehabilitation Projects (CE)

Drug Rehab Projects aim to develop and deliver appropriate and relevant rehabilitation services for people who use drugs in their communities by:

- Providing supports and services to people who are in treatment to enhance the effectiveness of treatment
- Working with people in identifying their progression needs in relation to personal supports, family support, education and training etc.
- Facilitating access for people to whatever options are required in integrating them back into normal community life
- Providing ongoing support for people as they move from treatment to other option

Citywide met with the DRP network three times during 2023 to feedback on the progress with engagement with DSP. The Dept of Social Protection CE stakeholder group also met several times during 2023. A national conference will take place in early 2024, hosted by DSP, that will focus on raising awareness specifically amongst local Community Development Officers employed by DSP as to the unique nature of DRPs and how they differ from mainstream CE's.

Work began on the development of a stand-alone Job Description for Supervisors employed specifically by DRPs to carry out addiction work within the projects. The purpose of this is to evidence the need to review the standard CE Supervisor Job Description for DRPs.

Communities of Interest

We continue to support the participation of communities of interest that experience particular exclusion in our society in our response to the drugs problem.

We worked with Belong To Drugs Project developing inputs to Citizens Assembly and ongoing liaison on drugs policy issues.

We continued liaison with Pavee Point, the National Family Support Steering Group and with UISCE. During 2023 we worked in active collaboration across these networks in relation to participation in the Citizens' Assembly

Encourage and inform public and political debate on the drugs

In Feb & May we produced briefings for TDs & Senators on the key issues for the Citizens' Assembly and participated in meetings across-party grouping of TDs and Senators in relation to Citizens' Assembly

Europe drug policy

We participated in meetings as a member of the subgroup on EU Standards in Civil Society Engagement and attended the plenary session of CSF in November 2023. The process of developing a new mandate will be advertised in 2024

Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign CLG**Profit and Loss by Class January - December 2023**

Income					
1191 Dept of Community & Rural Development	209,180.00				
Total Income	€209,180.				
Gross Profit	€209,180.				
Other Income (Loss)					
Total Other Income (Loss)	€ 0.00				
Expenses					
3940 Admin Wages					
376 Managers Salary	47,835.17				
377 Managers Employers PRSI	5,285.76				
382 Co-ordinator Salary	39,026.83				
383 Co-ordinator Employers PRSI	4,179.05				
3970 Administrator salary	6,886.56				
3971 Admin Employers PRSI	606.01				
Total 3940 Wages	€103,819.38				
3950 Overheads & Administration					
4003 Rent	18,500.00				
4004 Office Supplies	1,783.38				
4007 Phone & Communications	1,509.39				
4008 Light & Heat	1,833.67				
4009 Insurance	1,282.58				
4010 Bank Service Charges	303.00				
4011 Audit/Legal Fees	2,814.60				
4013 IT Expenses	3,882.13				
4018 Organisational Development	11,422.00				
4055 Sundry					
4014 Expenses	274.12				
4017 Canteen	25.28				
4057 Recruitment	1,681.35				
Total 4055 Sundry	€ 1,980.75				
Total 3950 Overheads & Administration	€ 45,311.50				
4090 Depreciation					
Total 4090 Depreciation	€ 0.00				
5000 Project Payments					
4002 Travel & Subsistence	62.65				
4053 Networking	344.25				
5003 Training/Research Community Rep	5,210.51				
Total 5000 Project Payments	€ 5,617.41				
Total Expenses	€154,748.29				
Other Expenses					
Reconciliation Discrepancies-1	0.20				
Total Other Expenses	€ 0.20				
Net Earnings	€54,431.51				

Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign CLG					
Profit and Loss by Class - January - December 2023					
Income					
1199 Rowan Trust Ireland Fund Grant 2022	50,000.00				
Total Income	€ 50,000.00				
Gross Profit	€ 50,000.00				
Other Income (Loss)					
Management Fee					
Total Other Income (Loss)	€ 0.00				
Expenses					
3940 Admin Wages					
3961 Project lead	61,889.71				
3962 Employers PRSI	6,838.82				
Total 3940 Admin Wages	€ 68,728.53				
3950 Overheads & Administration					
4001 Management Fee	10,000.00				
4010 Bank Service Charges	19.00				
4011 Audit/Accountancy/Legal Fees					
4013 IT Expenses					
4018 Organisational Development	1,000.00				
4055 Sundry					
4014 Expenses					
4017 Canteen					
4057 Recruitment					
Total 4055 Sundry	€ 0.00				
Total 3950 Overheads & Administration	€ 11,019.00				
4090 Depreciation					
4091 Computers					
Total 4090 Depreciation	€ 0.00				
5000 Project Payments					
4002 Travel & Subsistence	183.85				
4053 Networking	850.00				
5003 Training/Research Community Rep					
IreF/RT- Campaign Video	29,443.22				
Total 5000 Project Payments	€ 30,477.07				
Total Expenses	€110,224.60				
Other Expenses					
Reconciliation Discrepancies-1					
Total Other Expenses	€ 0.00				
Net Earnings	-€ 60,224.60				