

Simon Shop appeals for more clothing

In 2008, the Simon Shop raised in excess of € 84,000 for services to people who become homeless.

However, in recent times, the Simon Shop has witnessed a fall off in the amount of clothing being donated.

This may be linked to the increasing number of private operators who collect from our doorsteps, which has resulted in a significant drop in the clothing being donated to charity shops locally, and indeed nationally.

The Simon Shop exists to raise funds for the work and services provided by the Simon Community in the emergency accommodation and also the resettlement of people who become homeless.

All of the money raised from the sale of goods in the shop goes directly to paying for the provision of these services.

The Simon Shop is staffed by FÁS employees and volunteers ó therefore no salaries are paid from the funds raised in the sale of donated goods. The only costs are energy costs and maintenance of the shop.

The Simon Community understand that it is very difficult for some people to take the time and make the effort to drop clothes off at the Simon Shop ó parking can sometimes be an issue, particularly at school times.

'We would urge people to call with clothing to the shop outside school hours ó you will be assisted to remove the bags from your car by the caretaker,' said a spokesperson.

The shop is open from 9.30am to 5pm Monday to Saturday, and during lunch hour.

'We would ask people NOT to leave bags outside the doors in the evenings - this has led to fires being deliberately set and also bags being rummaged through and scattered in the vicinity,' added the spokesperson.

'All clothing should be clean ó that is the one requirement we have to insist upon.'

The Simon Community benefits from the recycling of used clothing also and all the funds raised go towards paying for the provision of services to people who become homeless.

Along with providing 36 residential beds at three sites in Dundalk, Simon also helped to move over 300 people from hostels into their own homes.

The new Outreach Prevention Service aims to identify and support people at risk of becoming homeless in Dundalk ó in the first year, 19 local people were prevented from becoming homeless.