

Simon Community NI Pledges Welcome Packs for All

Simon Community NI is launching a Welcome Pack Initiative for users of their services across Northern Ireland.

Homelessness in Northern Ireland has doubled in the last 15 years. On discovering that many people who arrive at their Projects do so with very few belongings, which are often in a plastic bag or bin liner, Simon Community NI began the process of developing 'Welcome Packs' that would provide clients with everyday essentials that are often taken for granted.

Thanks to donations from **Trussell Trust** and **Ikea**; the generous support of the **Institute of Hospitality**; and the invaluable contributions made by individual donors every day, Simon Community NI has committed to providing those in need of their homelessness services with a Welcome Pack.

In partnership with **MADLUG** (Making a Difference Luggage), Simon Community NI pledges to give each and every client a holdall bag containing a starter pack of items that will make the adjustment to their situation a little easier.

MADLUG is a Community Interest Company which provides a holdall bag to a young person in care for every bag purchased from their website.

At this launch event, which will be opened by **Lord Mayor Brian Kingston**, Simon Community NI will also be premiering their 'Crack VS Craic' youth residential video as part of a **Big Lottery funded 'Natural Highs' Project**.

The premise of a Natural Highs programme is to build positivity, encourage confidence and develop relationships and trust through fun, exciting activities that push people out of their comfort zone, distract from problems, worries and addictions, and encourage team work.

With support from the Big Lottery Fund, 7 young people currently living with Simon Community NI travelled to Greenhill YMCA for a weekend of activities including Raft Building, Wet Bouldering and Ropes Initiatives.

A small proportion of the funding was allocated to Go Pro cameras to allow young people to document their experiences at the residential, and these moments have now been collated into a 'Crack VS Craic' film.



ending homelessness

The Welcome Pack Launch will take place on 21st September between 3pm to 4.30pm at Simon Community Belfast Foyer, 3-5 Malone Road, BT9 6RT. Refreshments will be provided. For more information, contact Claire Andrews claireandrews@simoncommunity.org / 028 9023 2882