



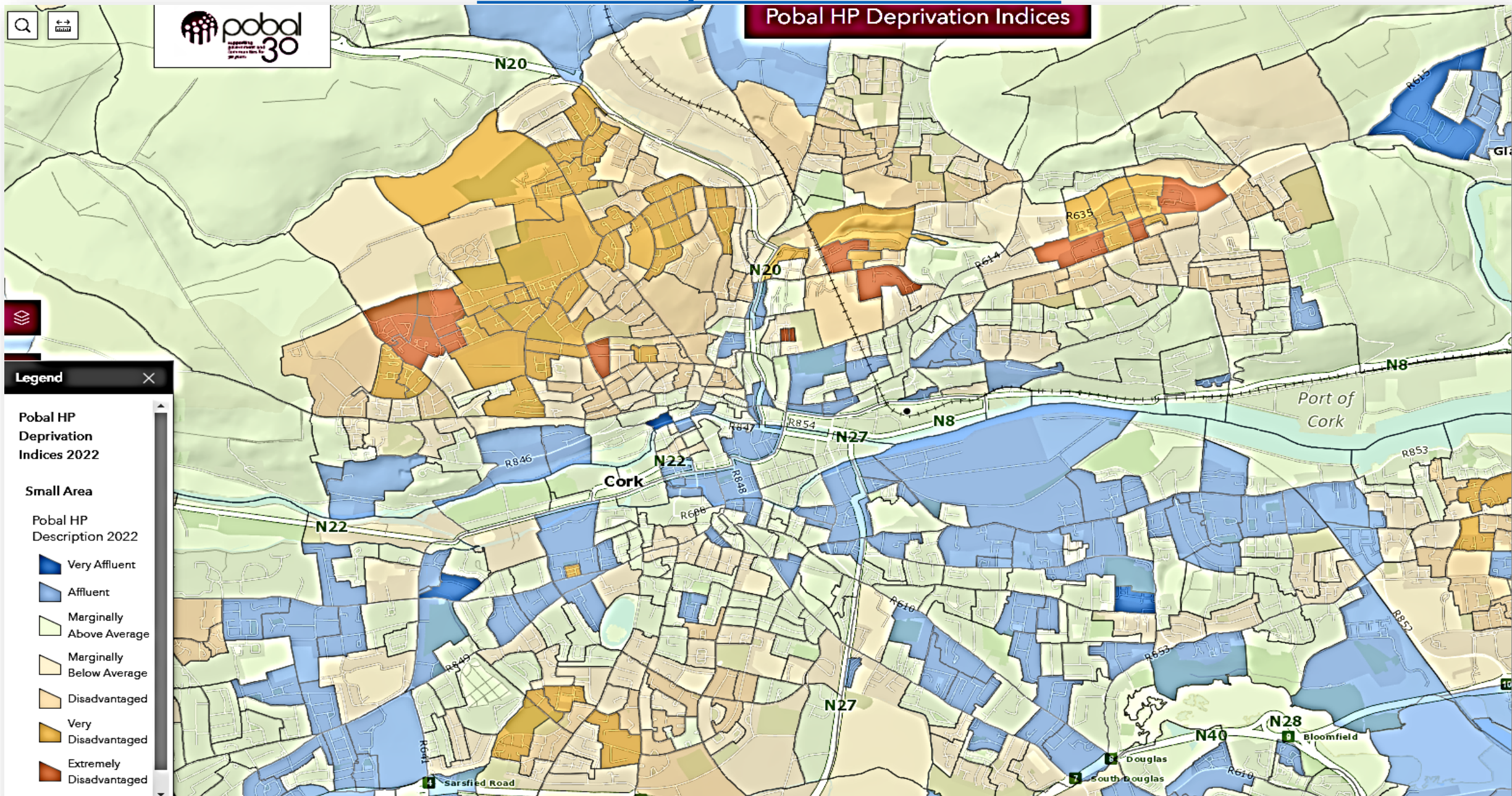
NARROWING the DISCONNECT

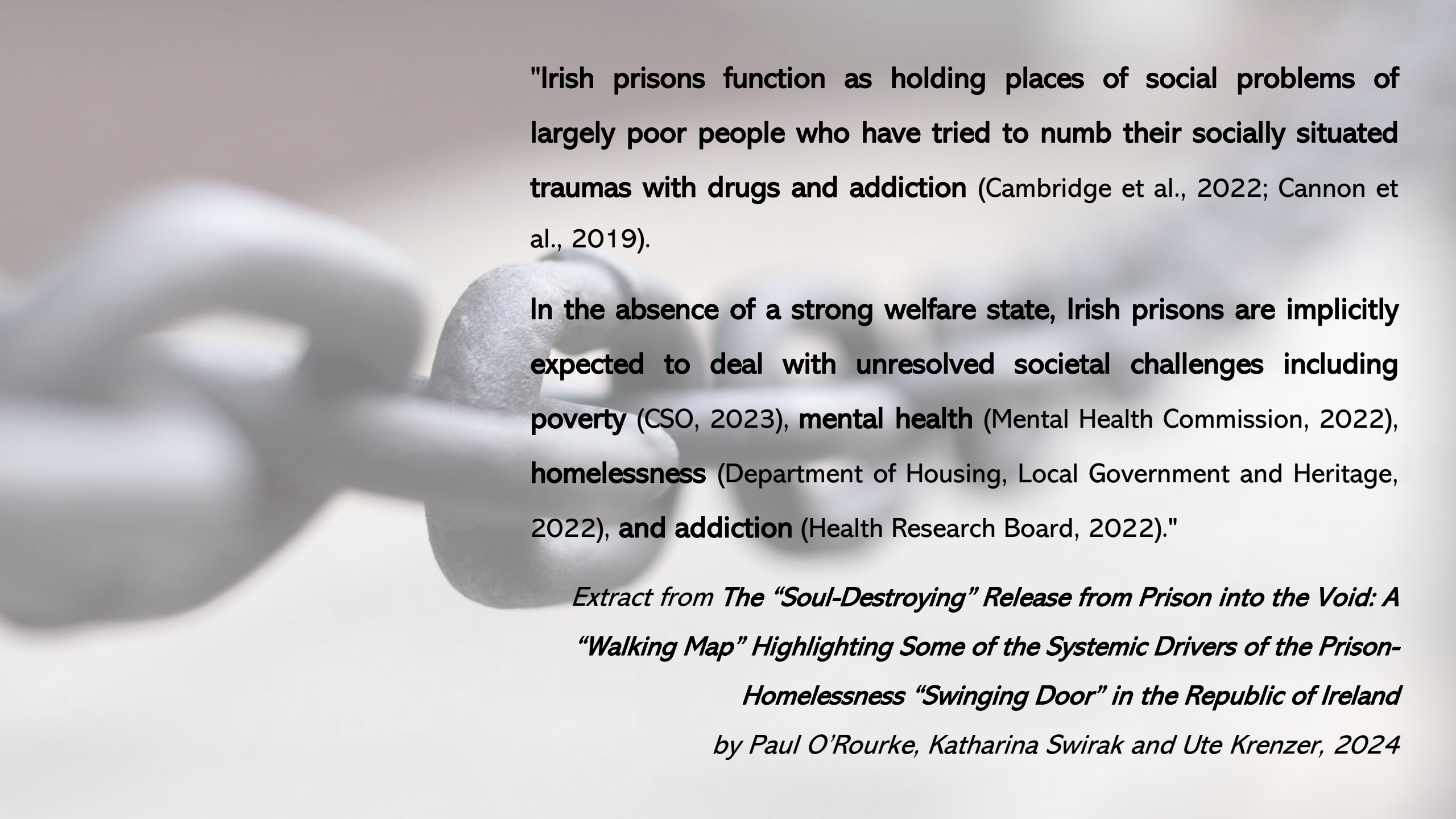
The Ethics of Supporting Desistance from Crime

Reimagining Prison and Punishment



Pobal HP Deprivation Indices 2022





"Irish prisons function as holding places of social problems of largely poor people who have tried to numb their socially situated traumas with drugs and addiction (Cambridge et al., 2022; Cannon et al., 2019).

In the absence of a strong welfare state, Irish prisons are implicitly expected to deal with unresolved societal challenges including poverty (CSO, 2023), mental health (Mental Health Commission, 2022), homelessness (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2022), and addiction (Health Research Board, 2022)."

*Extract from **The "Soul-Destroying" Release from Prison into the Void: A "Walking Map" Highlighting Some of the Systemic Drivers of the Prison-Homelessness "Swinging Door" in the Republic of Ireland***
by Paul O'Rourke, Katharina Swirak and Ute Krenzer, 2024



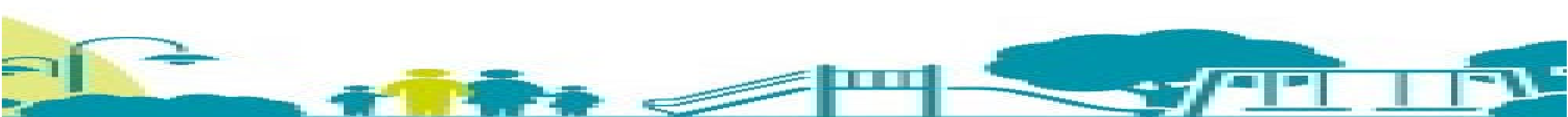
No child is born bad, we are all products of our environment, family, society.

No child wants to grow up to commit crime, be imprisoned and ostracised from society

*“if an offending lifestyle for some offers **purpose, inclusion, belonging**, how do we dismantle this and provide credible alternatives” (Weaver 2013)*

“Cork Alliance never closed the door on me ...they got me to get to know myself again, and to find myself... I was lost and broken”

“There isn’t a day that goes by that I don’t regret what I did. I am so sorry and remorseful.”



"I'm 31 and originally from the Northside ...grew up in a dysfunctional family. My mother and father were alcoholics and there was a lot of abuse in the home... Physical abuse and ..violence and so basically it went from there to ...when I was put into state residential care, I was in there from the age of 8 'til 18.

As a young fella I didn't feel I was wanted or loved? But for me, my comfort blanket and my safety thing in a kind of a way was drugs.

I fell into drugs at a very young age, my first ever roll up ...was hash, so it just kind of went from there"

(CleanSlateCork.com 2022)

"Addiction is not a choice anybody makes. It's not a moral failure; it's not an ethical lapse; it's not a weakness of character; it's not a failure of will, which is how society depicts addiction. Nor is it an inherited brain disease, which is how our medical tendency is to see it.

What it actually is: it's a response to human suffering."

Dr. Gabor Maté





“Because like to us... with us...when we go into court and all that, the Judge and all them, the Gardaí and that, is looking at you and saying, ‘sure they've no feelings for no one, they're not humans at all’, do you get what I saying to you. But deep down we have feeling... but deep down we have feelings, it's like you're putting up a wall, do you get what I'm saying?” (Connolly, 2013)

“I can tell her stuff I wouldn't even tell my own family... That's the level of trust you have here, ...and that's very important... to be able to open up and say things you wouldn't normally tell no one, stuff you keep bottled up... I think that's very important” (Seaman & Lynch, 2016)

“They help me with everything - especially the things that I need to learn to do for myself.

It’s a place of hope and support, to help me stay on the straight and narrow. It helps me to see the real side of life and take responsibility and not hide away. It helps me to have respect for people and see their good sides, and to earn an honest living for myself. The counselling helps get a better understanding of myself and others, and to cope better.”

"It's probably the way families should be. Maybe that's why I linked it with family because maybe that's the way I wish family were with me like, accepting and... glad to see you“ (Seaman & Lynch, 2016)





“when I was talking with one of the staff from the Alliance, I asked her what was there for me when I get out? I said to her when I get out, I am going straight to the bookies, and what money is left I will go and get some drink, she said to call into the office when I get out. So, I got a couple of weeks TR, got two bottles of cider, went to the bookies and got drunk, next day I picked up the phone, and said I am going back to the same way as before I went in. They told me to come straight in. From that day on, I have not looked back, because I took full advantage of the services that they were giving me”.

(Cambridge, 2019)

The Desistance Journey: Into Recovery and Out of Chaos

Cambridge, G., Lynch, O., & Windle, J. (2022)

Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature Switzerland AG

Our Responsibility is to form a collaborative partnership where

Connect

we have the responsibility to stay connected and nurture healthy relationships that are safe, accepting and caring, **while not accepting harms done or colluding with destructive behaviour.**

Accept

we have the responsibility of accepting people where they are at and working at their pace – slips, falls and all – **while not pushing or pulling them as ‘we know best’.**

Someone of worth

we have the responsibility of letting people show and explore their inherent goodness and that they are someone of worth, with the power and responsibility to make good choices and to cope peacefully with frustration and conflict, **while leaving responsibility, power and autonomy to make it happen with the person themselves.**

Consistent

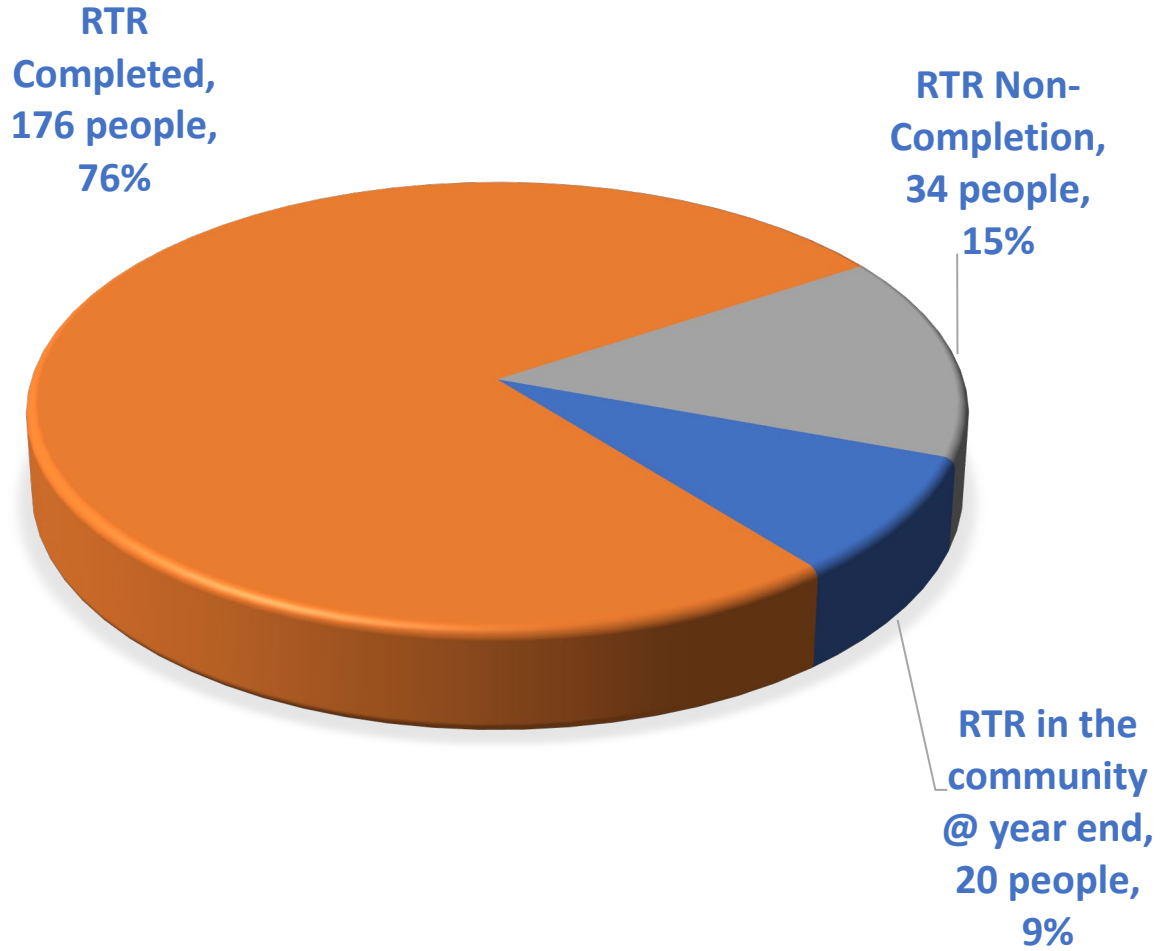
we have the responsibility of consistently being there to enable and support change **while leaving the responsibility, power and autonomy to make it happen with the person themselves**

The Role of the Cork Alliance

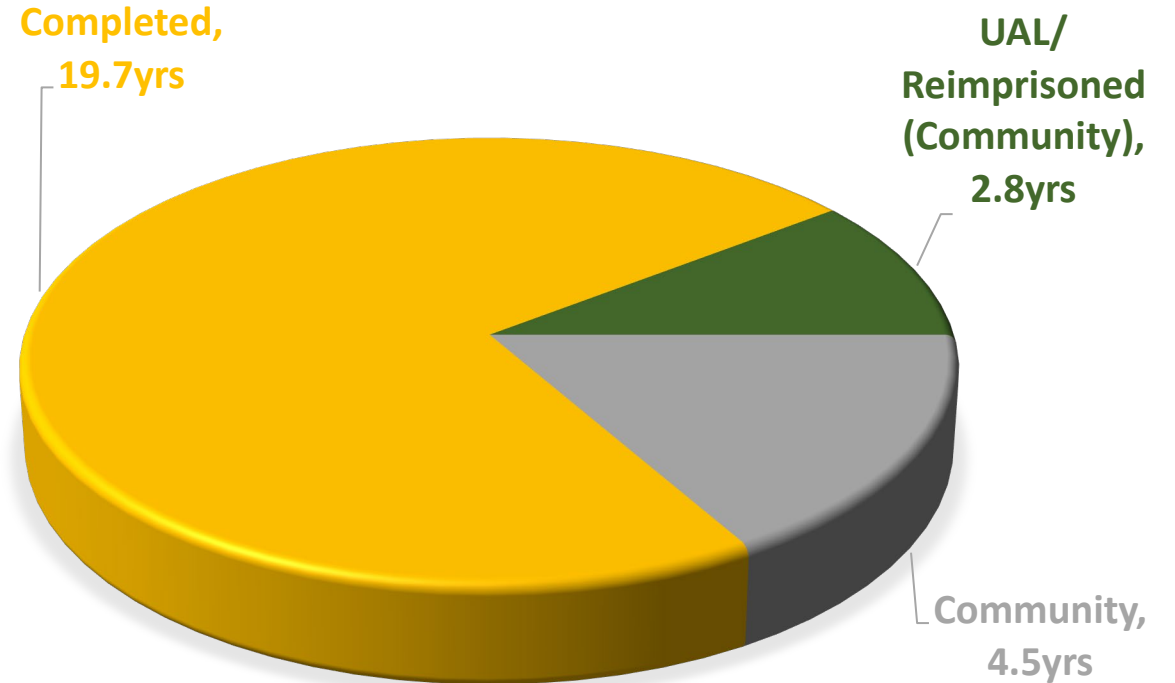


“...a safe place to be able to explore who I am, in this new scary world I find myself in”

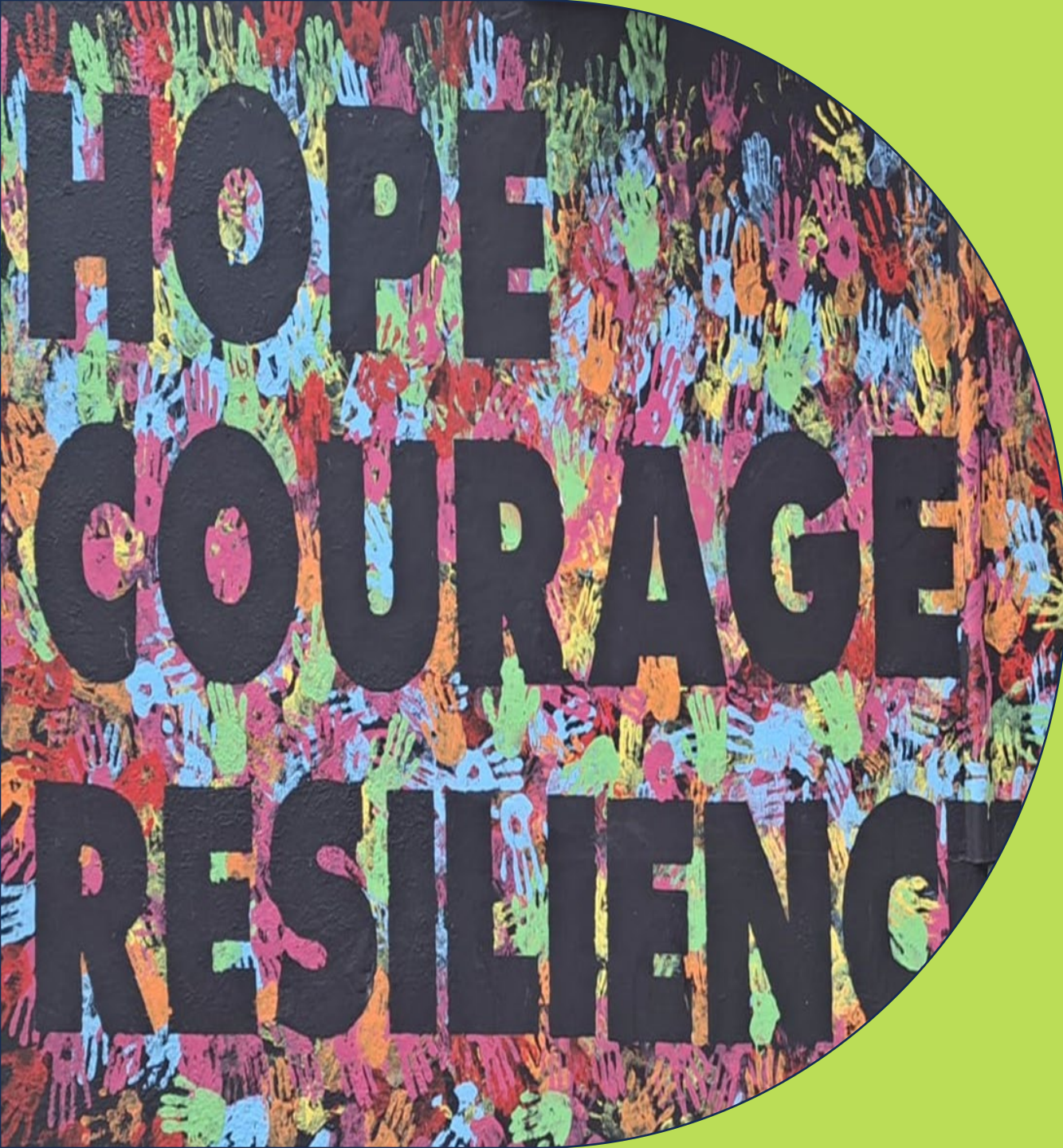
**COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEME (CSS)
2023 ANALYSIS OF SENTENCES SERVED IN THE COMMUNITY**



**COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEME (CSS)
2023 ANALYSIS OF TIME SERVED IN THE COMMUNITY**



9,830 days or 27 years served in the community rather than prison



Even though there's no guards on the door or security, I just knew that even people when they did come in here, the attitude was gone...

When you're on the streets... you're full of ... toughness..., but I felt.. I seen it myself.. people that I would have known on the streets, but then I seen a different side of them when we were all in here (Cork Alliance).

Because I suppose there is a different side to everyone, and on the streets, you have to be a different person,

then when you're in Cork Alliance it's like... it's just so relaxing and at peace I suppose“

(Seaman & Lynch, 2016)

'When I picked up the phone to see if I could link in... I was in a place in my life where I was feeling lost, alone and very unsure on how I could move from a life of addiction into recovery and trying to better myself. I'll never forget that first meeting... trying to explain... that I really wanted to go back to education and try to start doing some work on myself through therapy... when she smiled and said we can help you... and showed confidence in me... It honestly felt like a warm hug – that I didn't have to walk this road on my own.

I'm now a few months down the road and everything we spoke of in that first meeting I have received and so much more.'





“this work is critical, and the benefit of your work cannot be overestimated, and it will not just last for a day, it is something that will endure, and it is a crucial contribution, a building block, towards building the ethical society in which we all want to share, in all our imperfections and the versions of our wounded selves.”

President Michael D. Higgins, (2016)

A word cloud with the word "hope" as the largest and most central element. Other words are arranged around it in various sizes and colors (green, blue, purple).

opportunities
grow
purpose
open up
learn
honesty
family
happiness
understanding
move forward
kindness
confidence
trust
empowered
peace of mind
awareness
support
gratitude
connection
repair
change
believe
recovery
worth
change
safety

