

SICK AND INDIGENT ROOMKEEPERS' SOCIETY

233rd Annual General Meeting – 16th November 2023

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

This statement is presented to the 233rd Annual General Meeting of the Sick and Indigent Roomkeepers' Society, Dublin's oldest charity, founded in 1790. The banner headline on our website reads: *Serving the poor of Dublin since 1790 and still serving.*

During the calendar year 2022, the Society paid out €98,867 in assistance grants. While this represented a significant increase compared with the total of €84,612 granted in 2021, it still falls short of pre-Covid amounts. It is difficult to know why exactly this should be the case, but it would appear that not all of the social workers we deal with have resumed their former patterns of work. Assistance grants to date in the current year are also less than we had budgeted for; however, as in 2022, the category of 'Home start-up' remains the largest. This category covers help with purchases of furniture, electrical goods and floor coverings, often in cases where people are moving from homeless accommodation to unfurnished local authority housing and need additional resources to make it fully livable.

We received €31,029 in bequests in 2022; we are very grateful to the donors. We also benefitted from €16,850 from the State's dormant funds account. The annual collection carried out in Catholic churches in Dublin's inner city yielded €15,388. I would like to thank Archbishop's House and the individual parish priests for their help in arranging this collection, which is not only of great practical value to the Society but also reflects our historic links with the inner city, where Roomkeepers were founded over two centuries ago.

The work of the Society is carried out through our voluntary trustees. Since our last AGM, we have been fortunate to recruit three new trustees – Margaret Butterly, Eamonn Molloy and Rosie Plunkett. Each of them brings valuable new expertise and perspectives to our work. Siobhan Fitzpatrick resigned as a trustee in May 2023; she did sterling work in the redesign and development of our website, and on behalf of the Board I would like to thank her for input and to wish her well. As will be seen later at this AGM, two of our longest-serving trustees, Felix Larkin and Colette O'Daly, are approaching the limit of their time on the Board, and we are conscious of the ongoing need to find replacements.

I have been greatly supported as chair by my vice-chair Roger McCormack, who has been a constant source of helpful advice. Michael Deasy, our Company Secretary, has ensured that we comply with the governance requirements of the Charities Regulator. Margaret Judge, aided by Michael and John McClancy, has continued to liaise with Cantor Fitzgerald in managing our investments and in advising the Board on financial matters generally. Roger and Aideen Ireland look after the operation of our redesigned website, where the 'donate' button facilitates online donations. I am grateful to each of the trustees for their commitment to the work of the Society and for their active participation in Board meetings.

The day-to-day operation of the Society is carried out by our Secretary / Administrator, Edel Withers, whose commitment and diligence are deeply appreciated by the trustees.

We recently held our annual Strategy Meeting during which we reviewed the medium- to long-term outlook for the Society. The Board will shortly consider a series of actions arising from the review, which will be reported on at next year's AGM.

John Martin
Chairman