

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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# OUR SERVICES



Prevention



Street  
Outreach



Social  
Housing



Family  
Support



Homeless  
Accommodation



Tenancy  
Sustainment  
Services



Recovery  
Services



Out-of-  
Hours



Advice &  
Information



# VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



Today, Thursday 10th of October is World Homeless Day and a fitting occasion to launch our 2023 Annual Report, which highlights the trends that emerged in the homeless landscape across Ireland and the growing number of people seeking and receiving support from NOVAS.

By the end of 2023 there were 13,318 people in emergency accommodation, 3,962 of whom were children; another year that heralded new records of homelessness across the state. The seemingly inexorable rise continued into 2024 with the most recent August figures standing at 14,486 in emergency accommodation, including 4,419 children. There were also many more households that experienced hidden homelessness during the twelve-month period, people leaning into friends and family, sofa surfing and sleeping on our streets. These people sit outside official homeless records.

NOVAS responded to the ongoing crisis in a compassionate, agile and multi-faceted way. We provided emergency accommodation for more than 1,000 unique individuals, long-term housing to more than 700 tenants, advice and information, family, outreach and tenancy sustainment support and a humanitarian response to those on the margins through our Street Outreach and Out-of-Hours services.

This report highlights the unprecedented growth of presentations to our Out-of-Hours service in Limerick during 2023, increasing from 1,130 to more than 2,800 over the twelve-month period. Most of these presentations were to McGarry House from 9pm to 9am each night and spiked in the latter half of the year. NOVAS Board of Directors is deeply concerned about this trend. We are particularly concerned for the people that present in the middle of the night, with nowhere else to go. While our staff do amazing work supporting this very vulnerable cohort through the provision of warm beverages, food and sleeping bags, it is not enough. Our response to people who are rough sleeping needs to be more ambitious. With our partners in government, we must find lasting solutions for this group and ensure that no one has to sleep rough.

We hear the shocking statistics relating to rising homeless figures every month. Beyond these, are people who are deeply traumatised by their experiences. Individuals and families with unique stories and immeasurable resilience and fortitude. People that have hope for a future with secure and appropriate housing.



**This report highlights the unprecedented growth of presentations to our Out-of-Hours service in Limerick during 2023, increasing from 1,130 to more than 2,800 over the twelve-month period. Most of these presentations were to McGarry House from 9pm to 9am each night and spiked in the latter half of the year. NOVAS Board of Directors is deeply concerned about this trend.**

At NOVAS, we also carry this hope for all the clients we serve. We believe it is achievable, through a revision of existing housing targets, coupled with an innovative acceleration of social, affordable and cost rental housing.

Ireland has signed up to the Lisbon Declaration to end homelessness by 2030. We are committed to playing our part in realising this ambition. Last year, NOVAS created tenancies for 80 households, with 129 people housed. In 2024, we would like to exceed this. Together, with our partners in government, we can strive to end homelessness. The crisis is solvable. Meanwhile, we must maintain the standards in our homeless services and recognise the complex needs of the people we serve.

While we are immensely grateful to our statutory partners at local and national level for their continued support and trust in us, we are deeply concerned about the future of the sector. Homeless services must be properly funded. There must be a recognition of historical budget deficits, rising costs of service delivery and appropriate remuneration of our educated and experienced workforce. One of the greatest challenges facing the sector is the recruitment and retention of staff. The reality is frontline staff can do similar work in statutory services with higher salaries and more attractive terms and conditions. The frontline work of our amazing staff teams must be financially recognised and our services must be financially stable. We need multi-annual budgets that allow us to plan and forecast. We urge government to make this a reality.

In reference to our frontline staff teams, words cannot adequately portray the amazing work you do, 365 days a year and 24 hours each day. You deliver services with the values of compassion, grace and commitment and you support our tenants and clients through the lens of trauma informed practice. The same is true for our wonderful and irreplaceable volunteer team. Our management team led by our CEO consistently provide the framework, organisation and leadership which delivers on these values. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish to extend our warmest thanks to you all.

Thank you.

**MICHAEL O'CONNELL**  
Chairperson

# A WORD FROM OUR CEO



Welcome to NOVAS 2023 Annual Report. I hope that you find it insightful and inspiring, as well as a stark reminder of the collective work we need to do to address the pervasive homeless crisis. Last year was our busiest. NOVAS supported more people than ever before and yet it was not enough. We could not meet the demand of people seeking support, emergency accommodation and long-term housing.

This report illustrates the work we did throughout the year to address the needs of people who are homeless, in addiction and living on the margins of society through the Pillars of Housing, Health and Recovery. We supported almost 6,400 people through the provision of supported temporary accommodation, tenancy sustainment, treatment and recovery and street outreach. The report provides intuitive data on the number of people supported, their presenting needs and the positive impact engagement had on their lives. However, it is just a snapshot of the work we completed throughout the year and there are many more themes and stories worthy of inclusion. Important work such as realising the youth homelessness strategy and striving to provide post-treatment support and housing to prevent people returning to homelessness.

It is the vision of NOVAS that 'everyone has their own sustainable home'. To this end, throughout the year we continued to scale our housing department to meet

the growing demand for social housing nationally. Last year we provided 80 tenancies to 129 tenants. This was the largest number of tenancies in a single calendar year provided by NOVAS and we will build on this in 2024, with a continued emphasis of creating pathways from homelessness for single adults.

While the statistics on our work are illuminating, the human stories are empowering and inspire us as an organisation to do more for the people trapped in the cycle of homelessness and disadvantage, through the provision of services, research and advocacy work. This report is peppered with such stories that highlight the human impact of homelessness, the trauma it yields and the power of recovery and housing. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our clients who generously shared their personal stories for this report, which enables us to understand the impact of homelessness and how we can respond and support people in the best ways possible.



I am very proud to lead an organisation that delivers its services through the lens of Trauma Informed Practice (TIP). Following this model since 2018, we seek to place client behaviours in the context of their experiences. Last year we held our first National TIP Day across our services and housing teams, exploring our client's understanding of trauma and how best to respond to it.

I am very proud to lead an organisation that delivers its services through the lens of Trauma Informed Practice (TIP). Following this model since 2018, we seek to place client behaviours in the context of their experiences. Last year we held our first National TIP Day across our services and housing teams, exploring our client's understanding of trauma and how best to respond to it. From this, we are currently engaging in an extensive piece of work with our clients and tenants to create a Charter of Rights for everyone who uses our services. This helps us to live our organisational values and the values of Trauma Informed Practice.

We are immensely grateful to have been expertly guided by our voluntary Board of Directors last year. During 2023,

they gave of their time, expertise and guidance with compassion and generosity, to ensure we remained focused on our strategic objectives. Their unwavering commitment enabled us to deliver our services and housing in a transparent and client and tenant-centred way, with ongoing oversight on good governance and financial prudence. We are indebted to them for their leadership.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our funders in government; the HSE, the Department of Housing, the local authorities in the areas we work and Tusla. Thank you for enabling us to serve the people that need us the most. I would also like to extend my warmest thanks to all our donors and those that arrange and participate in fundraising events for us. On behalf of our clients and tenants we are eternally grateful.

To our wonderful staff that support our clients every day and night, I wish to extend a heartfelt thanks and gratitude for the work you do and the values and culture you espouse. You inform and guide the decision making of our leadership team which enables us to drive our organisation forward. And to our volunteers, who give so generously of their time and compassion. Without you, there would be no Street Outreach.

Finally, I wish to thank our clients and tenants who entrust their care to us. We are honoured to serve you.

**UNA DEASY**  
CEO

# TIMELINE 2002-2023

2002 &gt;

**BRIDGELAND HOUSE:** NOVAS opens its first service, a temporary supported direct access homeless accommodation service for men and women in Limerick City.

2003 &gt;

**ARLINGTON LODGE:** Kerry's only temporary supported low-threshold homeless accommodation.

**ST. PATRICK'S HILL:** Long-term supported group home for formerly homeless men in Limerick City.

2005 &gt;

**BELLEVUE HOUSE:** Long-term supported accommodation for unaccompanied minors entering the country based in Tallaght, Dublin 24.

**BROTHER RUSSELL HOUSE:** Provision of temporary and long-term supported accommodation for men in Limerick City, previously managed by the Alexian Brothers since 1978.

**INTENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE (IFS):** Preventative service working with families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Limerick City.

2006 &gt;

**KNOCKLEE HOUSE:** Temporary supported accommodation for individuals with medium-level support needs in Tralee, Co. Kerry.

**OUT OF HOURS SERVICE:** An out of hours service for people in Limerick City to access temporary and emergency accommodation.

**DIAL SERVICE:** Two year life-skills programme of supported accommodation and services to young adults leaving the care system.

2007 &gt;

**MOUNT BROWN:** Dublin's only low threshold dedicated female homeless service.

2008 &gt;

**PROSPECT HOUSE:** Temporary supported accommodation in single apartments for men and women requiring a low level of support in Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

2009 &gt;

**KILLEEN WOODS:** Long-term supported accommodation in Tralee, Co. Kerry.

**STREET OUTREACH:** Voluntary service providing meals for people in need of support in Limerick City seven nights a week.

**RESPITE HOUSE:** Caring for and improving the lives of the families of people with addiction throughout the Mid-West Region.

**MCGARRY HOUSE\*:** Provision of temporary supported accommodation for homeless men and women in Limerick City.

\*McGarry House replaced Bridgeland House in the provision of temporary supported accommodation for homeless men and women in Limerick City.

2011 &gt;

**OLD GOLF LINKS ROAD:** Long-term supported accommodation for older residents in peaceful one-floor setting in Tralee, Co. Kerry.

**MITCHEL STREET:** Provision of temporary supported accommodation and services for homeless men and women from North Tipperary.

2012 &gt;

**MID-WEST COMMUNITY DETOX:** Providing support and services to people wishing to detox from prescribed and nonprescribed medication in the Mid-West Region.

**TENANCY SUPPORT AND SUSTAINMENT SERVICE:** Securing accommodation and providing support for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in West Cork.

**MCGARRY HOUSE LONG-TERM SUPPORTED HOUSING:** 37 units of longterm supported housing in one, two and three-bed apartments.

2013 &gt;

**HOUSING FIRST LIMERICK:** Commencement of Housing First on a pilot basis in Limerick City, supported by a multidisciplinary team, managed by NOVAS.

**MILK MARKET LANE:** Long-term unit of supported accommodation in Tralee.

**RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT:** Inception of NOVAS' Research Department and roll out of its first project looking at overdose prevention in McGarry House.



2014 >

**HAARLEM COURT:** 8 two-bed apartment complex for families and individuals with special needs.

**BELLEVUE HOUSE:** Relocation and redevelopment of Bellevue Children's Home for unaccompanied minors and refugees.

**BROTHER RUSSELL HOUSE:** Redevelopment and extension of Brother Russell House to provide 33 units of longterm accommodation in Limerick.

**MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:** Development of an outreach mental health service under the auspice of Brother Russell House.

**THE ABIGAIL WOMEN'S CENTRE:** Relocation and redevelopment of our women's service (formerly Mount Brown) to accommodation up to 40 homeless women.

2015 >

**HOUSING FIRST:** Development of a new Housing First programme in collaboration with the Limerick Homeless Action Team.

**LONG-TERM APARTMENTS:** Procurement of four long-term apartments in Kerry for households with a housing need.

**FAMILY HOMES:** Procurement of eight family homes in Limerick for families experiencing homeless and engaging with the IFS.

2016 >

**TEMPORARY EMERGENCY PROVISION:** Emergency shelter-style accommodation for up to 20 individuals on a nightly basis.

**FAMILY HOMES:** Procurement of four family homes in Limerick for families experiencing homelessness and engaging with the IFS.

2017 >

**TEMPORARY EMERGENCY PROVISION**  
2: Additional, separate-site emergency accommodation for up to 10 individuals on a nightly basis.

**OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICES:** A new office/information centre in Co. Tipperary, supporting people in a preventative and resettlement capacity.

**SARSFIELD FAMILY HUB:** A hub for 12 small families experiencing homelessness and previously living in emergency accommodation.

**HOUSING FIRST KERRY:** Development of a new Housing First service in Kerry in collaboration with Kerry County Council and the HSE.

**LONG-TERM HOMES:** Procurement of 30 homes in Limerick, Tipperary, Kerry, Kildare and Dublin for households experiencing homelessness.

2018 >

**THE RATHMINES WOMEN'S SERVICE:** A dedicated female STA in Dublin for 21 women.

**THE SHANNON HOUSING PROJECT:** Community living for six adults with an intellectual disability, who were formerly homeless.

**FAMILY HOUSING FIRST:** Development of a Family Housing First Service in collaboration with the local authority & the HSE.

**LONG-TERM HOMES:** 34 new tenancies in 2018, housing 93 people

2019 >

**RATHGAR FAMILY HUB:** 10 bed family hub in Dublin 6, supporting families who were formerly living in hotel accommodation.

**SUPPORTED LIVING SERVICE, DUBLIN:** Dedicated service for a homeless woman with co-occurring mental health, intellectually disability and addiction issues.

**WHITESTOWN STA:** Eight unit STA for single adults and couples in north Dublin.

**INTENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT:** A family support service established in partnership with Fingal County Council, supporting families living in emergency accommodation to move to independent housing.

**ENNIS FAMILY HUB & OUTREACH**

**SUPPORT:** Five bed family hub in Co. Clare and family support for families living in emergency hotel accommodation.

**SOCIAL HOUSING:** Continued procurement of social housing in Munster and Dublin.

2020 >

**COCOONING SERVICE:** During the pandemic NOVAS established one cocooning service in Dublin.

**SOCIAL HOUSING:** Continued procurement of social housing in Munster and Dublin.

2021 >

**ABIGAIL WOMEN'S CENTRE:** Reconfiguration of The Abigail Women's Centre to separate site locations.

**SOCIAL HOUSING:** Continued procurement of social housing in Munster and Dublin.

2022 >

**SOCIAL HOUSING:** Continued procurement of social housing in Munster and Dublin.

2023 >

**KERRY DISABILITY OUTREACH SERVICE:** Outreach and tenancy sustainment support for people with a disability, at risk of homelessness.

**SOCIAL HOUSING:** 80 new tenancies with 129 tenants.

# MAP OF SERVICES

## LIMERICK

- 1 Street Outreach
- 2 McGarry House STA
- 3 Intensive Family Support Service
- 4 Brother Russell House
- 5 DIAL House
- 6 Mid-West Community Detox
- 7 Out-of-Hours Service
- 8 St. Patrick's Hill Disabilities Services
- 9 Long-Term Housing
- 10 Temporary Emergency Provision

## KERRY

- 11 Long-Term Housing
- 12 Knocklee House STA
- 13 Old Golf Links Road
- 14 Arlington Lodge STA
- 15 Family Support Service
- 16 Residential Disability Service

## CORK

- 17 West Cork Tenancy Sustainment Service

## TIPPERARY

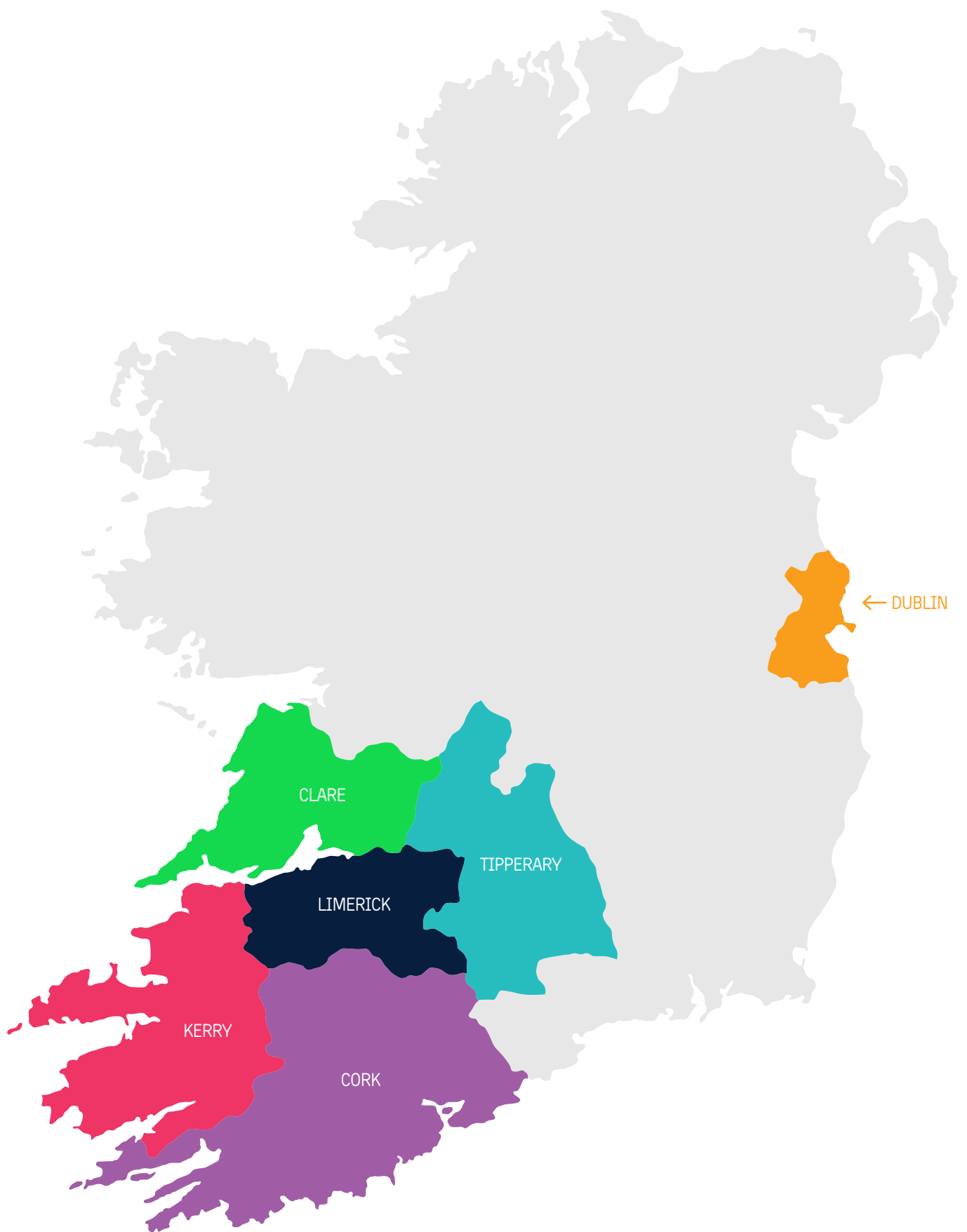
- 18 Respite House
- 19 Prospect House STA
- 20 Mitchel Street STA
- 21 Croke Street Outreach Support Service
- 22 Long-Term Housing

## DUBLIN

- 23 Rathmines Women's Centre
- 24 Bellevue House Children's Home
- 25 Long-Term Housing
- 26 Bella House Women's Service
- 27 Rathgar Women's Service
- 28 Whitestown STA
- 29 Whitestown Family Service

## CLARE

- 30 Clare Tenancy Sustainment
- 31 Ennis Family Hub



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MICHAEL O'CONNELL >  
Chairperson



< PAT CLAFFEY



< MARTINA MURPHY

TRACY LEONARD >



DIAN LOPOSSO >





# SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

**DONAL O'CARROLL >**  
Head of Finance



**JOHN ROGERS >**  
Head of Housing & Development



**< UNA BURNS**  
Head of Advocacy  
& Communications



**< DARREN CROWE**  
Head of Operations



**MARK VELLA >**  
Head of Quality, Risk  
& Compliance



**PAMELA GUNTER >**  
Head of Human  
Resources



**< JACKIE LEONARD**  
Head of Fundraising



## VISION

EVERYONE  
HAS THEIR OWN  
SUSTAINABLE  
HOME.

## MISSION STATEMENT

PROMOTING  
SOCIAL INCLUSION  
THROUGH  
HOUSING, HEALTH  
AND RECOVERY  
AND PROVIDING  
LASTING SOLUTIONS  
TO HOMELESSNESS.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To provide homes to people who are homeless.
- To support homeless people to have better health outcomes through interventions in drug use, mental health and disabilities.
- To provide recovery pathways for homeless people with enduring mental health issues.
- To empower and promote the independence of those who use our services.
- To treat all our clients with dignity and respect.
- To provide client-centred services, rooted in evidence, quality and good practice.
- To advocate on behalf of people who are homeless, at risk of being homeless, entrenched in addiction or those experiencing social marginalisation through a strengths-based approach.

## NOVAS' CORE VALUES

- EQUALITY
- DIVERSITY
- DIGNITY
- STRENGTHS-BASED
- RIGHTS-BASED

# NOVAS MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE 2024



**Pat Claffey**  
Board of Directors



**Dian Loposso**  
Board of Directors



**Michael O'Connell**  
Chairperson  
Board of Directors



**Una Deasy**  
Chief Executive Officer



**John Rogers**  
Head of Housing  
and Development



**Mark Vella**  
Head of Quality, Systems  
and Compliance



**Jackie Leonard**  
Head of Fundraising



**Donal O'Carroll**  
Head of Finance



**Una Burns**  
Head of Advocacy and  
Communications



**Noel Guerin**  
Senior Asset  
Manager



**Eavan Magner**  
Senior Tenants  
Service Manager



**Aoife McDarby**  
Individual Giving  
Manager



**Enda Clifford**  
Estate & Facilities  
Officer



**James Ledwith**  
Tenant Engagement  
Manager



**Pamela Dempsey**  
Housing Officer



**Elaine Phelan**  
Head Office  
Administrator



**David O'Connor**  
Housing Officer



**Deirdre O'Connor**  
Housing Officer



**Kathryn Dennehy**  
Assistant  
Accountant



**Chris O'Connor**  
Procurement  
Manager



**Philip Norden**  
Accountant



**Deirdre Kirwan**  
Deputy Manager  
Rathmines



**Grace Nwanze**  
Deputy Manager  
Rathgar





**Tracy Leonard**  
Board of Directors



**Martina Murphy**  
Board of Directors



**Darren Crowe**  
Head of Operations



**Pamela Gunter**  
Head of Human  
Resources



**Jennifer Doyle**  
Senior Residential  
Service Manager  
(East)



**Patrick Healy**  
Senior Disability  
& Young Persons  
Manager



**Billie Stoica**  
Senior Outreach  
Service Manager



**Monika Wachala**  
Senior Residential  
Service Manager  
(West)



**Julie McKenna**  
Senior Health &  
Recovery Manager



**Michelle Dillon**  
Group Services  
Manager  
Drumcondra



**Sam Rock**  
Deputy Manager  
Whitestown



**Kim Keogh**  
Services Manager  
Drumcondra



**Deborah Ryan**  
Services Manager  
Tipperary



**Niamh Hayes**  
Deputy Manager



**Maureen Dooley**  
Deputy Manager



**Jean Humphreys**  
Team Leader  
Bellevue House



**Joanne Conran**  
Team Leader  
Bellevue House



**Kirsty Cahill**  
Deputy Manager  
Brother Russell



**Roisin Enright**  
Teamleader  
Brother Russell



**Eugene Toner**  
Service Manager  
Brother Russell



**Elaine Howard**  
Service Manager  
McGarry House



**Nessan Quinlivan**  
Services Manager  
TEP



**Tom Cleary**  
Services Manager  
Clare



**Shauna Adams**  
Team Leader TEP



**Team Leader**  
Vacant



**Ellen Ryan**  
Practice Leader



**Kerry McNamara**  
Deputy Manager



**Brendan McKeon**  
Health & Safety  
Advisor



**Tracey McCarthy**  
HR Service  
Partner



**Deirdre Sheehan**  
HR  
Administrator



**Robert Radulescu**  
Service Manager  
Bellevue House



**Louise Creamer**  
Service Manager  
DIAL



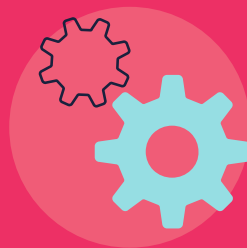
**Lorraine McCashin**  
Team Leader,  
Disability Services  
Midwest



**Tom O'Sullivan**  
Deputy Manager,  
Kerry Disability  
Services

# 2023 OUR IMPACT

Here is a snapshot of the work completed by NOVAS during 2023, highlighting the range of services and support provided to our clients.



LAST YEAR NOVAS  
WORKED WITH

**6,396**  
PEOPLE



AN INCREASE OF 5% FROM  
THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS  
AND AN INCREASE OF

**188%**  
IN 10 YEARS



IN 2023, NOVAS  
SUPPORTED

**1,200**  
CHILDREN  
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



**+25,000**  
MEALS

PROVIDED THROUGH  
STREET OUTREACH



**2,855**  
PRESENTATIONS  
TO NOVAS  
OUT-OF-HOURS SERVICE



**138,265**  
WARM MEALS

PROVIDED ACROSS OUR  
RESIDENTIAL SERVICES



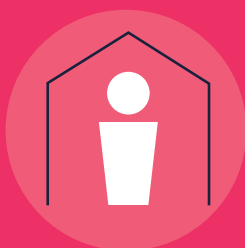
**1,120**  
PEOPLE

SUPPORTED WITH INFORMATION AND  
ADVICE THROUGH OUR HEAD OFFICE



**232**  
WOMEN

LIVED IN OUR FEMALE  
SERVICES IN DUBLIN



**70%**  
OF ROOMS  
IN EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION  
WERE SINGLE OCCUPANCY



**307** UNITS OF  
HOUSING WITH  
**399** ADULTS &  
**384** CHILDREN



**FIRST NATIONAL  
TRAUMA INFORMED  
PRACTICE DAY**  
ACROSS ALL NOVAS  
SERVICES

# 2023: A YEAR IN REVIEW

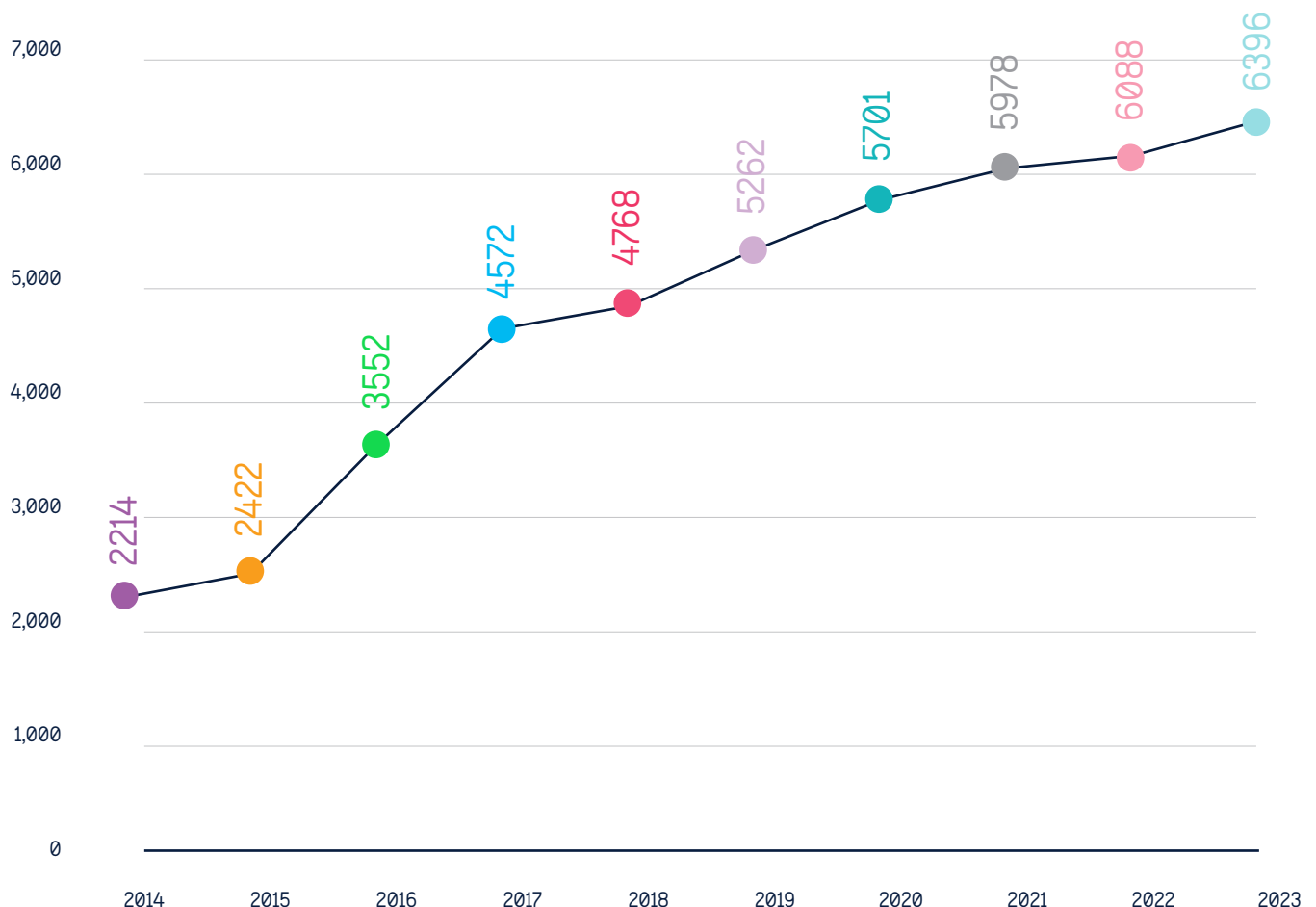
## 2023: A YEAR IN REVIEW

During 2023, the housing and homeless crisis continued unabated and by year's end the number of people recorded as homeless had reached an unprecedented 13,318. Thousands more were living in insecure, substandard and overcrowded housing, sofa surfing with family and friends or rough sleeping and living in squats. The roots of the crisis were bound to the shortage of housing and the historical development deficit, the ending of the moratorium on evictions in March of that year and the ongoing contraction of the private rented market. Notwithstanding the complexity of homelessness, there simply weren't

enough homes to fulfil social, affordable and cost rental demand and our reliance on a contracting private rented sector to fulfil this need became increasingly problematic. The consequences for people on the margins of society was homelessness or the pervasive risk of homelessness.

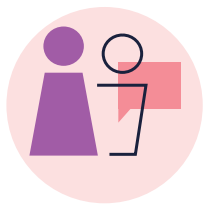
Throughout 2023, NOVAS worked with 6,396 people through Housing, Health and Recovery. This was an increase of 5% from the previous twelve-month period and 188% over ten years.

### NUMBER OF CLIENTS 2014-2023





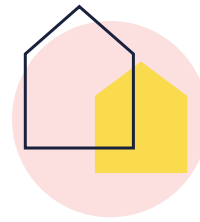
## CLIENTS WERE SUPPORTED THROUGH A RANGE OF SERVICES AND HOUSING



**1,734**  
ADVICE AND  
INFORMATION



**913**  
STREET OUTREACH



**783**  
HOUSING



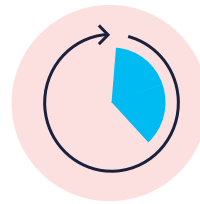
**140**  
COMMUNITY DETOX  
AND RESPITE SUPPORT



**1,024**  
FAMILY & OUTREACH  
SUPPORT SERVICES



**1,002**  
RESIDENTIAL  
ACCOMMODATION



**800**  
OUT OF HOURS

\* Due to the nature of Street Outreach, it is not possible to get an exact data set for the number of people, rather this is a conservative estimate based on the number of presentations (8%).

Despite significant growth in the number of people supported by NOVAS, demand continued to exceed capacity. This was true for all our services, none more so than our Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA). The contraction of the private market resulted in a subsequent reduction in exit pathways from homelessness, resulting in people spending protracted periods of time living in emergency settings. This also made it difficult for people presenting for the first time to services to access the support they required.

As in previous years, move-on from homeless accommodation was slow. Services designed for stays of six-months or less had unintentionally become long-term accommodation for many. Single people bore the brunt of this, due to the scarcity of one-bed units of accommodation in the private and social sectors.

However, despite difficulties in securing long-term units of accommodation, many clients successfully moved into independent housing, including through NOVAS own stock. There were shoots of hope across all our accommodation services, as clients secured and maintained housing, despite the challenges they faced. More than 50% of residents in the Whitestown STA in Blanchardstown moved to long-term housing. In Mitchel Street, Thurles, the figure was 20% and across our women's services it averaged 10%. There was greater move-on from our smaller STA services, which by their nature foster a greater sense of independence as there is more opportunity to organically develop life-skills and assimilate into the local community. Typically, these services are general housing units in larger developments and are not distinguishable from other housing in the community.

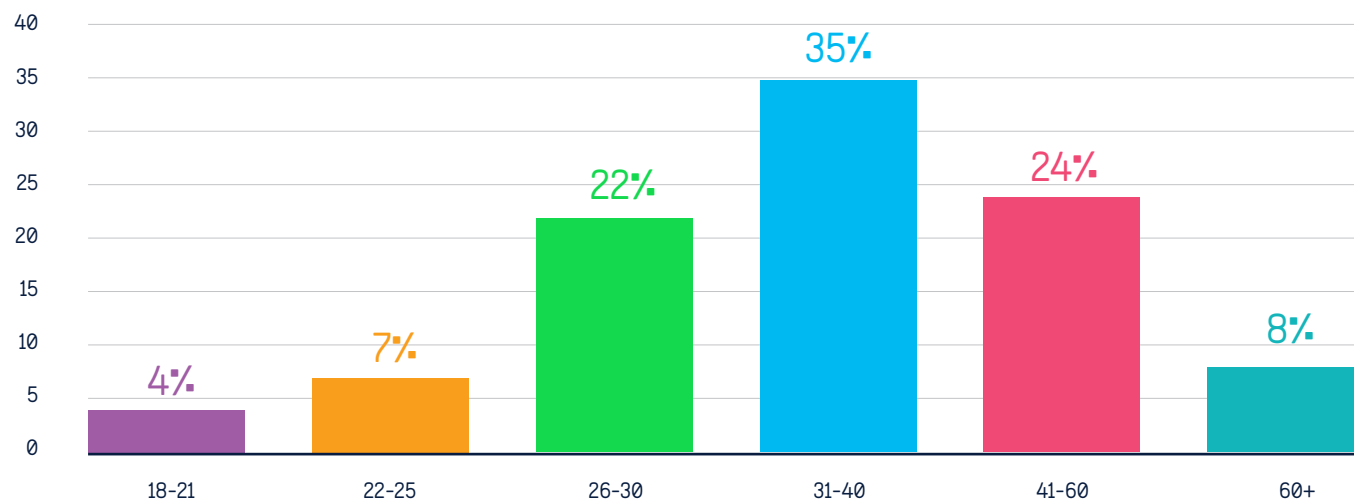
Increasingly, move-on is through social housing provided by local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies, rather than the private rented market. NOVAS provided 80 new tenancies with 129 new tenants, increasing our national housing stock to more than 300 units, housing 783 people. In October, NOVAS launched eight one-bed city centre units

of accommodation in Limerick, developed across two derelict Georgian buildings, for previously homeless single adults. These were tenanted in the first half of 2024. As per our strategic plan 2023-2027, we are committed to providing accommodation for single individuals, as one-bedroom units are in greatest deficit, preventing people from exiting homelessness.



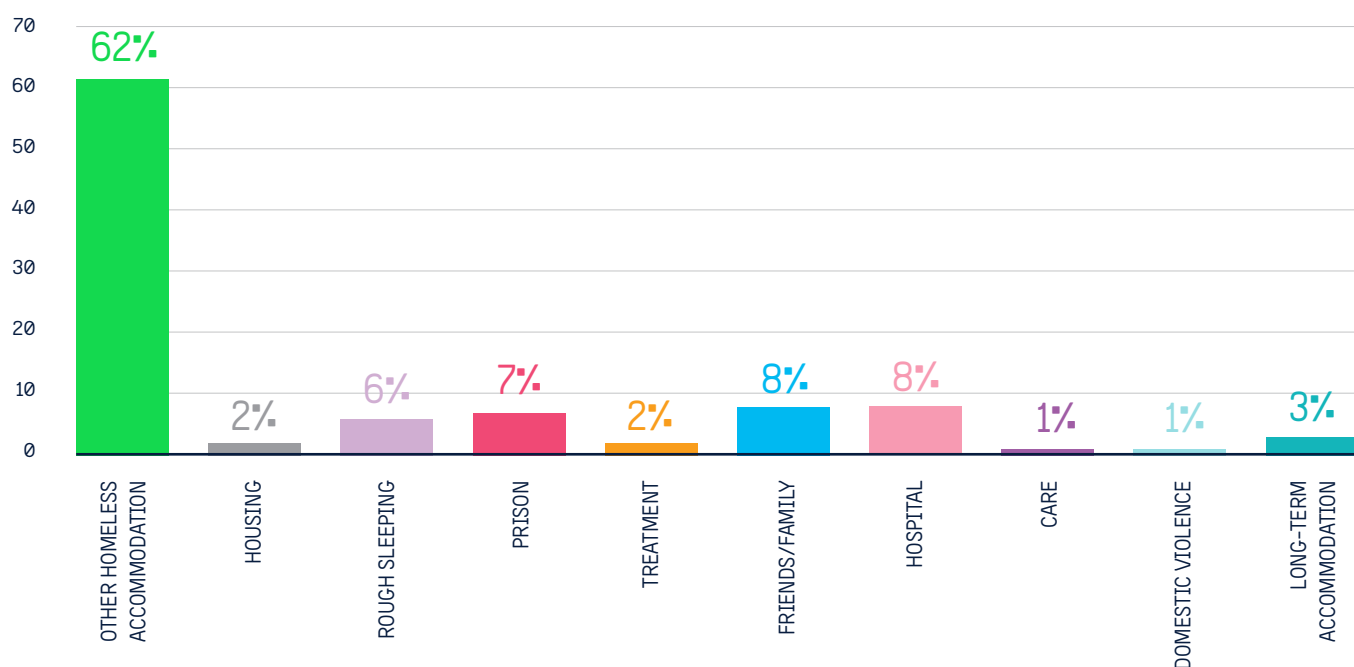
The pattern of people presenting to homeless accommodation at a young age persisted throughout 2023. Some 11% of residents were under 25 years, 33% were under 30 years and close to 80% were under 40 years old.

## AGE PROFILE OF CLIENTS LIVING IN NOVAS HOMELESS SERVICES IN 2023



Whilst most of the families NOVAS worked with throughout the year had come from the private rented sector, the route is different for single individuals, most of whom have never had the opportunity to live independently. Despite the declining age profile of homeless people, most residents in NOVAS STA accommodation during 2023 had come from other homeless services or institutional settings, indicating a prior experience of homelessness.

## LIVING ARRANGEMENTS PRIOR TO ACCESS TO NOVAS HOMELESS ACCOMMODATION





Young people are also more predisposed to hidden homelessness, leaning into family and friends, with no address of their own. This highlights how vulnerable this cohort is to housing insecurity, particularly those with experience of state care, from disadvantaged and minority backgrounds and those who experienced homelessness as a child.

The needs of people requiring supported accommodation throughout the year were broad ranging and complex and included; housing, mental health, addiction, physical health, dual diagnosis, domestic and sexual violence, life skills & tenancy sustainment support.

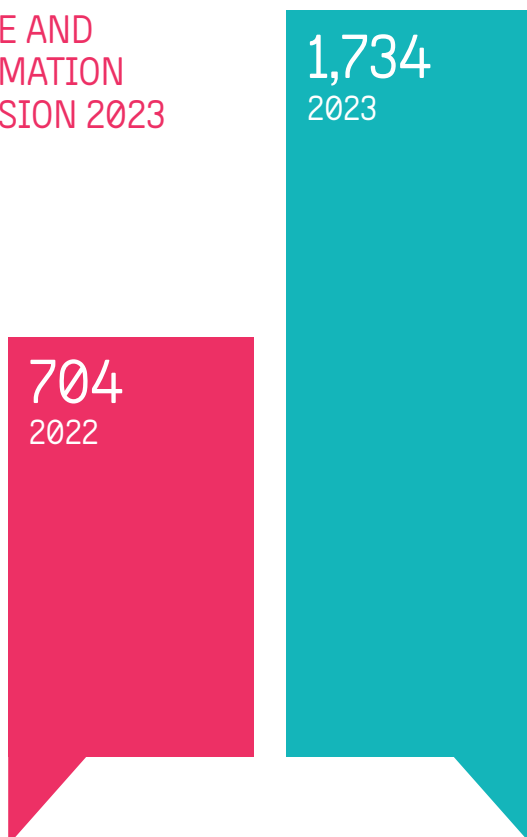
As in 2022, fewer people were able to access NOVAS STA services throughout the year due to the lengthy stay of existing clients. However, more people were supported with advice and information, prevention and tenancy sustainment. Additionally, the number of people presenting to Street Outreach remained high, with up to 40 people per night presenting to the service in Limerick city. Our dedicated Street Outreach volunteer

team are supported by out-of-hours and health and wellbeing staff to provide interventions for clients presenting with more complex needs. People present to Street Outreach for a variety of reasons. Some people are rough sleeping and experiencing street homelessness, for others the meal they receive is the difference between being able to pay their rent or not and for some the nightly interaction with volunteers and other clients may be their only social connection of that day.

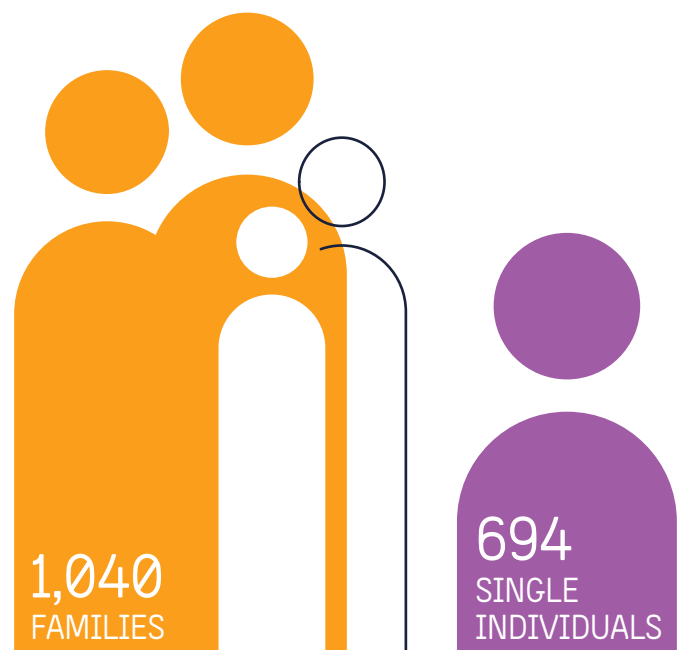
The number of people presenting for advice, information and signposting increased significantly during the twelve-month period of 2023, rising from 704 to 1,734. Advice and information were largely provided via our head office and family services.

Access to information and advice increased by 146% during 2023, spread between single adults and families, the latter comprising of more than 600 households. This work included advice and information, signposting, advocacy and one-off interventions and support. It was provided via telephone, in-person presentations and through email.

#### ADVICE AND INFORMATION PROVISION 2023



#### ADVICE AND INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES AND SINGLE INDIVIDUALS





# OUT-OF-HOURS SUPPORT



There was an extraordinary rise in the number of presentations to NOVAS Out-of-Hours service in Limerick City throughout 2023, indicating increasingly precarious living arrangements of vulnerable adults in the city.

Since 2005, NOVAS has offered Out-of-Hours support, funded by Limerick City and County Council. From 5pm until 9am each weekday evening and night and across the weekend, people can access support, advice and information as well as homeless accommodation if required and available. Historically the service offered in-person support each evening until 9pm and during the nighttime a 24/7 helpline was provided and managed by our McGarry House staff team.

More recently, due to increased demand for the service and growing levels of rough sleeping in the city, in-person presentations continue to the McGarry House complex through the night. Hot beverages, food and sleeping bags are provided when no alternative accommodation is available. Reporting and advocacy is subsequently pursued and clients are urged to present to the Limerick Homeless Action Team the following morning where an assessment of needs can be conducted. Last year, presentations to the Out-of-Hours service increased by more than 150% compared to 2022 and as the year progressed, figures inclined steeply.

# SUPPORTING WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS

# SUPPORTING WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS

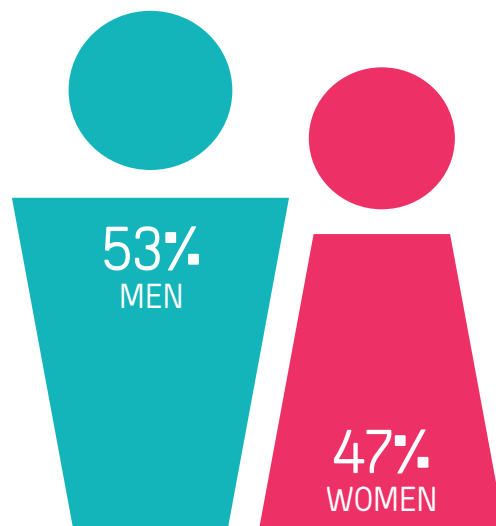
While the number and proportion of women experiencing homelessness in Ireland continues to grow, it can be difficult for women to access appropriate services offered through a gendered and trauma informed lens.

The unique and complex needs of women in homeless services have been identified in our reports for many years. These needs relate to motherhood, separation from their children, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts, sex work and other co-morbid physical and mental health illnesses. Such profoundly complex needs require targeted and gendered interventions in spaces that foster a sense of safety.

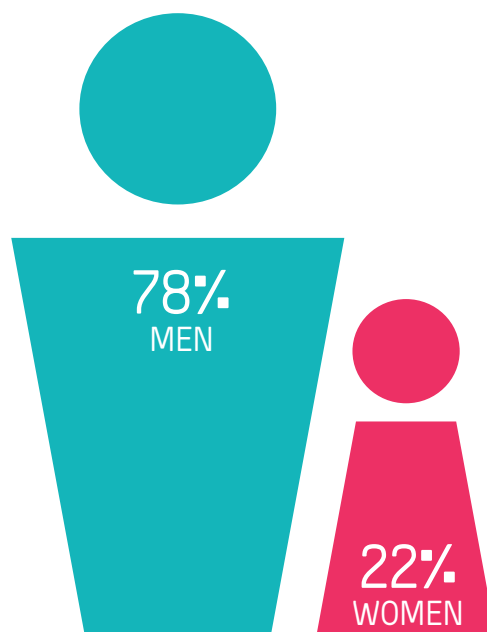
When examining NOVAS STA services in their entirety, 47% of residents in 2023 were women. However, when our mixed-gender hostels are reviewed in isolation, the male dominated nature of these services is evident, with 78% of clients throughout the year being men. Research and practice have repeatedly shown that women often only access formal homeless services as a last resort because of the male dominated environments within these services.

NOVAS seeks to meet the needs of women through the provision of female-only STA services and dedicated health and wellbeing support and interventions.

## GENDER BREAKDOWN IN ALL NOVAS STA SERVICES



## GENDER BREAKDOWN IN NOVAS MIXED-GENDER HOSTELS





Female-only accommodation helps to address the complex support needs of homeless women, most of whom have experienced sexual, gender and domestic-based violence at some stage of their lives. In Dublin, we currently provide four female services, with 66 bed spaces per night as well as surge capacity in extreme weather. Our services offer a range of rehabilitation and stabilisation interventions designed to engage with residents and create sustainable pathways out of homelessness. Supports are provided through the lens of trauma informed practice and harm reduction. Services do not put barriers in place for entry and accept the women as they are.

Outside of Dublin, all NOVAS STA services are mixed gender. However, in recognition of the value of single-sex services, NOVAS committed to creating a female-only floor in McGarry House in Limerick towards the end of 2023. McGarry House is NOVAS largest STA hostel, providing supported accommodation and long-term housing for 70 men and women across the campus. In 2023, 85% of residents there were men. Considering research and practice evidence, a female only space was created, which provides accommodation for eight women, in single, en-suite rooms and a small relaxation room with a kitchenette. This space was opened in the first half of 2024.

## A WOMAN LIVING IN MCGARRY HOUSE

*I am writing to tell you how NOVAS Services has helped me change my life. I have lived in McGarry House for a year and I am currently six months in recovery. Here is my story.*

*For many years I have struggled with addiction. The struggle with addiction led to my parents not being able to handle me and I ended up on the streets. I attended treatment a few times throughout my life, but it never suited me. After treatment I would end up back on the streets continuing to battle my own demons and drug addiction. After a few months of attending various NOVAS services and hospital, I secured a full-time bed in McGarry House. When I first came to McGarry House, I was at one of my lowest points, but the staff were there to support me.*

*Throughout my first few months in McGarry House I witnessed overdoses, and I decided I did not want this for my life anymore. I decided to self detox with the support of the fabulous staff and I have been sober for six months. McGarry House staff have always gone above and beyond to support all of us in the service.*

*Within McGarry House I have completed a TOPPLE course as witnessing these overdoses scared me and I wanted to help prevent it happening again. In McGarry House, I have developed a good routine which has helped me stay positive. During the day I stay active and have enrolled in some courses. Currently I am doing a cooking course, computer course and I have joined the Helping Women in Recovery group in Palls.*



**After a few months of attending various NOVAS services and hospital, I secured a full-time bed in McGarry House.**





While the provision of dedicated women's services is vital, so too is the provision of single rooms. Of the 66 clients supported across our women's services on a nightly basis, just 21 have a single room, with all others having two or three occupants. This is a cause of conflict among residents and the source of most incidents within services. A single room affords security, privacy and dignity among clients that is not possible within shared spaces. It is particularly problematic for women with complex and enduring mental health needs and can often lead to disengagement and perpetuating the cycle of revolving door homelessness.

In the eye of this unprecedented storm of homelessness, we must resist the temptation to reduce the standard of services. Single room occupancy allows us to support women with the most complex needs, address concerns relating to

addiction and mental health and support our clients to create meaningful and lasting solutions to homelessness.

Despite shared accommodation, we have made significant inroads in transforming the physical environments of our women's services, both inside and out, to reflect our trauma informed approach to service delivery. We have created tranquil spaces for time alone and key-working sessions as well as maximising garden and courtyard spaces to extend the physical footprint of our buildings. This has been very important in welcoming new clients and maintaining engagement with the residents who have the most complex needs. In 2023, with the support of wonderful corporate partners, Bella House in Drumcondra and our Rathmines Women's Centre underwent beautiful transformations of communal spaces within the buildings and in the gardens.



## MY NAME IS MELISSA,

*I have been homeless for roughly two years. Although I am very lucky to have a family who try to support me as much as possible, unfortunately I ended up homeless due to a number of factors. I have struggled with addiction, low self-esteem & shame for a long period of time.*

*Due to my experiences, I have found it very difficult to trust people. The first time I stayed in a hostel it was extremely traumatic for me, I found the service to be quite restrictive and I was made feel like a homeless person. My experience with the staff there was not pleasant.*

*I have felt nothing but support since coming to Bella House. The staff speak to me like I am a human being. I have a male key-worker and I have been able to work on building positive working relationships with males. Right now, I feel like I am home.*

*If I could change one thing about the service, I would like to see single bedrooms for everyone. It is very difficult to share at times and it impacts on your right to be treated with dignity and respect. I am currently exploring housing options through choice-based letting and I am looking forward to living independently again and building my life back up.*



**I would like to see single rooms for everyone.  
It's very difficult to share at times and it impacts  
your right to be treated with dignity and respect**



## MY NAME IS MICHELLE,

*I am the Manager of the Rathmines and Rathgar Women's Services in Dublin.*

*What keeps me engaged and doing the role is the unique personality of each of the women, seeing their coping skills every day and supporting them through their trauma. I firmly believe in what NOVAS stands for, especially in relation to Trauma Informed Practice and also the dignity and respect we treat our clients with. This keeps my work ethic ingrained in me.*

*As soon as a client enters one of our services this is where our roles begins. From the outset, we strive to maintain and enhance the inherent skills our clients arrive with. We need to remember that these women know what their needs are and we are there to support them through their journey, not to try to fix them. We include our client voice in all our decision making. Truly listening to clients can be very powerful and builds trust between clients and staff.*

*I manage both Rathgar STA and Rathmines STA and the main difference is Rathgar has single rooms, which allows clients to have their privacy. There is also a space to cook. Incidents are lower in the service and this in turn cuts down on clients becoming more traumatised.*

*My vision for services in general is smaller services with single rooms, where there is less of an institutionalised feel and where clients feel safe and get the support they need. I have worked with NOVAS since 2007 and I feel I have the same energy and belief that I did then, that positive change can happen.*



**I firmly believe in what NOVAS stands for, especially in relation to Trauma Informed Practice and also the dignity and respect we treat our clients with.**







NOVAS has provided myself and fellow clients with a team of mental and wellness professionals who assist us with everything from mental health, physical health & emotional support.

## MY NAME IS SHIRLEY,

*During my time homeless I have been placed in three hostels before coming to Bella House. Both the facilities, care and attention given by the staff here at Bella House are probably the best this country has to offer. NOVAS has provided myself and fellow clients with a team of mental and wellness professionals who assist us with everything from mental health, physical health & emotional support. The staff also arrange for activities to be held on site and are available to us seven days a week.*

*In relation to the actual building there are some areas I feel could be improved. Health and safety is paramount. As a 53-year-old woman I find it extremely difficult having to share a bedroom with anyone – it would make life in emergency accommodation much easier if more single rooms were available. NOVAS also provides all meals for us here at Bella House. We have a team of chefs who prepare balanced nutritious food and snacks every day.*

The single biggest age category of women living in our female services was 31 to 40 years, many of whom were mothers separated from their children. This disenfranchised grief can define a woman's experience of homelessness and can be the single biggest motivating factor in her recovery. Women who experience homelessness and do not have their children in their care, are often not recognised as mothers. This is evident in housing applications, where these women are labelled as 'Single Applicants,' leaving them with the seemingly impossible task of reunifying with their children without access to appropriate housing. Without suitable housing, the chances of reunification are significantly reduced.

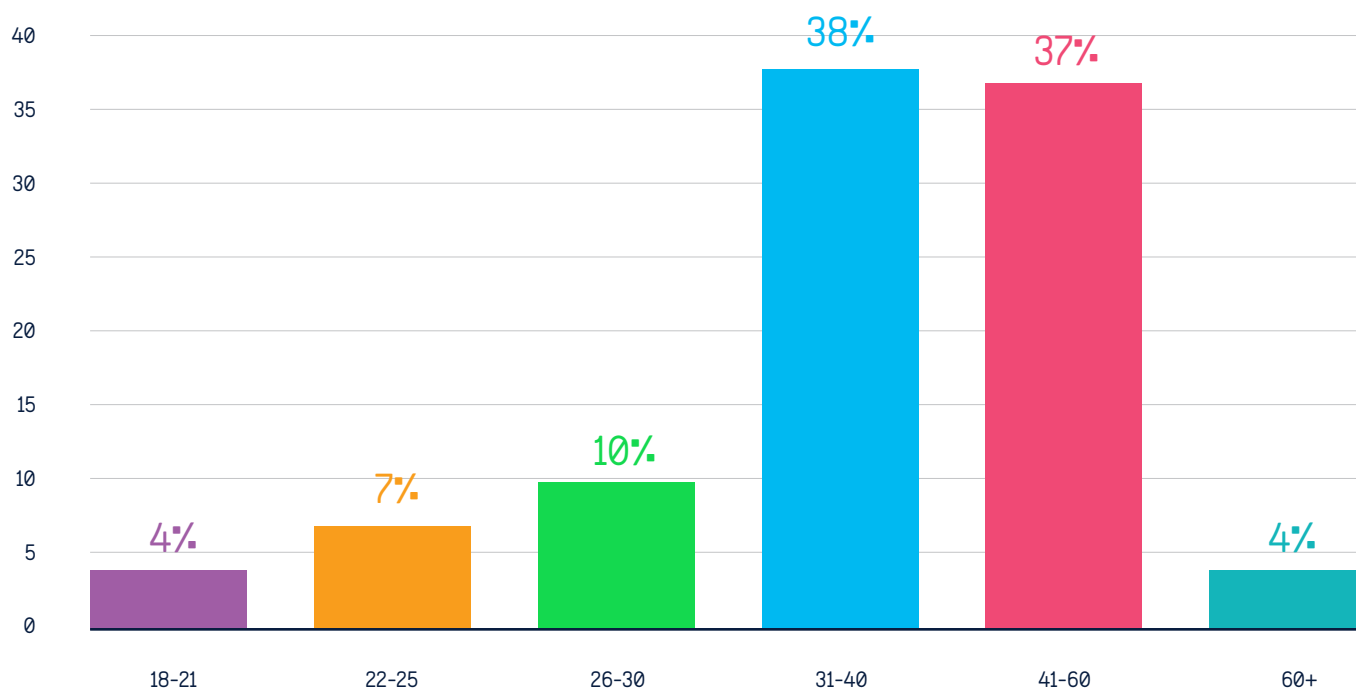
These experiences lead to feelings of disempowerment and hopelessness among homeless mothers. Failing to recognise motherhood within homeless services has profound consequences, including loss of confidence, increased stress, deteriorating physical and mental health, and a rise in drug use and high-risk behaviours. Many

women report feeling shame for being unable to provide for their children and face barriers in seeking help.

NOVAS services, through a trauma-informed and gendered lens, acknowledges the trauma of separation from children and advocates for the women who use our services. By implementing strengths-based support planning, NOVAS helps women recognise their own strengths, resilience, and power to identify pathways to reconnect with their children and ultimately to exit homelessness. However, without systemic change, barriers for women who are homeless and are mothers will continue to be difficult to overcome.

It is our ambition to build a healthy peer support network for women who are mothers and accessing NOVAS services and create opportunities for women to have their voices heard as mothers across various forums. We are doing this work with our voluntary and statutory partners in the sector.

## AGE PROFILE OF WOMEN IN STA SERVICES



## MY NAME IS MEGAN,

*I became homeless in 2021 when I ended up in prison after years of being in addiction. I lost my home, my children and my freedom. The consequences of my addiction was I lost everything.*

*I went to residential treatment from prison after serving 16 months out of a three-year sentence. I detoxed in prison from a lot of substances and went to treatment, staying drug free for the first time in 10 years. When I got to treatment I got sick and I was taken to Beaumont and got diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.*

*I got in touch with NOVAS from treatment after Fingal County Council put me forward for it. I didn't want to go there. I hated the thoughts of staff and having to live with other clients. My anxiety was all over the place and I couldn't trust anyone.*

*From the day I walked in my view changed. I was given my own room and the house was spotless. All the staff were lovely. I was given a lovely friendly and most of all caring keyworker. I opened up to all the staff and they helped me to grow independently. After being here for eight months I was given my own apartment. I have my children back in my life and I've learned to trust again. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart. I'm nearly 10 months in recovery and managing my illness.*

Love Megan xxxx





In 2023 NOVAS extended its Health and Wellbeing service to Dublin, with dedicated interventions for the women in our STA services there. These interventions related to dual diagnosis of mental health and addiction, sex working and sexual health, menopause and motherhood. The work reaped immense benefits for the women living in our services, some of whom were

able to access a GP and other primary care services for the first time, others who began their journey of recovery and many who enhanced a range of life-skills to prepare for living independently. Our Health and Wellbeing Workers also delivered TOPPLE across our Dublin services for the first time, with our first women graduating in Q1 2024.





# FAMILY & OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICES

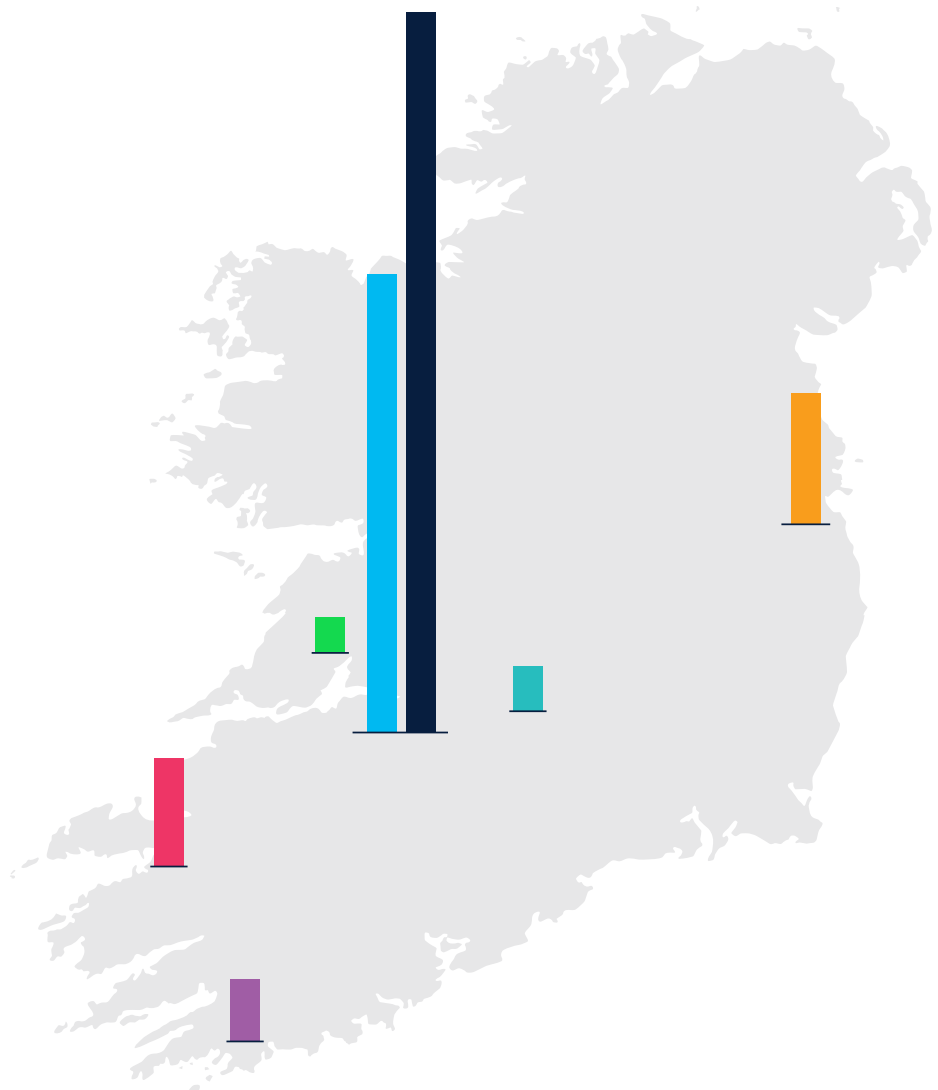
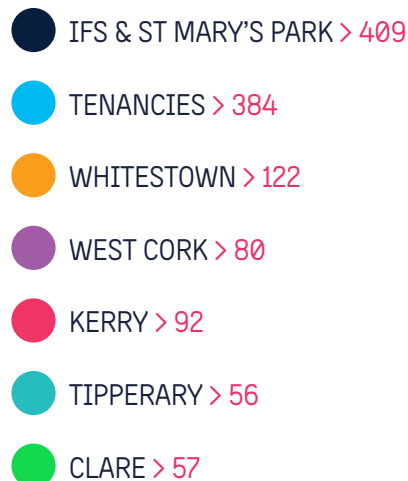
NOVAS has been providing family services since 2005, supporting underserved and disadvantaged households to maintain tenancies for nearly two decades. Since then, the homeless landscape has changed dramatically, with family homelessness becoming a pervasive feature since 2013. Despite a welcome decline in family homelessness during the Covid-19 pandemic, it has otherwise accelerated at pace for the last decade and NOVAS now provides supports and interventions for families who experience or are at risk of homelessness in every region in which we work.

Unfettered rent increases, static HAP payments, a further contraction of properties in the private rented market and insufficient social housing make it

increasingly difficult for low-income families to secure and maintain long-term housing options. By December 2023, there were 3,962 children experiencing homelessness in the state, closing in on the previously unbroken 4,000 barrier. In this year NOVAS worked with more children than ever before.

By the end of 2023, NOVAS provided long-term, secure housing for 384 children within their family units. We also continued to support children who were actively homeless, seeking to reduce the length of stay in homeless accommodation, knowing the detrimental and traumatic impact this has on young people's physical, social and emotional wellbeing.

## NUMBER OF CHILDREN BY NOVAS SERVICE 2023



Considering all our family services across the country, some 78% of adults who received support from NOVAS in 2023 were women, indicating the over representation of single mothers among homeless families and the burden of familial responsibilities falling to women. Much like emergency accommodation for single adults, family services must also consider the provision of support and care through a gendered and trauma informed lens.

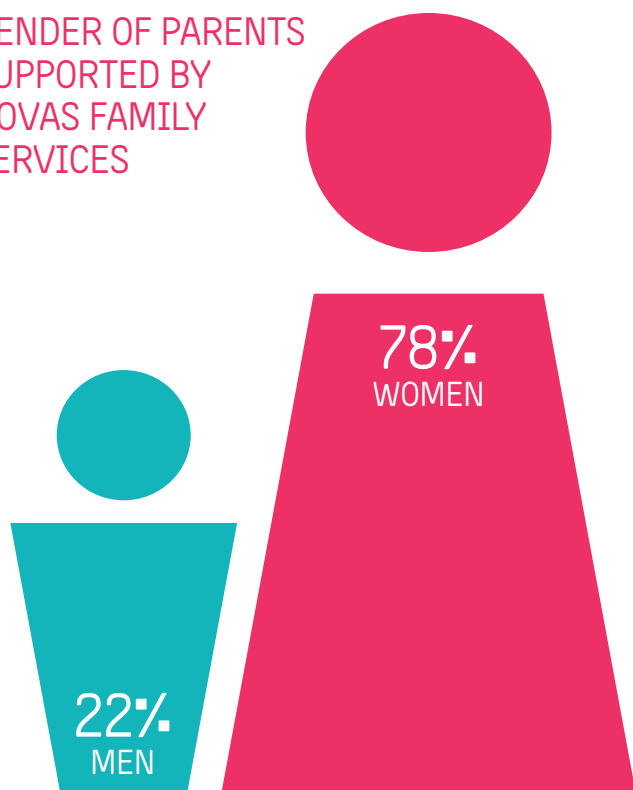
Throughout 2023, NOVAS provided a range of support and services to families in preventative, responsive and housing capacities. In partnership with our funders in local government and the HSE, we sought multi-agency responses to prevent and reduce the length of stay for families in homeless accommodation. We provided intensive life-skills programmes, advocated for families to secure housing and provided emotional and practical supports to those living in commercial hotels and B&B's. Our support workers also liaised closely with our Housing

Department to support clients to access long-term NOVAS tenancies, as well as housing from other Approved Housing Bodies and from local authority social housing stock.

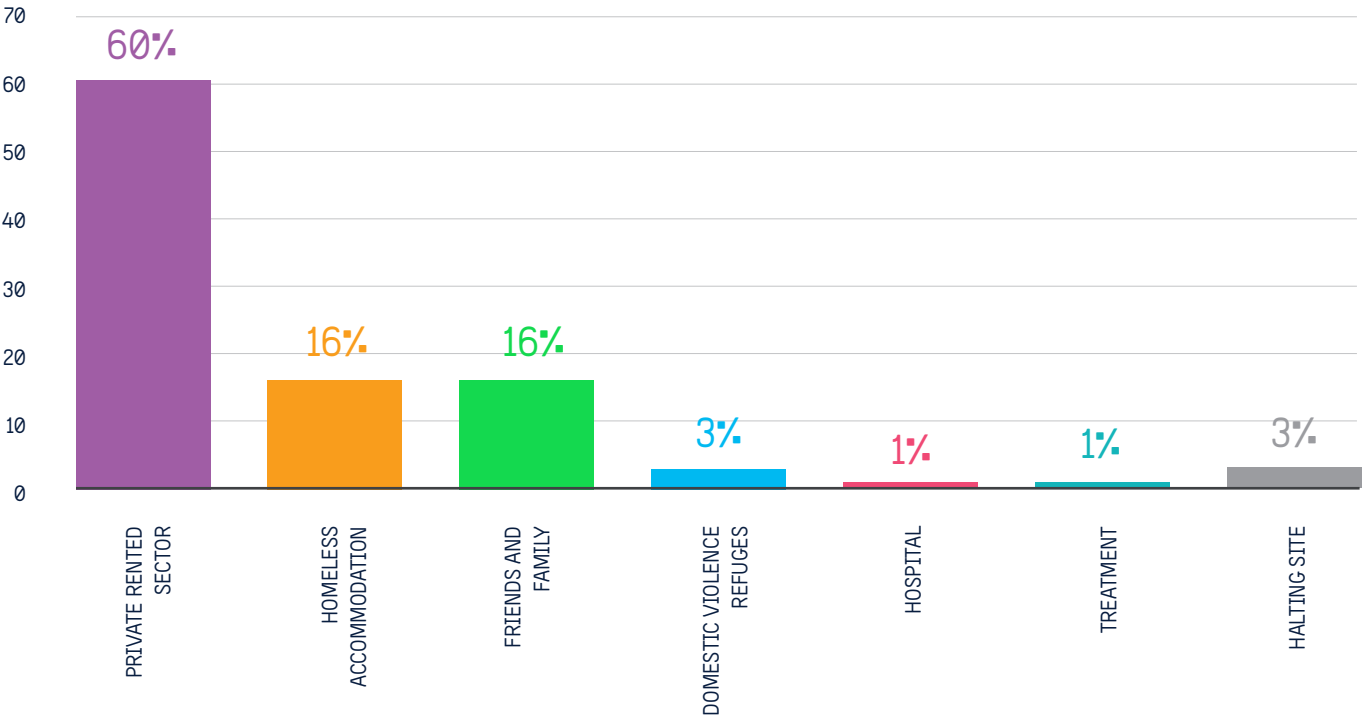
The contraction of the private rented market and its correlation to rising family homelessness has been well documented, both as a route into homelessness and in terms of reduced exit pathways. Scarcity of supply coupled with the significant cost of rent in the market, has made our reliance on the sector to solve our social housing needs increasingly unstable.

Across NOVAS' family services throughout the county, the majority of households came directly from the private rented sector. Following a Notice to Quit (primarily due to the landlord selling), families found it increasingly difficult to access a new tenancy in the sector, within their budget. Stagnant HAP payments added a layer of complexity for low-income households seeking security of tenure in appropriate housing.

#### GENDER OF PARENTS SUPPORTED BY NOVAS FAMILY SERVICES



ACCOMMODATION STATUS OF FAMILIES SUPPORTED BY NOVAS



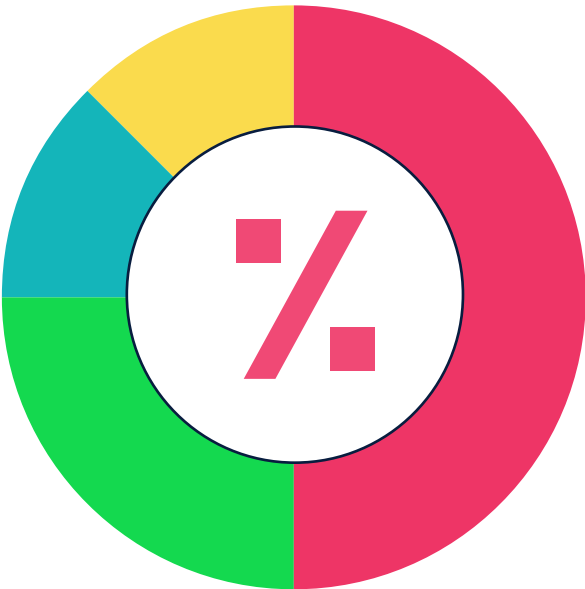
While the private rented sector directly accounted for 60% of families seeking support, for many others, whom by then were living in homeless accommodation or with family and friends, their last stable accommodation was also in the private sector.

In addition, fewer families were successful in securing exit pathways from homelessness via the private sector. In

our Kerry family service, where 75% of households were successful in securing housing throughout the year, none of these were through private housing. There were also very few families across our Limerick and Clare services who were successful in accessing the private rental sector. However, in West Cork, 64% of households last year were supported to access housing and 37% of these were through the private market.

KERRY FSS HOUSING OUTCOMES IN 2023

- HOUSING - AHB > 50%
- HOUSING - LA > 25%
- TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER SERVICE > 12.5%
- MOVED TO TEMP. ACCOMODATION - STA > 12.5%



## CLIENT IN KERRY FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

*I am so grateful to Annette and Lisa and how amazingly they supported me when I needed it and are still there.*

*I met them when I was 7 months pregnant. All alone in Ireland. Helpless and there was no help around. I am overwhelmed every time I think about NOVAS, how Lisa and Annette helped me .*

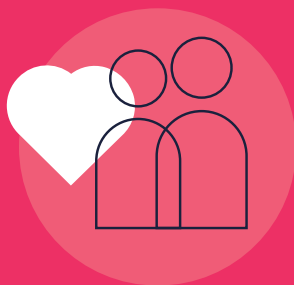
*Now my baby is almost 1 year. I feel like without their help I could have drowned. They supported me emotionally, helped me sorted financial problem or paper work. Helped me with transport and were always there. Their presence made me comfortable and confident in my worst situations. I can't find any more words to explain how grateful I am to Annette and Lisa, they are both amazing. All I want to say is I am so thankful to NOVAS.*



**I can't find any more words to explain how grateful I am to Annette and Lisa, they are both amazing. All I want to say is I am so thankful to NOVAS.**



# OUTREACH SUPPORT



**369**  
PARENTS SUPPORTED  
IN 2023



**9**  
TENANCIES  
SUSTAINED  
IN 2023



**614**  
HOUSEHOLDS  
SUPPORTED IN 2023



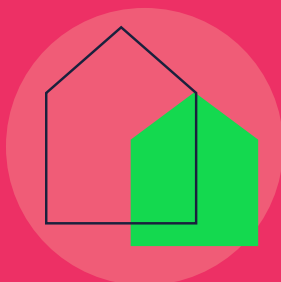
**140**  
COMMUNITY DETOX  
AND RESPITE  
SUPPORT



**47**  
HOUSEHOLDS  
SUPPORTED INTO  
HOUSING



**770**  
CHILDREN  
SUPPORTED  
IN 2023



**33**  
HOUSEHOLDS  
PREVENTED FROM  
HOMELESSNESS



**8,827**  
TRAUMA INFORMED  
INTERVENTIONS IN  
2023



The provision of outreach support is important to prevent homelessness, both initially and as a re-occurring episode. In 2023, more single people than ever sought outreach support from NOVAS. Some of these were in precarious living situations. For example, 6% of clients who presented to our Croke Street Service in Thurles were rough sleeping. This is unprecedented.

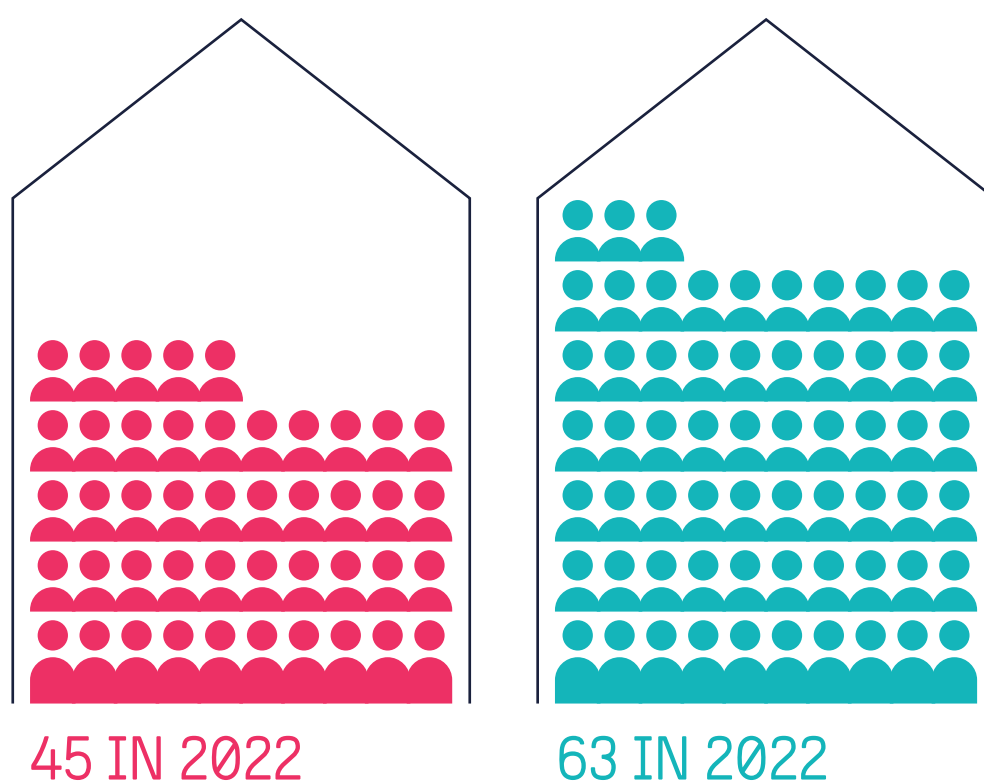
Throughout the year, rough sleeping was not confined to Tipperary, as more people across the Mid-West found it increasingly difficult to access emergency accommodation as demand continued to grow and services were unable to keep apace.

The number of clients supported by the Croke Street service has increased annually, since being established in 2017. In 2023 this was primarily because the Community Homeless Clinic was being

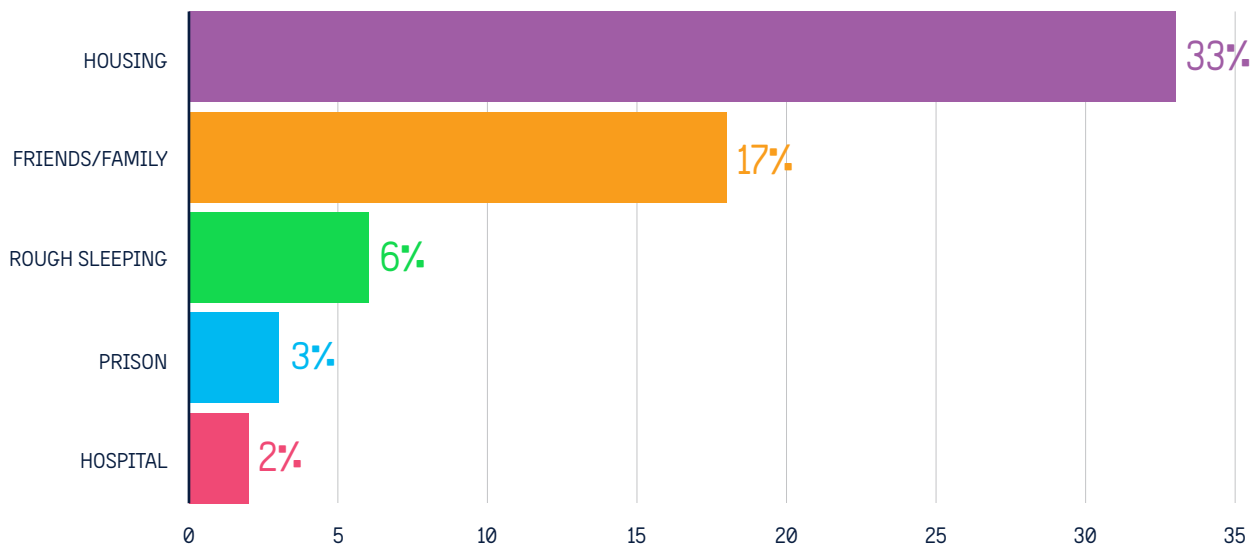
operated from the premises and there was additional emergency accommodation in the area. Since the service was set up, we have worked hard to reach the most vulnerable people in the community, to provide preventive and responsive support and interventions. We now have a more fulsome picture of the actual numbers of people experiencing homelessness in Thurles, including those who are hidden homeless, living in overcrowded and inadequate housing.

As well as providing humanitarian responses to those rough sleeping, our outreach services provided a range of important interventions to support clients to secure and maintain housing, including the provision of life-skills, signposting and advocacy, tenancy sustainment and support with addiction, mental and physical health needs.

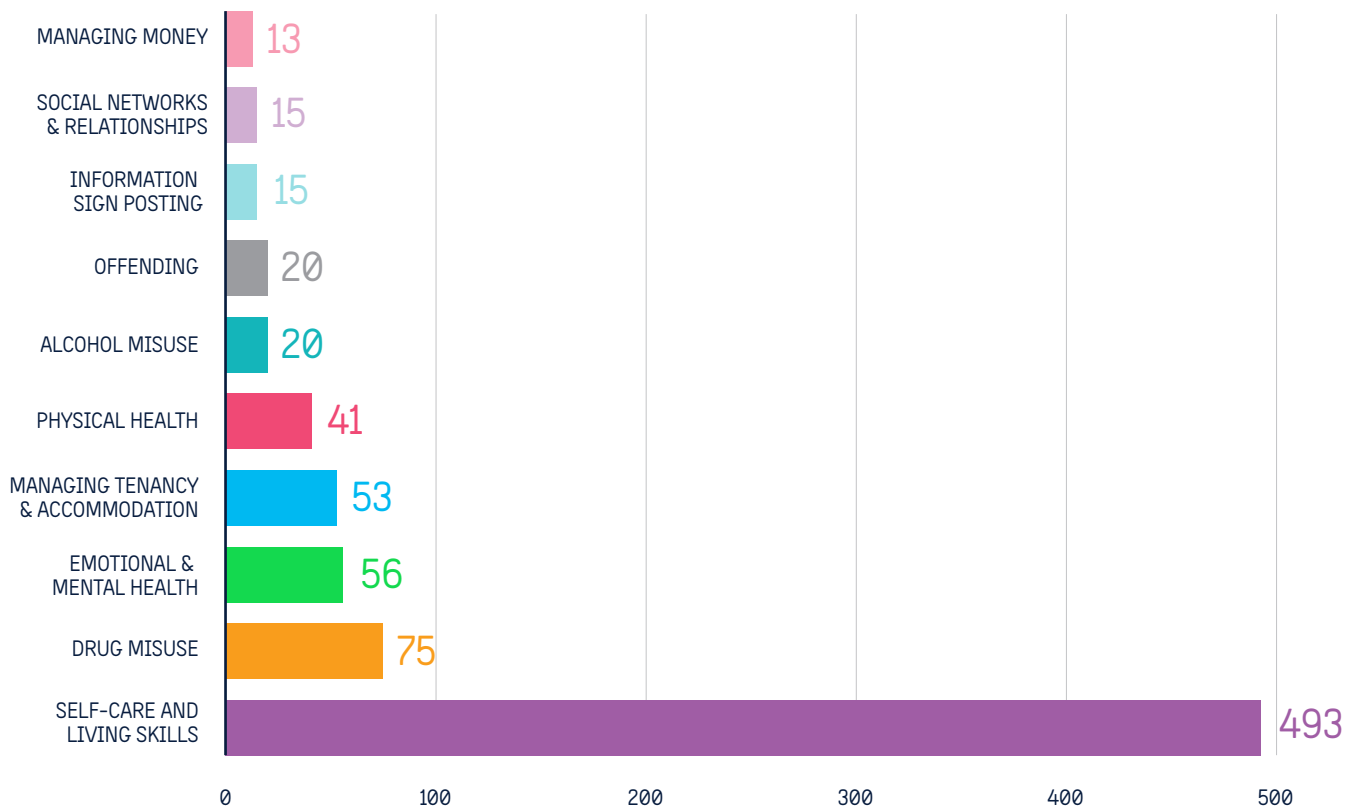
## NUMBER OF CLIENTS SUPPORTED THROUGH CROKE STREET OUTREACH SERVICE FROM 2022 TO 2023



## CLIENTS EXPERIENCE PRIOR TO ACCESSING CROKE STREET OUTREACH IN 2023 (N63)



## CROKE STREET OUTREACH INTERVENTIONS IN 2023 (N773)



## DAVID AND LOLA

My name is David and I have been living in NOVAS Mitchel Street service since August 2023. Previous to this I had been homeless for over 3 years' couch surfing between friends and family. During that time my addiction and dependency on drugs increased and my mental health suffered too. I first met Lola when she belonged to someone else and I could see he was not taking care of her properly. She is a lovely Patterdale breed and I could tell she was miserable. I asked him could I look after her even though I had no home, but I could not leave her there. He agreed and since then Lola has become my forever companion. I was lucky she is such a quiet dog and so loyal that she could stay with me wherever I went.

When I moved into NOVAS she would stay with my brother at night and I would collect her first thing every morning. That was my routine for a while until NOVAS staff could see how much I missed her when she was gone. I asked the staff could Lola stay over one or two nights on a trial basis and from then on she got to stay with me full time. Lola is my best friend, she goes everywhere with me, to clinics, to appointments. I get up every morning to walk her and she has brought structure and focus to my life. I have to think about her when I am making any decisions good or bad. I am now very determined to get a home with a small garden just for the two of us. She has also become everyone's friend in the house, staff and other clients love to pet her and give her treats. I wish I had met Lola years ago as I feel I would not have gone down the road I have but now I feel any decision I make or action I do are positive ones. She has been my lifesaver.



Lola is my best friend, she goes everywhere with me, to clinics, to appointments. I get up every morning to walk her and she has brought structure and focus to my life.

## ELLEN'S STORY

*At one of the worst times in my life I was informed about and introduced to NOVAS. I was at my lowest and had no one to turn to. Discovering NOVAS was the best thing that happened to me; the people, the support, the help and information received as well as beautiful accommodation was and still is, amazing. To people who have nowhere to live, no one to count on and little information about help and support with mental health issues, depression, anxiety, abuse, substance abuse etc, to have the support and genuine care is amazing to help you to get back on your feet and to never feel alone. I know in the past three years I have gone from strength to strength because of the team, especially my present and past keyworkers. It's never easy but knowing you have help and support keeps me going whether it's advice or just a friendly face, a coffee and a chat. It's the light at the end of a tunnel for most people that keeps us going.*



Discovering NOVAS was the best thing that happened to me; the people, the support, the help and information received as well as beautiful accommodation was and still is, amazing.



# HOUSING & TENANTS



## HOUSING & TENANTS

In 2023 NOVAS provided 80 new tenancies with 129 tenants, bringing our total housing stock to 308 units with 384 children and 399 adults living in them. This was our most productive year in the provision of long-term, secure and appropriate housing and far exceeded the targets of our Strategic Plan 2023-27.

All our housing was developed in collaboration with local authorities and funded by the Department of Housing. Nomination rights lay with the relevant local authority and all tenants came from social housing waiting lists, many of whom were experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Our stock was a combination of units for single and family households, reflecting and responding to the current diverse homeless landscape. Housing was a mixture of turnkey, scatter-site acquisitions, in-fill sites and repurposing vacant and derelict units in our existing built environment.

In 2023, we also availed of the new tenant-in-situ scheme, following the lifting of the moratorium on evictions in March. This scheme was designed to prevent households living in the private sector from becoming homeless, following a Notice to Quit by their landlord. In instances where the landlord was selling, local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies could purchase the property with the tenant in situ. This was an excellent preventative initiative

that NOVAS warmly welcomed and by years' end we had committed to 23 such properties, in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council. In 2023, our new housing stock was procured in Clare, Dublin and Limerick.

Throughout 2023, NOVAS continued to grow its Housing Department in an effort to provide excellent standards of housing with pro-active and person-centred tenant engagement. Currently, our Housing Department comprises of a Head of Property & Development, a Senior Asset Manager and a Senior Tenant Services Manager. We also employ a Tenant Engagement Manager, Housing Officers and an Estates & Facilities Officer. Our Tenancy Sustainment and Resettlement Officers also work with our housing teams to support a smooth transition from homeless accommodation to independent living. This is a vital intervention for people who require specialist tenancy sustainment support and seeks to prevent re-occurring homelessness. It enables us to support sustainable tenancies for people with complex and enduring needs.

NOVAS is committed to its vision that everyone has their own sustainable home and is steadfast in playing its part in making this vision a reality. Despite the rising homeless figures, we believe the problem is solvable and the provision of a robust and agile social housing sector is an integral part of the solution.

## ANGELINA'S STORY

*My name is Angelina, and I live in Limerick with my 2 children. My daughter is 11 and my son is 7. I wanted to tell you my story, to hopefully help someone caught in the same situation.*

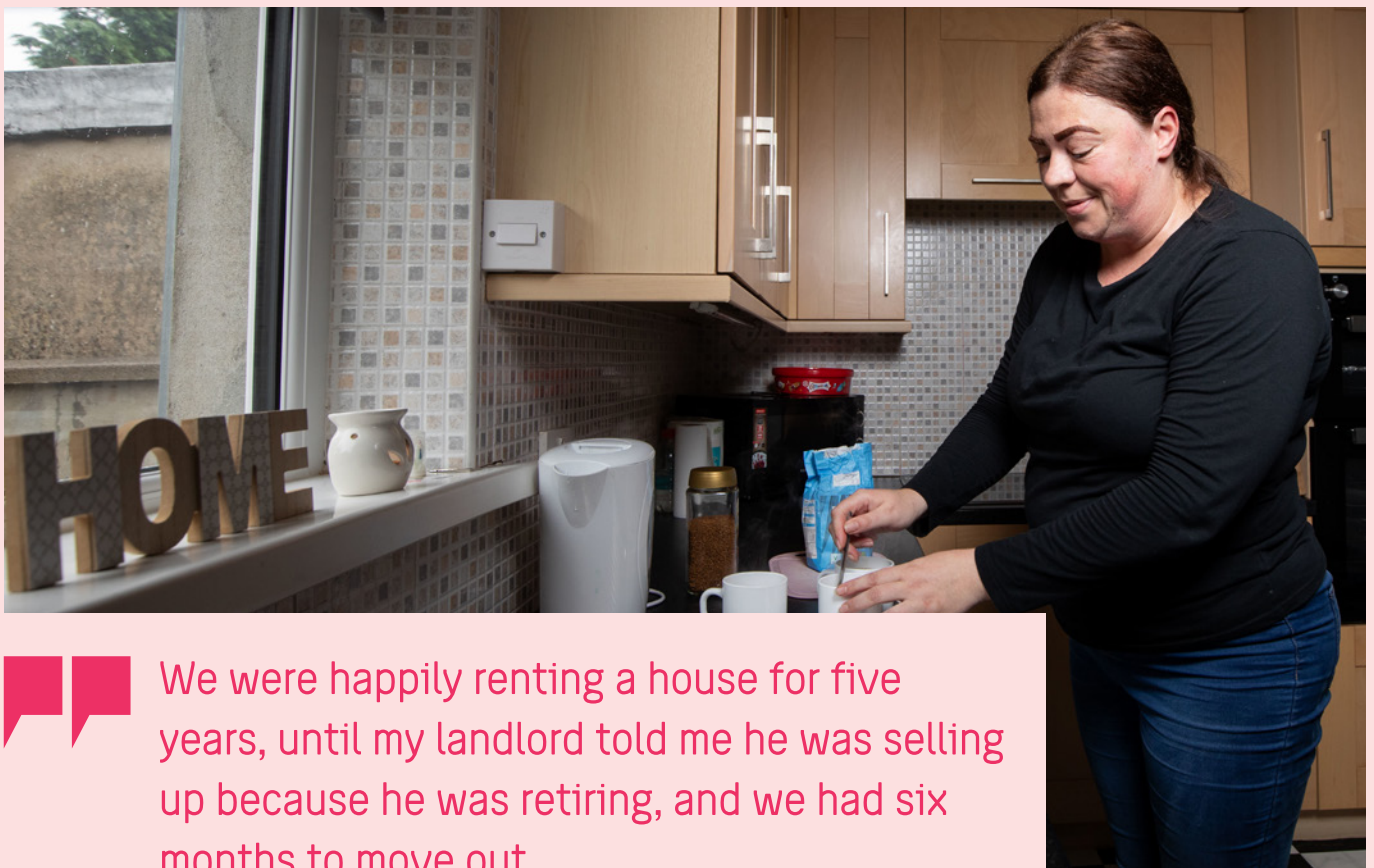
*We were happily renting a house for five years, until my landlord told me he was selling up because he was retiring, and we had six months to move out. Our landlord was lovely but he wanted to sell. The children were only 9 and 5 at the time. This was our home for so long, and we didn't want to leave. I remember hugging the walls before we moved out.*

*I applied for the houses in my price range in my area, there weren't many of them and anything that was there wasn't offered to me. I emailed numerous other places around Limerick city, but still I wasn't offered anywhere. It was never ending. I eventually had to present as homeless to the council which was very difficult.*

*I was so worried, I cried every day wondering where were they going to put us, what would happen? The housing crisis was getting really bad and there really seemed like there was nowhere for us to go.*

*I didn't know where we were going until two days before we were due to move out of the house. That's when NOVAS called and said we could move into a hotel in the City Centre.*

*Although it wasn't ideal, I was so happy to be placed in a central hotel. I told the kids that it was good news - we would have a bed at night, we'd be warm, and we'd have a roof over our heads, and we'd be safe.*



**We were happily renting a house for five years, until my landlord told me he was selling up because he was retiring, and we had six months to move out.**



It was hard emotionally. Especially when you have two kids looking to you for answers. I kept telling them that it won't be forever, but after being there for months, they started to lose hope.

Moving in was a big adjustment. The staff in the hotel were lovely to us and that helped but it was still very hard. We went from having a house with our own bedrooms to suddenly being in a tiny little hotel room with three single beds. The only sink was the small one in the bathroom so that's where I had to wash the dishes. I couldn't cook or do any laundry.

The hardest thing was the lack of space. The kids couldn't be themselves, they had nowhere to play or meet their friends. They had to do their homework on the bed, they weren't allowed play in the halls, there was nowhere to go. There was no space and no privacy. It was so tight in the room we couldn't pass each other; you'd have to step into the bathroom or onto the bed.

It was hard emotionally. Especially when you have two kids looking to you for answers. I kept telling them that it won't be forever, but after being there for months, they started to lose hope.

That first Christmas in the hotel was very hard. There was no space for a tree, so I put up a few decorations and little stickers on the windows.

We were living in the hotel for a year before we were moved to a family hub. That was better, there was more space. The beds were still in the one room but the kids had bunk beds which they loved, and there was a tiny kitchen so I could cook. There was enough space that I could go into the bathroom and have a cry and the children wouldn't know I was upset. I couldn't let them see me breaking down. Staying strong for them was one of the hardest challenges.

We were in the family hub for nine months. The staff from NOVAS would visit and check in on us, and would tell us to hang in there, things would change.



Eventually we got the call that we would be moving into a NOVAS home. We moved on the 19th of March, and I'll remember that date forever. We got the call on a Wednesday and got the keys on a Friday. We moved in on my daughter's birthday. I really pushed to move in then to make it extra special and I think it was the happiest day of our lives. I've never seen the kids so excited.

I love my fabulous forever home. Apart from my children, it's the best gift I've ever received. It's been so emotional, but now all my tears are happy tears, I really am so relieved and grateful to have this secure home for my children. Knowing that no one will call me and say I have to be out in six months. I used to pray every night to God asking for stability for the kids. And now everyday I say a prayer of thanks.

We have lovely neighbours, and my kids go to the local school. They have a normal childhood again; they have friends over, they play in the garden and ride their bikes in the estate. When they started school in September my son was so excited to be able to give them his home address.

I'm so appreciative of everyone in NOVAS, they're fantastic landlords and James checks in regularly to make sure everything is working and is always available when I need to call.

I wanted to share my story with you because it was very hard, and I used to be ashamed that I couldn't provide a home for my kids, but I'm proud of how we coped and I want to tell anyone in the same situation, there is hope. You've just got to hold on, take it day by day and eventually something will come up. There is a home for everybody, so you can get through it.

And thank you to everyone who supports NOVAS, to allow me and my kids to have our lovely home.



I want to tell anyone in the same situation, there is hope. You've just got to hold on, take it day by day and eventually something will come up.

# FUNDRAISING & VOLUNTEERING



# FUNDRAISING

In 2023, NOVAS hired its first dedicated fundraiser and formally set up a Fundraising Department. The main objective of establishing this department was to fulfil our strategic objective of securing and growing sustainable funding, to provide quality services for our clients and tenants.

Relationships have been established and systems have been developed to scale into a mature fundraising organisation in the future. In 2023, there was a focus on building NOVAS brand recognition and creating greater awareness of the work

we do in local communities. This is a prerequisite for any income generation into the future. We look forward to developing this department, so we can provide support and services to more people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

A highlight in 2023 was winning the best not-for-profit award at the Limerick Chamber Regional Business Awards. NOVAS was honoured to accept this recognition of our impact in the community and is extremely proud of this accomplishment.

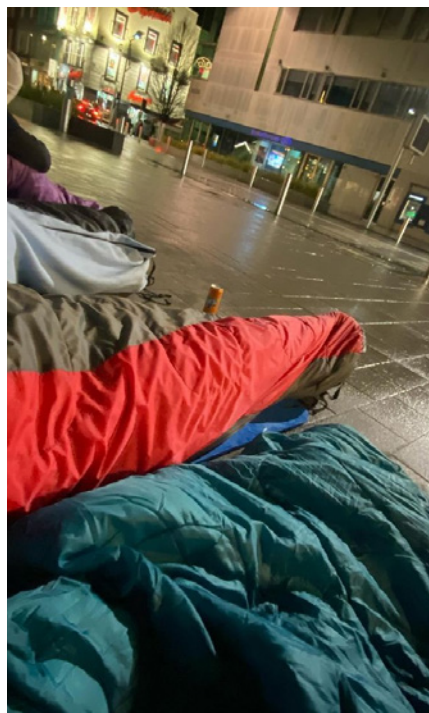






NOVAS relies on corporate donations and partnerships and we are extremely thankful to all our corporate donors. A special thank you to Analog Devices International (ADI) for a gold donation as part of its Annual Community Awards and Charitable Donations Programme. Also, to John Paul Construction and Engine Lease Finance Company for their year-on-year commitment to our Christmas Sleep Out and Toy Appeal.

In 2023, due to the corporate donation of Smurfit Kappa and funding from the National Lottery, we were able to completely transform the garden space in The Rathmines Women's Centre. This was transformative to the lives of the women who live there, most of whom share rooms, as it provided a calm outdoor environment with zoned areas for relaxation, gardening and get-togethers.







In March 2023, we launched our dedicated Art Room in Brother Russell House in Limerick. This was the culmination of a wonderful corporate partnership with Cook Medical and enabled us to provide art therapy for all the clients living there. Each week, art teachers provide lessons and interventions to our clients, many of whom have significant sensory, mental and physical health needs.





NOVAS received a number of grants in 2023. The Children's Rights Alliance Food Poverty Initiative to tackle Holiday Hunger was a lifeline for the families and children we support at a critical time. As a result of this we were able to address holiday hunger by providing direct food provision. The ESB Energy for generations funding provided support for a vehicle to help transport clients to appointments in Tipperary.

Our monthly committed donors and all the various community events that took place in 2023 were a core part of our work and we look forward to further developing this area in 2024.

2023 was a difficult year overall for all charities, with downward trends in fundraising emerging across the sector. As a result, our own fundraising revenue was down slightly in 2023. It is likely that international geopolitical unrest coupled with the ever-increasing cost of living have contributed to this trend. However, we are positive about our future fundraising capacity and are ready to adapt to emerging national fundraising trends.

Each year the generosity of our donors and supporters astonishes us. Without them we simply couldn't do the work we do, for which we are immensely grateful. Thank you for your continued support.



# VOLUNTEERS

Throughout 2023, volunteers continued to be central to the operation of NOVAS Street Outreach service in Limerick City. With the service in greater demand than ever, their role was vital to providing a humanitarian response to people who needed it the most. Providing a warm meal, social connection and signposting to additional services, our volunteers made a lasting impact on the lives of hundreds of vulnerable people. Throughout the year, they distributed more than 20,000 meals at the coalface of the homeless crisis.

Our volunteers were also integral to our fundraising endeavours during 2023 and connected us to generous benefactors and corporate partners. They organised and participated in a range of events, for which we are immensely grateful, most notably our Christmas Sleep-Out. We are immensely grateful for their financial support, which helped extend frontline services in the Limerick region.



# ADVOCACY & INNOVATIONS



# ADVOCACY & INNOVATIONS

NOVAS engages in collective and individual advocacy as a means of enhancing the health and housing outcomes of the people we serve and to create a more equitable society for communities who experience multiple disadvantage. We do this through a variety of means including media and social media platforms, submissions relating to government policies and engagement in relevant research.

Throughout the year NOVAS advocated for additional supports, services and housing for people experiencing homelessness in Ireland. Among these, our 2023 pre-budget submission focused on a revision of existing housing targets, an accelerated delivery of housing with particular focus on one-bed units of accommodation and maintaining standards in homeless services to create sustainable exit pathways and opportunities for people with complex needs.

We also use the collective power of the homeless, housing and broader social care sectors to advocate for evidence-led transformations. Among other groups, NOVAS is a member of FEANTSA, The Dublin Homeless Network, the Irish Homeless Policy Group, the Coalition to End Youth Homelessness and the Recovery Academy, to advocate for positive change in the lives of our clients.

Providing low-threshold, harm reduction support and services in key to the work that NOVAS does and the people it supports. Developing innovative, strengths-based programmes that promote recovery, empowerment and sustainable, independent living is core to our service delivery. The roll-out of TOPPLE on a national scale during 2023, was a reflection of this work.



## TOPPLE

TOPPLE is a pioneering overdose prevention programme that was initiated in McGarry House STA service in Limerick. The idea was the brainchild of a research piece commissioned by NOVAS following a period of significant overdoses in the service.

The programme was designed to identify the signs of overdose, respond in the event of overdose and provide support in the event of non-fatal overdose. Client training includes the skills needed to respond to and support people in crisis, to create partnerships with staff and first responders and to promote self-care. More recently, the administration of Naloxone was added to the programme. Thereafter, participants volunteer as Peer Overdose Workers for three-to-six-month periods, or longer if they wish.

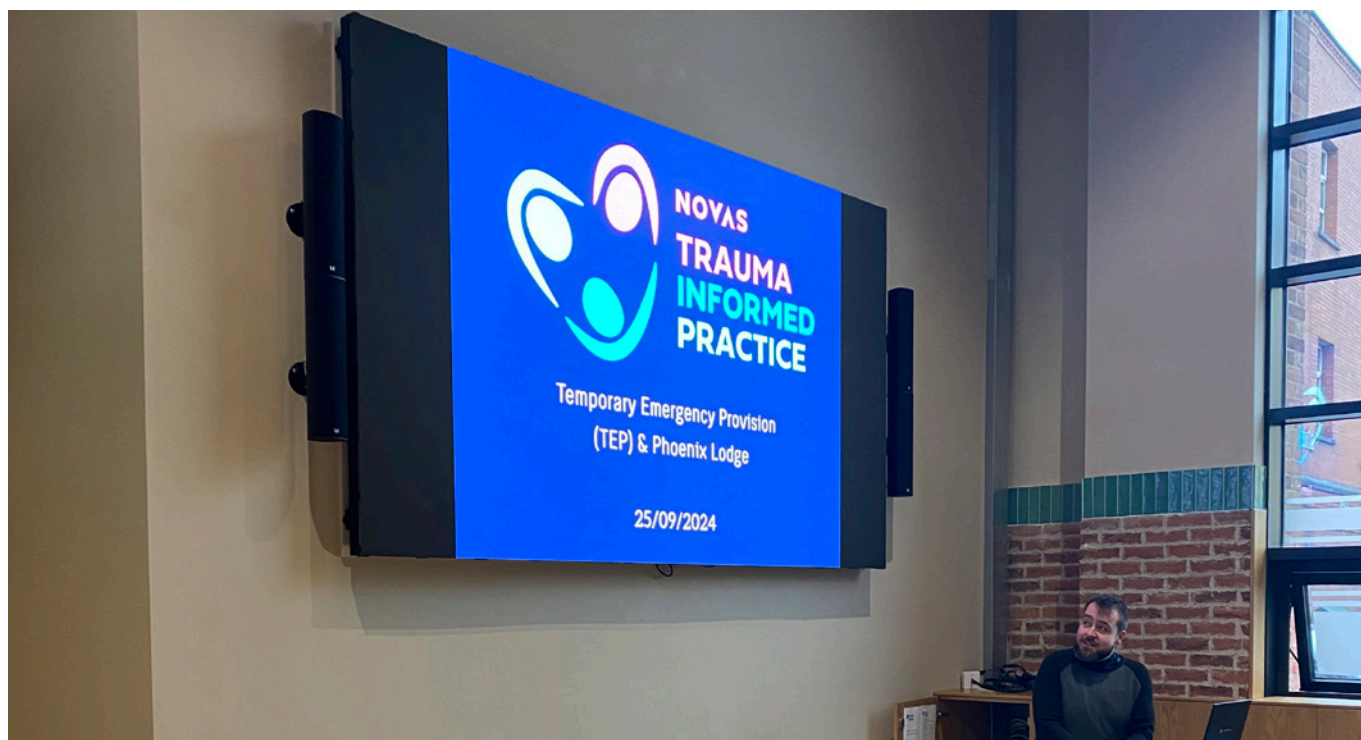
The programme has proved immensely successful in preventing and responding to overdose by harnessing the lived experience of the people most deeply

affected by it and utilising their skills to create safe spaces to support their peers to address problematic drug use.

Such has been the success of TOPPLE that in 2023 the National HSE Social Inclusion office adopted it as its national peer-led initiative in responding to overdose among at-risk groups. The programme was renamed Circle and thirty staff members and 128 peers were trained across 16 hubs countrywide. The new Circle programme began for a six-month pilot phase in 16 locations in January 2024.

Circle represents the circle of peers, who through shared lived experience understand each other and through participating in the programme learn a range of vital skills as per the TOPPLE model. There is at least one programme operating in every HSE Community Healthcare region, with operations in Cork, Waterford, Limerick, Wexford, Dublin, the Midlands, Galway, Sligo and Donegal.





## TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

NOVAS is committed to providing support and services through the lens of Trauma Informed Practice (TIP). We recognise the multiple and complex traumas experienced by our clients and the vicarious trauma our frontline staff are exposed to through the delivery of their roles. We try to create environments, culture, structures and policies that consider trauma and prevent triggering trauma responses among clients and residents.

Trauma Informed Practice helps us to better understand the trauma induced behaviours our clients often present with. It enables us to keep those with the most enduring trauma engaged in our services by creating environments where clients feel safe, respected and listened to.

In 2023, NOVAS held its inaugural National TIP Rep Day in September and the first organisational wide TIP Celebration Day on Friday 10th of November. The purpose of the former was to recognise the work done on the ground by our TIP reps and of the latter, to engage all our staff and clients in discussing the impact of trauma informed practice on service and housing delivery and explore the best ways to meet the values of TIP in all our interactions with clients and tenants. From this, we engaged in a lengthy process of developing a Charter of Rights with our clients, exploring what NOVAS values mean to them and ensuring that our culture and practice represents these values every day.

# GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

# GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

NOVAS is fully committed to maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance. We uphold these standards by adhering to principles that promote transparency, fairness, and accountability to all our stakeholders, especially those who access our services and housing. We believe these values are essential to the long-term sustainability and success of our operations. Our governance practices are aligned with the principles of statutory regulators and best practice guidelines, ensuring that we fulfil our mission to provide quality services, housing and support to our communities.

The board is responsible for providing leadership, oversight of strategy and ensuring effective controls are in place. The Board has overall responsibility of ensuring that operational functions are in line with best practice and governance of the organisation meets legal and statutory

obligations. There is a clear division of responsibilities between the Board and the CEO, with the former having oversight of all legal and financial activity, as well as setting strategic direction. The CEO is responsible for implementing the strategy as delegated by the Board.

The organisation has comprehensive systems in place for providing the Board with key information associated with risk, financial activity, quality standards, and KPI's.

NOVAS Board and its Sub Committees comprise of volunteers with backgrounds in, finance, law, housing, social care, clients' rights, advocacy, and human resources. For good governance, the Board has established five sub-committees to facilitate their duties (with an additional committee added in 2024).

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The directors and secretary who currently hold office, or who held office during 2023 are:

> Michael O'Connell (Chairman) (Appointed 1 January 2024)
> Greg Maxwell (Retired 27 August 2024)
> Siobhan Wheeler (Secretary) (Retired 27 August 2024)
> Tracy Leonard
> Patrick Claffey
> Dian Lopooso
> Martina Murphy

## BOARD MEMBERS – PROFILES

NAME	BRIEF PROFILE
MICHAEL O'CONNELL	Michael is a chartered accountant with over 25 years senior management and leadership experience in the public service and higher education. He retired from Limerick Institute of Technology as Vice President for Strategy and External Affairs in 2015. His experience includes leadership in financial planning and control, human resources, strategic planning and development and institutional mergers, restructuring and governance.
SIOBHAN WHEELER	Siobhan Wheeler is a trustee and chairperson of The Free Dinner Trust and a Local Preacher with the Methodist Church in Ireland. She graduated from University College Dublin in 1985 with a BA in French and History and from the University of Limerick in 1993 with a MA in European Integration. She taught French for several years and she is currently studying for a MA in Applied Theology through the Irish Bible Institute.
MARTINA MURPHY	Martina Murphy is a principal solicitor in her own law firm in Limerick City suburbs. She is a graduate of the University of Limerick and founded her own practice in 2007. As well as being a solicitor, Martina is also an accredited mediator and has a particular interest in family law, mental health law and education law.
PATRICK CLAFFEY	Patrick Claffey started as a volunteer with the Dublin Simon Community, later was elected to its board and served as its Chair. Thereafter, he worked in various roles within the Dublin Simon Community and became its Head of Services. He played a critical role in identifying new services and led the way in their introduction. He joined NOVAS when we opened our first service in Dublin and until his retirement played a valued role in the successful development of this service.
DIAN LOPOSSO	Dian holds an Honours BSc in Food Science and Health and works as a lab technician in a dairy company. She is also a Gospel artist, using her musical talents to inspire others. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Dian has lived in Ireland for 14 years. She is an active member of her church and volunteers with various organisations. She is passionate about community work and supporting vulnerable individuals.
TRACY LEONARD	<p>Tracy Leonard studied Bachelor of Business Studies in University of Limerick. She achieved a Master of Accounting from UCD Michael Smurfit School of Business and is a member of Chartered Accountants Ireland. She joined KPMG in 2012 and is a Director in Audit Practice. She provides audit and assurance services to a wide variety of both private and public clients.</p> <p>Tracy has experience working with listed companies and private Irish family-owned businesses across the Retail, Hospitality, Agribusiness, Manufacturing and Education sectors.</p>
GREG MAXWELL	Greg Maxwell has extensive experience of the housing and homeless sectors in Ireland. Former CEO of the Dublin Simon Community, he co-established the Dublin Homeless Network to support efforts in collective advocacy and policy development. Greg was the Chair of NOVAS Board of Directors until 2023.



## MEETING AND SUB-COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE 2023

BOARD MEMBERS	BOARD MEETINGS	AUDIT & FINANCE	GOVERNANCE	HOUSING & TENANTS	QUALITY CLIENT SERVICES	JOINED	RESIGNED
GREG MAXWELL (CHAIR)	8/8		4/4				27/08/2024
MICHAEL O'CONNELL		4/4		03/12/2015	27/08/2024		
(VICE CHAIR	7/8	3/3		4/4		29/04/2021	
SIOBHAN WHEELER (SECRETARY)	7/8		3/4		2/4	25/10/2018	27/08/2024
PATRICK CLAFFEY	6/8				4/4	23/01/2020	
DIAN LOPOSSO	6/8			2/4		09/12/2021	
TRACY LEONARD	5/8	3/3				10/12/2020	
MARTINA MURPHY	5/8		2/4			15/09/2022	
SUB COM MEMBERS						Joined	Resigned
MARY O'SHEA					3/4	16/01/2019	
MARTINA SHEEHAN				2/4		20/04/2023	
GILLIAN DUNNE				4/4		22/06/2022	

## BOARD COMMITTEES

### Audit & Finance Sub Committee

The Audit & Finance Sub Committee of the NOVAS Board of Directors provides oversight and governance of the following areas of activity:

### Financial Sustainability

- > Reviewing and making recommendations to the Board on an annual budget of income and expenditure prepared by the Head of Finance and CEO including annual adjustments to Reserves and Sinking Funds.
- > Reviewing Management Accounts on a quarterly basis in relation to income & expenditure, balance sheet and assumptions as prepared and presented by the Head of Finance and to report to the board.
- > Discuss plans to ensure future financial sustainability and growth of the organisation and ensure the organisation makes the necessary financial preparations to fulfil the commitments of its strategic plan.
- > Decide on any prudent investment strategies that will support the financial suitability of the organisation.

## Financial Audits

- > Reviewing every year whether the service of an internal auditor needs to be secured.
- > Reviewing every three years whether to tender for the services of an external auditor or retain the current provider.
- > Engage the External Auditors to commence the Annual External Financial Audit and support the requirements of the process through to receiving the report of and actions arising from the Audit.
- > Engage effectively with any external auditors appointed by statutory funders of regulatory authorities with responsibility for oversight of our work.
- > Ensure open action items from all financial audits are tracked and monitored in the Audit & Finance Sub Committee Report through to completion.

## Finance

- > Reviewing the Finance Department Risk Register and interrogating the mitigations in place to manage risks and the completeness of the register.
- > Reviewing new and revised Organisational policies relating to Financial Management and making recommendations to the Board for adoption.
- > Ensure adequate controls and monitoring of finance records are in place and effective.
- > Monitor the integrity of Annual Financial Statements and produce an accompanying Directors Report.
- > Ensure a Protected Disclosures policy is in place to provide arrangements by which staff of the organisation may, in confidence, raise concerns about possible improprieties in matters of financial reporting or other matters and ensuring that there are arrangements for independent investigation of such matters and for appropriate follow-up action.
- > Ensuring compliance with the expenditure of income in accordance with statutory funder service level agreements or donors wishes.

## GOVERNANCE SUB COMMITTEE

The Governance Sub Committee of the NOVAS Board of Directors provides oversight and governance of the following areas of activity:

### Board Governance

- > Identify any skill gaps existing in the skill range of existing Sub Committee and Board membership and make recommendations to the Chair of the Board for targeted recruitment to fill existing gaps to enable effective succession planning.
- > Support the induction of new subcommittee or board members.
- > Identify training needs and opportunities for board members.
- > Ensure an effective Board Information Pack is in place for new Board members.
- > Ensure the Constitution and charitable purpose of the organisation is still relevant and up to date.
- > Carry out an annual review of the Board's Performance including an appraisal of the Chair and CEO.

## **Human Resources**

- > Reviewing recruitment practices, vacancy rates and retention plans.
- > Employee Engagement, communication and satisfaction.
- > Ensure Learning and Development initiatives provide effective induction, required and developmental training.
- > Reviewing Health and Safety risks, mitigations, incidents and compliance.
- > Effective management of Industrial & Employee Relations and performance management concerns and fulfilment of statutory obligations as an employer.
- > Ensuring the effective functioning of the HR department.
- > Reviewing new and revised Human Resources policies and making recommendations to the Board for adoption.
- > Analysing and making recommendations to the Board for any changes to salaries, Pay Scales, Compensation & Benefits or any requests for individual salary reviews.
- > Managing the recruitment process when the CEO role becomes vacant and setting remuneration and performance expectations for the role.

## **Compliance**

- > Ensuring compliance and integrity of statements made relating to statutory reporting requirements including:
  - Funder applications and reporting requirements (Section 39 HSE, Section 10 Local Authorities, Section 56 Tusla)
  - Reporting and cooperation with re questions from AHBRA (Approved Housing Body Regulatory Authority)
  - Charities Regulators Code of Governance Code, annual self-declaration and register of Directors and cooperation with any other requests for information
  - Companies Registration Office reporting requirements.
- > Advise and make recommendations to the Board relating to Statutory or Regulatory Compliance requirements.
- > Reviewing new and revised Organisational policies and making recommendations to the Board for adoption.
- > Ensure the organisation operates within the framework of its own policies.
- > Ensure awareness of upcoming and changing legislation that relates to our work and review plans for preparedness for same.

## **Risk Management**

- > Ensure effective Risk Management, Incident Management and Service Continuity Policies are in place.
- > Ensure a comprehensive Organisational Risk Register is in place, interrogate the rationale and completeness of the Risks identified, be assured of the effectiveness of the mitigations in place against risk and seek updates in relation to changes in risks.

## QUALITY CLIENT SERVICES SUB COMMITTEE

The Quality Client Services Sub Committee of the NOVAS Board of Directors provides oversight and governance of the following areas of activity:

### Client Support

- > Ensuring the voice of the client is foremost in decision making.
- > Reviewing and interrogating data relating to the support provided to clients, with particular focus on monitoring the volume of clients supported to progress into sustainable independent living or supported to avoid entry into homelessness.
- > Reviewing other metrics that measure relevant outcomes for clients including the key areas of life skills.
- > Review of any clients of particularly high vulnerability and plans in place to provide appropriate support.

### Quality of Service

- > Review and interrogate results and recommendations of internal quality audits of services, based on the National Quality Standards Framework, and compliance with expectations relating to risk assessments, consent, care planning and management, incident management, environmental maintenance and health & safety.
- > Review of new or revised Operational Policies and making recommendations to the Board for adoption for the furtherance of safe and effective services to clients.

### Risk Management

- > Review of Operational Risk Register and interrogation of completeness of identified risks, effectiveness of mitigations identified and any resulting impacts.
- > Review of outcomes from any Client Complaints.
- > Review of significant incidents and resulting changes in practice or mitigations

### Funder Engagement

- > Review of funding applications to statutory funders and any matters arising.
- > Overview of recent engagement with funders, in particular where deficits in funding exist and any agreements or progress towards eradicating deficits.
- > Review of reports from any funder annual service level review meetings and implications for the organisation.

### Service Development

- > Review of potential new opportunities for proposals or tenders for new services and an overview of the resources required and planned next steps.
- > Oversight of any risks to continued operation of any service due to funding shortfalls or other reasons.



## HOUSING & TENANTS SUB COMMITTEE

The Housing & Tenants Sub Committee of the NOVAS Board of Directors provides oversight and governance of the following areas of activity:

### Property Acquisition

- > Ensuring the organisation has sufficient and sustainable financial planning to meet the goals for growth in housing stock outlined in the Organisation's strategic plan.
- > Review of proposed properties for acquisition or construction reviewing the individual cases for financial viability and quality to prospective tenants of each scheme and providing approvals to proceed with purchase or construction to Head of Housing & Development.
- > Ensuring adequate due diligence is in place for the assessment of each scheme and associated compliance and risk considerations.
- > Report of current property portfolio by location against targets.

### Asset Management

- > Oversight of emergency, planned and cyclical maintenance works.
- > Oversight of stock condition survey completion and associated external evaluation with connected sinking fund allocation.
- > Review of completion against environmental sustainability target through retrofitting programme.

### Tenant Services

- > Ensuring the voice of the tenant is foremost in decision making.
- > Monitoring tenant engagement and satisfaction programmes and evaluations.
- > Review of tenancies of high concern and planned actions.
- > Review of formal complaints arising from tenants or neighbours.

### Compliance

- > Review of new or revised Housing Management Policies and making recommendations to the Board for adoption for the furtherance of safe and effective services to clients.
- > Review of annual AHBRA (Approved Housing Body Regulatory Authority) annual report.
- > Oversight of Health & Safety and building regulation compliance on all units.
- > Overview of Residential Tenancy Board (RTB) registration compliance.

### Risk Management

- > Review of Housing Department Risk Register and interrogation of completeness of identified risks, effectiveness of mitigations identified and any resulting impacts.

## FUNDRAISING & ADVOCACY (ESTABLISHED APRIL 2024)

The Advocacy, Fundraising & Communications Sub Committee of the NOVAS Board of Directors provides oversight and governance of the following areas of activity:

### Research

- > Oversight of planned approach to new programmes of research determined by trends emerging within NOVAS service provision and more generally within the sector.
- > Review of outcomes from research conducted by NOVAS, or in collaboration with partners in the sector and academia, to promote better public policy and governmental supports for our clients.

### Advocacy

- > Review of planned and completed public policy change lobbying efforts, including submissions relating to proposed policy and legislative change, commentary on government budgets and activity relating to election campaigns, referendums and other political activity.
- > Review of collective advocacy work with peer not-for-profit organisations in the sector.

### Fundraising

- > Review of Fundraising Campaign incomes and planned next steps of development in each area.
- > Oversight of new fundraising campaign themes, messages, images and calls to action.
- > Ensuring adequate resources (people, skills and funds) are available to the organisation to effectively deliver the agreed fundraising initiatives.
- > Oversight of congruency of messaging through research, advocacy, fundraising campaigns and communications work.
- > Review and updates about possible contacts and introductions.

### Public Relations, Messaging & Communications

- > Responsibility for protecting the good name and reputation of the organisation.
- > Review of the resources and capacity of NOVAS to effectively reach our required audiences.
- > Overview of activity to expand name recognition and brand awareness.
- > Overview of recent media engagement and representation.
- > Review of connections and opportunities arising from NOVAS representation on relevant networks and forums.

### Risk Management

- > Review of Advocacy & Communications Department Risk Register and interrogation of completeness of identified risks, effectiveness of mitigations identified and any resulting impacts.
- > Review of Fundraising Department Risk Register and interrogation of completeness of identified risks, effectiveness of mitigations identified and any resulting impacts.

## COMPLIANCE

NOVAS publishes its accounts on an annual basis and submits annual returns to the Company Registration Office.

NOVAS is a company limited by guarantee (CRN 330018) and was incorporated in 2000. It is a registered charity (CHY 13390) (RCN 20041533) and an Approved Housing Body. It is compliant with the standards set out by the Charities Regulator in the Charities Governance Code, which have statutory effect from 2020.

In addition, we comply with the standards issued by the Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority (AHBRA).

The Companies Act 2014 came into effect on 1st June 2015 and from then the requirements for the content and presentation of financial reporting for not-for-profit companies changed. NOVAS adopted the reporting standards of FRS 102 (Financial Reporting Standards) for charities to report their financial activities.

NOVAS complies with the requirements set down by the Charities Regulator and the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising from the Charities Institute Ireland.

## OPERATIONAL AND REGULATORY STANDARDS

NOVAS Bellevue house is a residential childcare facility that is registered with TUSLA, and it is periodically inspected under the National Standards for Children's Residential Centres (HIQA).

NOVAS Homeless Services are measured against the National Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services.

All services that receive state funding have a Service Level Arrangement in place and reviews are carried out on an annual basis.

## PRINCIPLE RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

RISK AREA	RISK SUMMARY	MITIGATING ACTIONS
RECRUITMENT & RETENTION	Challenges in recruiting and retaining staff could impact on service delivery.	Enhanced staff benefits Benchmarking salaries Learning and development program
CLIENTS' WELLBEING & WELFARE	Clients' wellbeing may be impacted due to reduced service quality, which could stem from factors such as recruitment challenges, funding constraints, and lack of suitable long-term housing.	Trauma informed practice Staff training program H&S program Complaints framework Policy framework
SUSTAINABLE FUNDING	Funding not aligned to full cost recovery could result in deficits that cannot be met by reserves which could impact the organisation's ability to deliver services and meet planned objectives.	Annual budget preparation Financial monitoring and cost control on each project Funding reviews with statutory partners
REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE	Negative publicity on social or traditional media could harm the organisation's reputation, potentially affecting relationships with funding partners and stakeholders.	Policy and communication spokesperson Media awareness in the organisation Social and traditional media presence
DATA PROTECTION & CYBER SECURITY	Exposure to data breaches and cyber-attacks could disrupt the organisation's ability to perform its daily operations and lead to scrutiny from the media and the data regulator.	Multi Factor Authentication Advanced Threat Protection Staff training Offsite data back ups
HOUSING DELIVERY	Financial resources available to the organisation could limit the ability to expand housing acquisitions and development, which may put our housing output goals at risk.	Budgets aligned to growth and workload Ongoing evaluation of changes in funding and resources Capital Works Management Framework



# FINANCIAL REPORT

In 2023, the total income generated by Arlington Novas Ireland CLG was €14.778M (an increase of 6.4% from 2022). Revenue based Grants received by our organisation from the HSE, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and various local authorities amounted to €12.940M (up 6.47% from last year). This represented 87.6% of our total income. The increase from 2022 was due to some small increases in funding and the provision of some additional services.

The funding environment remained difficult throughout 2023, particularly with our long-standing services in the Mid-West region. Funding for some of these services remains at lower levels than in 2008, which continues to be a major issue, particularly with the recruitment and retention of staff, inflation and the subsequent increase in costs across the board. We are working hard with our government funders to address these deficits and secure the financial viability of our services in the region.

Other operating income was €1.837M (an increase of 5.7% from 2022). This consisted of contributions from our clients

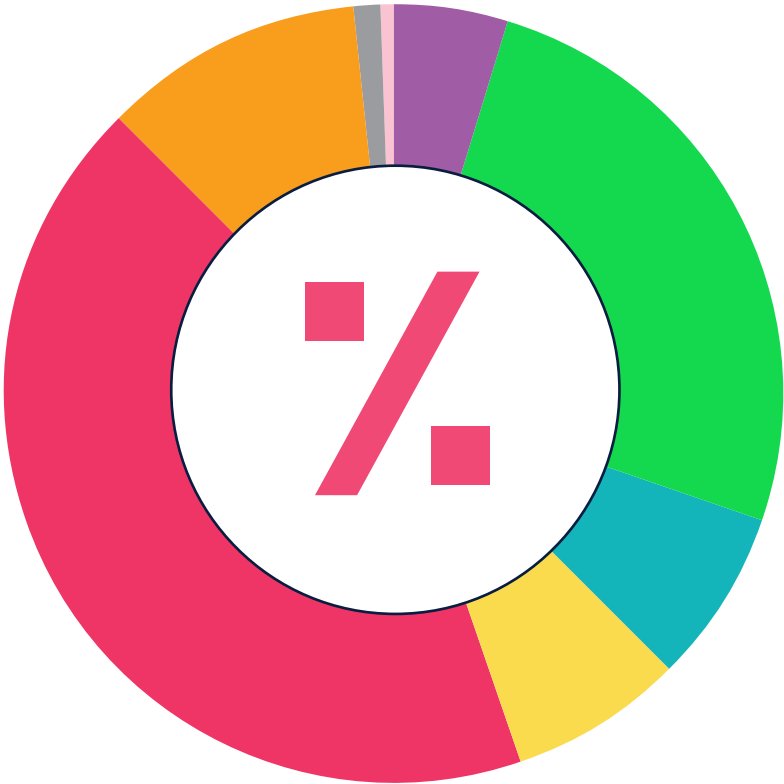
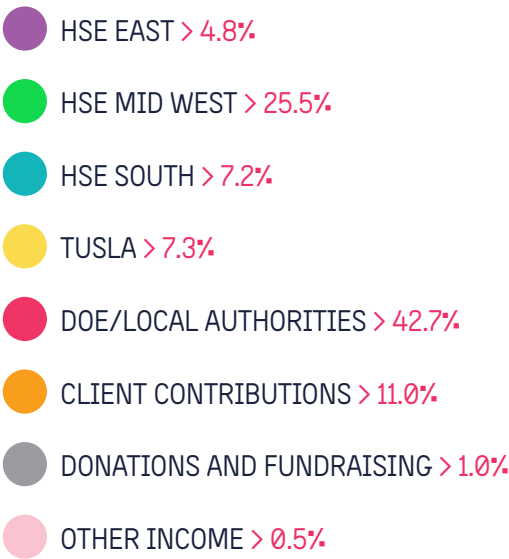
and tenants, development levies, return on investments, donations, legacies and fundraising. There continued to be some difficulties in respect of collection of client contributions and as previously noted, fundraising and donations were lower than in previous years. We recruited a Head of Fundraising during 2023, which was a new role in the organisation and should help to enhance our fundraising endeavours.

Other income was €1.109M (an increase of 3.4%). Other income consists of amortisation of Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) and other loans. There was a change in accounting policy in 2023. CAS loans are now being amortised over the life of the loan, usually 30 years.

We remain extremely grateful to all our funders and donors, whose continued support and generosity has enabled us to maintain the high standards of service provision and housing to our clients and tenants.

Set out below is a breakdown of our income for 2023 by source.

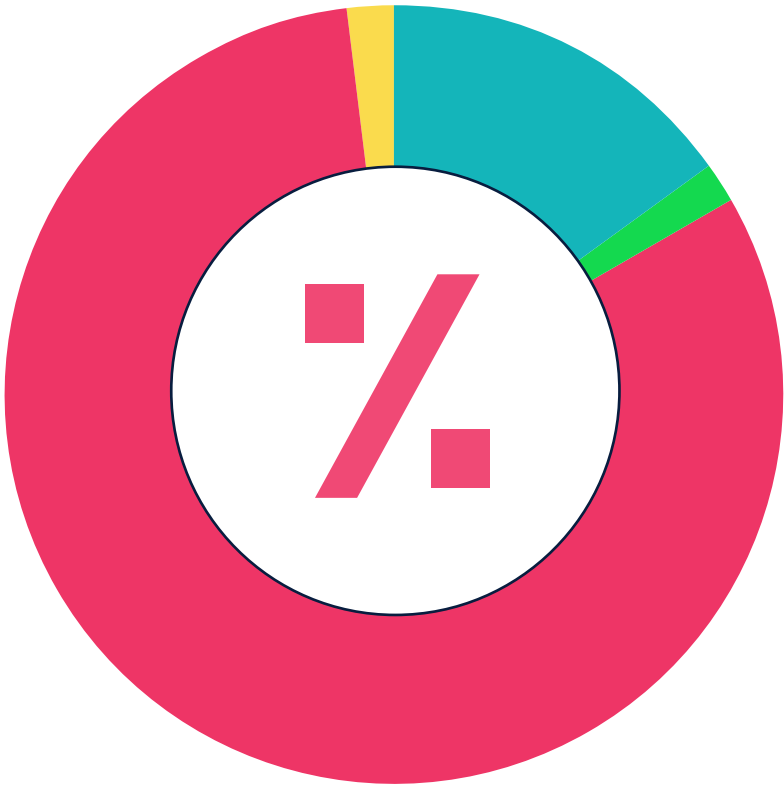
BREAKDOWN OF  
INCOME 2023



We have continued to manage expenditure as prudently as possible, with the support of our staff and suppliers. Client care, staff and related costs made up more than 82% of our overall expenditure, while costs associated with housing, both long term and short term, accounted for 15%. Our costs continued to be impacted by the increased cost of living, particularly in the areas of energy, food, subsistence, cleaning and maintenance.

Set out below is a breakdown of the expenditure for 2023.

BREAKDOWN OF  
EXPENDITURE 2023



## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the Financial Year ended 31 December 2023

	2023	AS RESTATED 2022
	€	€
INCOME	14,777,509	13,891,913
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	(14,692,115)	(13,816,429)
OPERATING SURPLUS	85,394	75,484
OTHER INCOME	1,108,569	1,072,396
INTEREST RECEIVABLE AND SIMILAR INCOME	2,288	-
INTEREST PAYABLE AND SIMILAR EXPENSES	(85,235)	(83,846)
SURPLUS BEFORE TAX	1,111,016	1,064,034
SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,111,016	1,064,034
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR		
UTILISATION OF DESIGNATED FUNDS	(29,113)	(46,140)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	(29,113)	(46,140)
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,081,903	1,017,894

There were no recognised gains or losses for 2023 and 2022 other than those included in the statement of comprehensive income.

All amounts relate to continuing operations

The financial statements were approved by the board and signed on its behalf by:

**MICHAEL O'CONNELL**  
(CHAIRPERSON)  
Director

**SIOBHAN WHEELER**  
Director

Date: 27 August 2024

Date: 27 August 2024

## ARLINGTON NOVAS IRELAND COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

## BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 December 2023

	2023	AS RESTATED 2022
	€	€
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
TANGIBLE ASSETS	36,026	36,597
TANGIBLE ASSETS - HOUSING PROPERTIES	48,988,911	42,364,205
	<u>49,024,937</u>	<u>42,400,802</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	1,315,791	1,324,237
CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND	3,917,123	3,859,325
	<u>5,232,914</u>	<u>5,183,562</u>
CREDITORS : AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	<u>(2,106,688)</u>	<u>(1,682,948)</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>3,126,226</u>	<u>3,500,614</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	52,151,163	45,901,416
CREDITORS : AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR	(31,546,751)	(26,356,766)
GRANTS	(2,037,711)	(2,065,248)
<b>PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES</b>		
OTHER PROVISIONS	<u>(144,678)</u>	<u>(139,282)</u>
	<u>(144,678)</u>	<u>(139,282)</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<u>18,422,023</u>	<u>17,340,120</u>
<b>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>		
DESIGNATED FUND	3,966,103	3,543,676
PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT	<u>14,555,920</u>	<u>13,796,444</u>
	<u>18,522,023</u>	<u>17,340,120</u>

The financial statements were approved by the board and signed on its behalf by:

**MICHAEL O'CONNELL**  
(CHAIRPERSON)  
Director

**SIOBHAN WHEELER**  
Director

Date: 27 August 2024

Date: 27 August 2024



In summary, there was an operating surplus of €85k (2022 - €75k) in income over expenditure. Any surpluses we attain are reinvested in our services.

The remuneration of the CEO for the year was €82,750 (2022 - €73,333). The company also made contributions at the standard rate to the company pension scheme in respect of the CEO. No other staff member is in receipt of a salary higher than the CEO.

We are committed to managing our costs as cautiously as possible, ensuring that the vast majority of our expenditure continues to be spent on providing frontline services to our clients/

The Finance and Audit Committee met on three occasions during 2023.

In 2024, we will continue to purchase and develop properties to provide long-term housing for individuals and families, as indicated in our Strategic Plan 2023-2027.



## FRIENDS & PARTNERS





# NOVAS





Housing | Health | Recovery

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