

Empowering you to live drug-free

# What you need to know about Soilse

## Soilse

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# Soilse

This booklet is written in plain English. It tells you what we do in Soilse and how we can help you. Please read it and keep it to refer to during your time at Soilse.

<b>Referral</b>	Connecting you with another service
<b>Rehabilitation</b>	Helping you to return to a normal life
<b>Relapse prevention</b>	Developing ways to stop you going back to using drugs
<b>Return to Learning course</b>	A Soilse programme to help you prepare for college or further education. It deals with research and study skills, essay-writing and preparation for exams
<b>Session or group session</b>	Working with others on a particular topic, for example relapse prevention or personal development
<b>Stable</b>	Taking <i>only</i> medication prescribed by a doctor. (In Soilse, ‘stable’ also means no alcohol or cannabis)
<b>Support network</b>	People whom you can call on for help during your recovery
<b>Treatment</b>	Addiction treatment, usually in a residential centre

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## **About Soilse**

Soilse provides an Addiction Rehabilitation, Education and Career Guidance Service for people at various stages of recovery from addiction.

Soilse was set up in 1992 to help people who were addicted to heroin and other drugs to rebuild their lives. Today we work with people addicted to a variety of substances including cocaine, hash, alcohol and benzodiazepines ('pills', 'benzos').

We are based in Dublin's north inner city and are part of the HSE.

## **Our mission**

To provide a comprehensive and holistic rehabilitation service which will empower the recovering addict, facilitating his or her growth and development towards a drug free and non-dependent lifestyle.

## **FETAC**

Further Education and Training Awards Council – the organisation which recognises the learning you have achieved

## **FETAC Award**

The certificate you receive from FETAC to show your achievements in a particular area, for example computers

## **Further education**

Education at college level

## **Health & Safety**

Making sure that the health and safety of participants, facilitators, staff, visitors and contractors is a priority for everyone

## **Holistic**

Looking at the 'whole' rather than the parts. For example, Soilse offers a holistic service which looks at all the ways in which addiction affects you (health, family, accommodation, criminal justice, and so on)

## **Illegal drugs**

'Street' drugs such as heroin, cocaine and cannabis

## **Impulsive behaviour**

Doing things without thinking about the consequences

## **Independence from drugs**

Living your life without needing to take drugs

## **Lifestyle changes**

Changing the way you live, for example stopping smoking, eating healthier food and exercising

## **Literacy**

Being able to read and write

## **Addiction and Soilse**

Addiction is not just about taking drugs. It affects all parts of your life. It also affects your children, family, friends and the wider community.

At Soilse, you will have an ideal opportunity, in a supportive environment, to examine the areas of your life that have been affected by your addiction. This may involve looking at impulsive behaviour, negative thinking, anger management, poor problem-solving, lack of confidence, poor self-image and family relationships.

Taking part in the Soilse programme will help you to build a strong foundation, develop a good support network and put a recovery plan in place.

Recovery from addiction takes time and you will have many obstacles to overcome. At Soilse, we will help you to develop the skills to overcome these obstacles and to move to a drug-free, independent lifestyle.

Soilse is a recovery programme where addressing your addiction is our priority. While in our recovery programme, you will also benefit from educational opportunities.

### **Detox / detoxing / detoxification**

Withdrawing from the chemical effects of drugs or alcohol

### **Drug-free**

Not taking any drugs or alcohol

### **Educational support**

Help with study skills and writing essays to prepare you for college

### **Empowerment**

Helping you to understand and act upon your rights and responsibilities

### **Environment**

The physical, social, biological, cultural and political conditions which surround you and which affect the way you live

### **Equality**

Fairness – recognising that everyone, no matter what their age, sex, religion, race or background, is entitled to the same rights

### **Evaluation**

Looking at what has been done and how it could be improved

### **Facilitators**

People who help groups to work together effectively. In Soilse, facilitators work in specialist areas such as personal development, computers or art

### **Fellowships**

Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Gamblers Anonymous (GA) – support groups for those recovering from addiction

## What does Soilse do?

We provide a rehabilitation service for people at various stages of recovery from addiction. Our holistic service includes:

- Recovery group sessions;
- Talks on addiction and how it affects you;
- Individual care planning to help you find solutions to problems, plan for the future and deal with obstacles in your recovery;
- Referral to other agencies and services which may be able to help to you;
- Literacy support, if you need it;
- Opportunities to broaden your knowledge and develop your skills (with a FETAC certificate to show your achievements);
- Career guidance to help you find the college course or job that's right for you;
- Ongoing educational support if you progress to further education or training;
- Aftercare to support your recovery.

Our goal is to support you to make the lifestyle changes you need to recover.

## Some words explained

<b>Addiction</b>	Psychological and physical dependence on a substance or type of behaviour
<b>Addiction education</b>	Exploring the reasons for your addiction
<b>Aftercare</b>	Ongoing support after you leave Soilse
<b>Anger management</b>	Learning to control your temper
<b>Anti-social behaviour</b>	Acting in a way which harasses, alarms or distresses people
<b>Assessment</b>	Gathering and evaluating information about you
<b>Care planning</b>	A written action plan that deals with your specific needs or problems
<b>Career guidance</b>	Helping you to explore your skills, interests and career options and develop a career plan
<b>Community</b>	A group living in a particular area or sharing a particular interest
<b>Confidentiality</b>	Not sharing personal information with others without permission
<b>Counselling</b>	One-to-one counselling or group work where you look at issues of concern to you
<b>Dependency</b>	Relying on or being controlled by a substance or person

## Which Soilse programme is best for you?

We have two day programmes for people at different stages of recovery. One is based in Henrietta Place, the other in Green Street.

**Q: What happens if I have problems with reading or writing?**

A: We will assess your literacy needs and arrange literacy tuition for you.

**Q: Where do I go when I finish in Soilse?**

A: That's up to you. If you're on our Henrietta Place programme, you may decide to go to a residential detox or treatment centre and then come back to Soilse Green Street. If you're already in Soilse Green Street, you'll spend your final month working on a plan for when you leave Soilse. Whatever you decide, we'll support you.

**Do I get any support after I leave Soilse?**

A: Aftercare is available with your key worker on a one-to-one basis by appointment. You can also link in with our career guidance counsellor.

**Q: On what grounds could I lose my place in Soilse?**

A: If you breach any of the Soilse rules, your place in Soilse may be withdrawn. The reason for the withdrawal of your place will be explained by your key worker.

**Q: Can I appeal the withdrawal of my place?**

A: You have the right to appeal. Your appeal must be in writing and must deal with the specific reasons that your place was withdrawn. You must send the appeal to Soilse's Head of Services who will investigate the matter and respond to you promptly in writing.

## Henrietta Place programme

This programme will help if you are:

- stable on prescribed methadone;
- thinking about detoxing; or
- have already been through a detox programme and want to go on to treatment.

Our Henrietta Place programme has 3 phases:

- 1. Pre-entry process.** You'll start off by coming in for an assessment and induction. To move into the full-time group, you must have no non-prescribed drugs in your urine.
- 2. Support intervention.** If you live in our catchment area, we will see you once a week and support you to get drugs (legal and illegal) out of your system.
- 3. Full-time.** This stage will help you to prepare for detox, residential treatment or whatever other option you feel is right for you. It runs 4 days a week (subject to review) and includes:
  - Addiction education, relapse prevention, recovery group work, care planning
  - Personal development, literacy, health and fitness, drama, art, computers, social analysis
  - Career guidance

## Your questions answered

**Q: What do I do if I have a problem with someone in my group?**

A: Talk to the person and try to resolve the issue. If that doesn't work, talk to your key worker.

**Q: What if I have a problem with my key worker?**

A: Try and talk about it with your key worker. If this doesn't solve the problem, you can ask for a facilitator or Soilse's Head of Services to look into the issue.

**Q: Can I drink alcohol (or take cannabis) while on the Soile programme?**

A: No. Drinking alcohol significantly increases your chances of a relapse onto opiates. Alcohol makes hepatitis C worse and heightens your risk of developing cirrhosis of the liver. Also, some people substitute one drug for another. For these reasons, drinking alcohol or taking cannabis is not allowed.

**Q: What happens if I lapse or use unprescribed drugs?**

A: Tell your key worker immediately.

**Q: What happens if I am sick?**

A: Phone your key worker before 10am. You may be asked to get a sick note from your doctor.

**Q: What happens if I miss a urine screen?**

A: Phone your key worker if you are late or have a problem. Where possible, we will make alternate arrangements.

**Q: What happens if I have holidays booked?**

- Preparation for follow-on detox, treatment or rehabilitation.

We will also work with your doctor and/or your counsellor to prepare you for detox or residential treatment.

This programme lasts about 6 months, depending on your needs.

### Green Street programme

If you have been through residential treatment and are drug-free, this programme will support you during the early stages of your recovery. It covers:

- Recovery education, relapse prevention, care planning
- Personal development and group work
- Communications and literacy
- Art, drama, woodwork and gym
- Career guidance
- Preparation for returning to learning, if that's what you choose to do.

Most of the work in Green Street is done in group sessions. This programme runs 4 days a week (subject to review) and lasts 6 months.

**Noel Murphy:** Noel is a key worker and is also in charge of the programme in Green Street.

**Patrick Bruce:** Patrick teaches maths.

**Sandra Burke:** Sandra leads the literacy integration team, edits Soilse’s documents, website and publicity material, and does workshops, presentations and research.

**Sinéad McNeary:** Sinéad is our second career guidance counsellor.

## **Are you eligible for Soilse?**

To join our drug-free programme in Green Street, you must be:

- aged 18 or over;
- motivated to change;
- willing and able to attend;
- drug-free; and
- have completed a residential treatment programme.

To join our prescribed medication and pre-treatment programme in Henrietta Place, you must be:

- aged 18 or over;
- motivated to change;
- willing and able to attend;
- not using illegal drugs or alcohol; and, in most cases
- on prescribed medication.

## **Financial support**

You will get a small, weekly allowance on top of your social welfare benefits.

## **Childcare**

Unfortunately, Soilse cannot offer support with childcare. We have no crèche.

## **Lunch**

You will get a light lunch each day.

## Drug screening

Drug screening is an important part of drug treatment and rehabilitation. Many former Soilse participants have told us that regular drug screening helped them to stay either drug-free or stable on methadone.

Before you start the Soilse programme, we will ask you to sign a form consenting to drug screens. We will expect you to provide regular urine samples so that we can check your drug status.

## Confidentiality

We make every effort to protect the privacy of all participants. For this reason, we ask you to sign a confidentiality agreement stating that you will not disclose any information about another participant to anyone or any group outside of Soilse. If you break this confidentiality agreement, you will automatically lose your place in Soilse.

## Equality

We are committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive place for you in Soilse. It doesn't matter whether you are:

- male or female;
- young or older;
- gay or straight;
- married, living with someone or single;
- black, brown, white or a member of the Travelling community;

**Suzanne Elliott:** Receptionist. Suzanne job-shares with Elaine.

## Green Street

**Aisling Geoghegan:** Receptionist.

**Ann Stone:** Ann does personal development and communications and provides literacy support.

**Gerry McAleenan:** As Head of Services, Gerry is in charge of Soilse and directs and oversees all aspects of the programme.

**Irene Crawley:** Irene does personal development sessions.

**Jed Murray:** Jed is a professional actor and does drama sessions in both buildings.

**Joyce Gough:** Joyce assesses each participant's literacy needs and provides literacy support sessions. She also oversees the FETAC learning process.

**Julie Fitzsimons:** Julie helps administer the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) programme.

**Julie Keating:** Julie is a career guidance counsellor.

**May Boland:** Cook.

**Morgan Lucey:** Morgan is a key worker.

**Natalie Hefferon:** Natalie is a key worker.

## **Soilse staff**

### **Henrietta Place**

**Catriona Cuddy:** Catriona does computer training in Henrietta Place for participants from both buildings.

**Darren Flood.** Darren is a support worker. He oversees and supports those with severe drug problems who want to access recovery. He also liaises with detox and treatment centres.

**David O'Brien:** Dave is a key worker and is in charge of the programme in Henrietta Place.

**Elaine Hilliard:** Receptionist. Elaine job-shares with Suzanne.

**Jed Murray:** Jed is a professional actor and does drama sessions in both buildings.

**Liz Walsh:** Liz is an artist and works with participants in both buildings.

**Mark McManus:** Mark does woodwork with groups in both buildings.

**Sonya Dillon.** Sonya is a key worker and represents Soilse on community networks.

**Stephen McGrane:** Stephen is a key worker and is also responsible for customer services.

- caring for children;
- living with a disability;
- with or without religious beliefs.

### **What is your recovery care plan?**

Recovery care planning is a central part of the Soilse programme. It is a way of planning how to care for yourself and deal with any obstacles you may encounter in your recovery. As addiction affects everyone differently, your care plan will be personal and specific to you.

We recognise that drug addiction affects every part of your life such as your health, family, education and work. Your care plan will help you to identify which areas in your life need attention and to put together an action plan to reach your recovery goals. It is a practical way to identify hurdles and find solutions to the obstacles you encounter.

Your key worker can help with any questions you may have about care planning.

### **Detox and treatment**

If you are in our Henrietta Place programme, are stable on methadone and want to detox, talk to your key worker about detox and treatment options that may be available to you.

Soilse has partnerships with several detox and treatment centres and we may be able to arrange a placement for you in one of these centres. They include: the Peter McVerry Trust Community Detox (the Lantern), Beaumont Hospital, Cuan

Dara, Keltoi, the Rutland Centre, High Park (Merchants Quay Ireland), Toranfield House and Cuan Mhuire.

We will stay in contact with you during detox and treatment and arrange for you to return to Soilse's drug-free programme after treatment, if that is what you want.

### **Education and Soilse**

Education forms a large part of the Soilse programme and you will have the opportunity to gain FETAC awards. Don't worry. Education in Soilse is not like school. Soilse takes an adult education approach to recovery and rehabilitation.

Adult education involves reflecting critically on your life, your needs and your experiences, and exploring new ways of looking at the world and your place within it.

Adult educators are not teachers but facilitators. Their role is to create a safe place so that you feel comfortable in expressing your opinions, taking part in discussions and debates, and exploring the possibilities that new ideas and new ways of thinking can bring.

In some ways, the adult education approach is similar to the therapeutic approach you will be familiar with if you have been in detox or treatment. Both approaches are concerned with helping you to bring about change in your life.

and community meetings. Your feedback will help us to improve the quality of the programme for participants now and in the future.

### **After Soilse – where to next?**

This will be different for everyone. For instance, if you're in the Henrietta Place programme, you may decide to detox or go to residential treatment. We'll support you whichever option you choose.

If you're in our Green Street programme, you'll spend your last month in Soilse working closely with our career guidance counsellor to put a structure in place for when you leave. This may be further education, training or a job.

Your priority upon leaving Soilse, however, will be to prevent yourself relapsing. For this reason, you will spend a lot of time working on recovery education and relapse prevention.

## Your personal records

You have the right to see any personal information that Soilse holds about you. We support this right and will do our best to make the information available to you in a supportive way.

If you would like to see our records about you, please ask your key worker. He or she will arrange a time with you to review the information and to answer any questions you may have.

After you leave Soilse, you still have the right to see your records. In these cases, we will ask you to:

- write to Soilse’s Head of Services to ask for access to your records;
- tell us when you attended Soilse so that we can find your records;
- arrange a time to come into Soilse to review your records in a supportive setting;
- provide identification if you are unable to come into Soilse so that we can be sure your information is not given to anyone else.

## Your opinions, suggestions and complaints

We try to provide a high-quality service in a professional and courteous way. To help us do our job well, we need to hear from you about the service we provide. If you are unhappy about any aspect of the Soilse service, please tell your key worker or any member of staff. We will do our best to solve any problem immediately.

During your time at Soilse, we will also ask you regularly for your feedback on the service. We will do this through evaluation groups, satisfaction questionnaires, a newsletter

## Literacy

We assess every participant’s reading, writing and maths and, if you need help, we can offer one-to-one reading and writing support, spelling groups, maths sessions and, if you need it, referral to specialist support services.

### FETAC in Soilse

FETAC is the national awarding body for further education and training in Ireland. It gives people the opportunity to gain recognition for learning that has taken place in education and training centres, in the workplace and in the community. Soilse is a registered FETAC Centre. As a Soilse participant, you will have the opportunity to attain FETAC awards at Levels 3 and 4.

During your time in Soilse, you will work on all aspects of your recovery and, at the same time, work on achieving your FETAC certification.

Our FETAC programme includes a range of modules. You will receive a minor FETAC award for each module that you successfully complete. Over time, you can build these minor awards towards a major FETAC award at Level 3. The modules include:

- **Communications** – this covers personal development, media studies, reading, formal and informal writing, and information technology.
- **Personal and interpersonal skills** – here you’ll learn about self-awareness, decision-making and assertiveness.

- **Computers** – gain basic and more advanced computer skills including word-processing.
- **Art, Design and Craft** – use ink, pencil, pastel, wood, clay, plaster and mosaic to learn about drawing, colour and perspective.
- **Drama** – boost your confidence and explore personal and social issues through improvisation, acting out simple scenes, exploring movement and working as part of a team. Some people find drama daunting when they first try it but it's one of the most exciting and fun modules in Soilse.
- **Preparation for Work** – explore your career options, develop a career plan and put that plan into action with the help of a career guidance counsellor. Career guidance can help you to become aware of your skills, abilities and work interests.
- **Health and fitness** – improve your health and fitness through exercise, diet, stress release and your personal training plan.
- **Mathematics** – make up for any maths you missed at school with this friendly, helpful, adult approach to mathematics. You will need maths to get a major FETAC award.

## Lapses and relapse

If you use drugs, alcohol or medication that has not been prescribed by a doctor, or if you have a positive drug screen, we will suspend your place in Soilse. While you are suspended, you will work closely with your key worker with a view to returning to your group. However, before you can return, you must be able to give a negative drug screen.

**Remember that if you use drugs after you have been drug-free for a while, your tolerance will be lower and you are much more likely to overdose and, possibly, die.**

## Withdrawal of your place

Your place in Soilse may be withdrawn if you breach any of our house rules. Your key worker will explain the reason for the withdrawal of your place.

## Appealing the withdrawal of your place

You have the right to appeal a decision to withdraw your place in Soilse. To do this, you should write to Soilse's Head of Service and ask for a meeting to discuss why your place was withdrawn. You have the right to bring someone with you to the meeting to support you or to speak on your behalf. Soilse's Head of Services will investigate your concerns and write and tell you the outcome of the appeal.

11. Housekeeping – we expect you to help keep the buildings, especially the kitchen and tea-room, clean and tidy.

## Health and safety

You are responsible for your health and safety while you are in Soilse. You also have a legal responsibility not to do anything that would harm yourself, other participants, staff or facilitators. Your key worker will explain Soilse’s rules about health, safety and fire prevention. Here are the highlights.

- Take care of your own safety and don’t do anything that would harm yourself or others.
- Report accidents, damaged equipment or potential safety hazards immediately to your key worker or, if your key worker is not available, to another member of staff.
- Do not engage in horseplay or ‘messing’ or do anything that might harm your own or anybody else’s safety, health or welfare.
- Use equipment only if you have been trained to use it.
- Wear protective clothing if you have been told to do so by a staff member or facilitator.
- Obey fire drills and fire alarms and follow directions of staff.

## Timetables

Your timetable will be different depending on whether you are in a pre-entry or a full-time group. The examples below show how you might spend your day in Soilse.

### Typical Green Street programme

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Check in 10:00 – 10:30 Art 10:30 – 12:30	Recovery education 10:00 – 12:00	Care planning appointments	Communications Group 10:00 – 12:00 12:15 – 1:15	Career guidance 10:00 – 11:00 Maths 11:00 – 12:00
<b>Lunch</b> 12:30 – 1:15	<b>Lunch</b> 12:00 – 12:45		<b>Lunch</b> 1:15 – 2:15	<b>Lunch</b> 12:00 – 12:45
Drug screens Computers 1:15 – 3:15 Recovery ed 3:30 – 4:30	Drama 12:45 – 2:45 Group 3:00 – 4:00	Care planning appointments	Drug screens Personal development 2:15 – 4:15	Community meeting, weekend planning or speakers

### Typical Henrietta Place programme

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Health & fitness 11:00 – 1:00	Computers 11:00 – 1:00	Care planning appointments	Drama 11:00 – 1:00	Ecology 11:00 – 1:00
<b>Lunch</b> 1:00 – 2:00	<b>Lunch</b> 1:00 – 2:00		<b>Lunch</b> 1:00 – 2:00	<b>Lunch</b> 1:00 – 2:00
Drug screens Communications / literacy 2:00 – 4:00 Wind down 4:00 – 4:15	Addiction education 2:00 – 4:00 Wind down 4:00 – 4:15	Care planning appointments	Drug screens Art 2:00 – 4:00 Wind down 4:00 – 4:15	Holistics 1:30 – 3:30 Wind down 3:30 – 4:00pm

### **What is Soilse's success rate?**

Success can be judged on many levels. For some, it might mean arranging childcare, getting a medical card or welfare payment, or finding a suitable place to live. For others, it might be returning to learning or work. Unless you can address your addiction, however, these gains may not last. This is why we prefer to see participants become and remain drug free. At Soilse, we will provide the insight and support to help you achieve this.

You are more likely to stay drug-free if you:

- complete the Soilse programme;
- attend counselling;
- attend aftercare;
- take part in day programmes, education or work;
- attend fellowship meetings;
- stay away from alcohol;
- avoid re-offending;
- build new friendships and support networks; and
- find stable and suitable accommodation.

If you are on methadone, stabilising your drug use is crucial. If you then want to become drug free, your goal will be to detox and progress into our drug-free programme. To do this, you will need to:

- build routine and structure into your life;
- develop your self-esteem;
- find convincing reasons to change your lifestyle;
- engage positively with the Soilse programme; and
- move away from the 'methadone culture'.

It is our experience that people who invest time in the recovery process are the ones who will achieve lasting recovery.

### **Soilse house rules**

To keep Soilse a safe and healthy place for all participants and staff, we expect you to respect our house rules. Your key worker will explain these to you in detail when you start in Soilse and will ask you to sign a form to say that you will follow the rules. Here are some of the main points:

1. Signing in and out. You must sign in and out each time you enter or leave the building.
2. Smoking – smoking is forbidden within the building and immediately outside the building.
3. Mobile phones – you must switch off your mobile phone during sessions.
4. Cameras and camera phones – you may not photograph participants, staff, facilitators or visitors within the Soilse buildings.
5. Punctuality and attendance – we expect you to be on time for all sessions and appointments.
6. Confidentiality – we expect you to respect the confidentiality of other participants and not to talk about other participants outside Soilse.
7. Aggressive behaviour – we will not tolerate violent, aggressive or bullying behaviour towards staff, facilitators or other participants. If you engage in this behaviour, you may lose your place in Soilse.
8. Disrespect – we will not tolerate disrespect to staff, facilitators or other participants.
9. Drugs and alcohol – you may not take either alcohol or drugs (except medication prescribed by a doctor) while attending Soilse.
10. Drug screens – you must give urine samples for drug screening on request. A positive drug screen may result in a review of your place in Soilse.