

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**NOVAS**  
Housing | Health | Recovery



6,088

people supported by  
NOVAS last year



▲1.8%

increase from the previous 12 months  
and an increase of 202% in ten years



1,110

children supported by  
NOVAS in 2022



1,064

children supported through  
our Christmas Toy Appeal



+20,000

meals provided by our  
Street Outreach



138,265

warm meals provided across our  
residential services



704

people supported with information  
and advice through our head office



1,130

presentations to our Out-of-Hours  
service in Limerick



244

women lived in our female  
services in Dublin



70%

of rooms in emergency accommodation  
were single occupancy



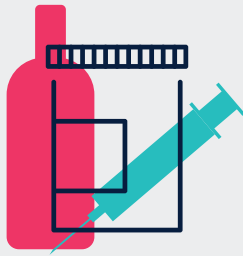
227

units of housing with 311  
adults and 343 children



**TRAUMA INFORMED  
PRACTICE**

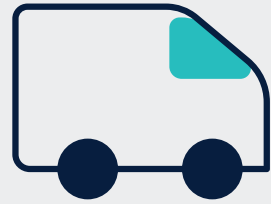
All NOVAS service had Trauma Informed  
reps appointed throughout the year



Addiction  
Services



Prevention

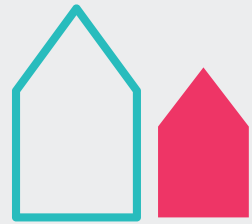


Street  
Outreach

## Our Services



Tenancy Sustainment  
Services



Social  
Housing



Homeless  
Accommodation



Family  
Support

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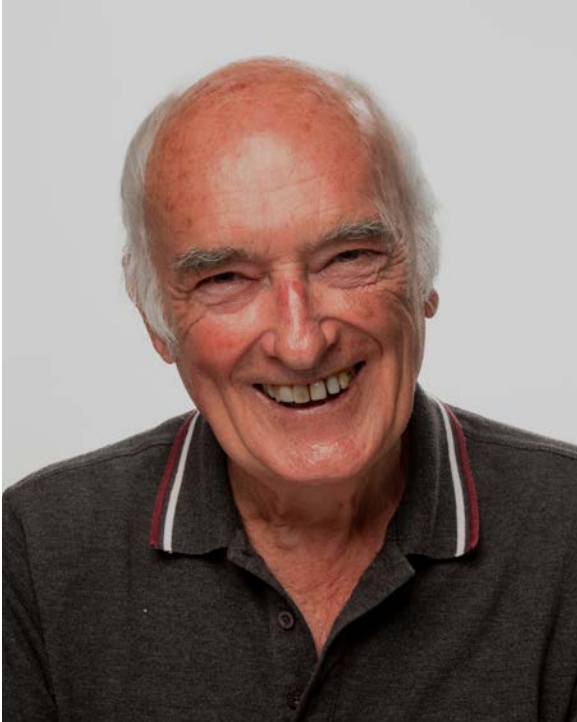
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“

FUNDING PROCEDURES REVEAL AN ABSENCE OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE DAY TO DAY NEEDS OF THOSE WHO ARE HOMELESS OR THE PRACTICALITIES OF PROVIDING HOMELESS SERVICES.

## A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

We are constantly being bombarded with housing numbers and statistics. We listen to politicians debating them. The media features house completions, homeless numbers and political comment on same. The reality of being one of those statistics is of a person devastated by their personal circumstances; of wanting to keep their ambitions, of not losing sight of their dreams.

Emergency accommodation is precisely that; a place to stay in an emergency. A place to leave behind as soon as possible. 'Emergency' is meant to be not more than six months. Indeed, some years ago voluntary agencies had to explain individual instances where a client had not moved to long term accommodation within the six months! Today 'emergency' can mean years, not months.

The reality of being one of those statistics is that you are at the end of a housing queue that gets longer and longer.

Eight years ago our main shelter in Limerick supported more than 200 clients in that year; helping most to move on to long term accommodation. Last year

the same shelter accommodated and supported just over 80 clients. Moving to long term-accommodation has become a long term aspiration.

In Dublin we pioneered working with women in women-only emergency accommodation. Despite increasing our capacity by over 100% in the last eight years, the number of women moving on fell from 333 to 224.

In these circumstances our staff have the unenviable task of encouraging and supporting clients to keep their ambitions, keep believing they will move away from 'emergency' accommodations. The focus, resilience and professionalism of our staff earn unqualified admiration of the Board.

Funding procedures reveal an absence of understanding of the day to day needs of those who are homeless or the practicalities of providing homeless services. Sometimes funding for a project is not known until well into the financial year.

Two decades ago a Government appointed Inter-Departmental Committee recommended multi annual funding for voluntary homeless agencies (on a rolling three-year basis). While the government welcomed the report, it was not acted upon. Multi-annual funding is something the sector, including NOVAS, continues to advocate for.

We all agree the solution is more housing. The decision to cut capital expenditure (taken during the financial crisis of 15 years ago) is identified as the major cause of the current housing shortage. This is only partly correct. The underlying reason is the absence of public housing for more than three decades. Housing is a civil right. Developers build houses to make profit, and that is entirely understandable. However, the state must ensure all its citizens are adequately housed. We support housing for all. Government must establish public housing authorities, to plan and construct housing to meet the needs of all citizens

Ireland is a signatory to the Lisbon Protocol and so has committed to ending homelessness by 2030. We are very far away from achieving that now. A lot more needs to be done if we are going to reach this target.

**Greg Maxwell**  
**Chairperson**



“

NOBODY IS MORE IMPACTED BY THE CURRENT HOUSING AND HOMELESS CRISIS THAN OUR CLIENTS, WHO ARE AT THE SHARP END OF THIS UNPRECEDENTED EMERGENCY. WE ARE INSPIRED BY THEIR RESILIENCE, AS MANY PEOPLE WE WORK WITH SPEND YEARS LIVING IN EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION...

## A WORD FROM OUR CEO

By December 2022, there was unprecedented numbers of people officially recorded as homeless in Ireland. With 11,362 people officially homeless, an increase of 30% since the same month in the previous year, demand for services was greater than ever before. At the same time, residents living in emergency and temporary accommodation were spending protracted periods of time living in services, as pathways out of homelessness were contracting, especially for single people. It was the perfect storm.

During 2022, NOVAS worked with more people than ever before, providing supports and services to 6,088 people. This was an increase of 1.8% from the previous year and 202% over 10 years. While fewer people were supported in emergency accommodation, more people than ever were supported with advice and information, tenancy sustainment and outreach support and through our street outreach service. We also increased our social housing stock during the year by 33 houses and apartments.

While demand for services was unprecedented, we continued to support our clients and tenants with care and respect and our frontline staff worked

ceaselessly to secure existing accommodation within social housing stock and the private rented market. Our staff simultaneously embraced our journey to provide services and housing through the lens of trauma informed practice, creating enhanced services and structures which helped to embed a sense of safety, mutuality and empowerment among our clients.

The zeal, commitment and expertise of our frontline staff never ceases to amaze me. Their commitment to finding innovative and client-centred solutions enabled us to support more people than ever throughout the year. It is a privilege to work with people who are committed to making a positive impact on the lives of every client that accesses our services. I am so grateful for their steadfastness in the face of mounting challenges.

The lifting of the eviction ban in April 2023 was one such challenge and a huge blow to those of us in the sector who had advocated for its extension. It resulted in more notices-to-quit, more landlords leaving an already contracting market and more people becoming homeless. In August of this year, we recorded the highest number of homeless children ever in this state.

Despite the grim reality faced by those at risk of homelessness, or indeed because of it, we rose to the challenge and in the months following the ban, NOVAS purchased 22 properties with existing tenants in situ, in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council. Through these purchases, we ensured that households avoided the trauma of homelessness and displacement and continued to live in their home with a greater sense of security. Of course, we are acutely aware that this is merely a drop in the ocean, considering the thousands of tenants potentially affected by the expiration of the eviction ban, but it is a measure we are committed to extending in other regions throughout the remainder of 2023 and into 2024.

Nobody is more impacted by the current housing and homeless crisis than our clients, who are at the sharp end of this unprecedented emergency. We are inspired by their resilience, as many people we work with spend years living in emergency accommodation with few opportunities to find their own sustainable home, especially single individuals. The data within this report clearly illustrates the contraction in the number of people accessing our temporary emergency accommodation because of the length of time existing residents are living there. In light of this, our 2023-2027 Strategic Plan has committed to doubling our housing stock during the lifetime of the plan, with particular focus on providing pathways from homelessness for our existing clients. The launch of eight one-bed units of accommodation in Limerick this month and our recent development for single older people in Dublin, is



testament to this pledge. Accelerated delivery of housing is the cornerstone to ending the current homeless crisis and NOVAS is committed to playing its part.

During these challenging times, we have been ably guided by our voluntary Board of Directors. During 2022, they steered the organisation with high quality governance and oversight. They provided their time and expertise to ensure the organisation fulfilled its duties in a transparent, cost effective, client-centred and focused way. We are indebted to them for their leadership and commitment to NOVAS and the clients and tenants we serve and their dedication to ensuring NOVAS continues to be an employer of choice for our staff.

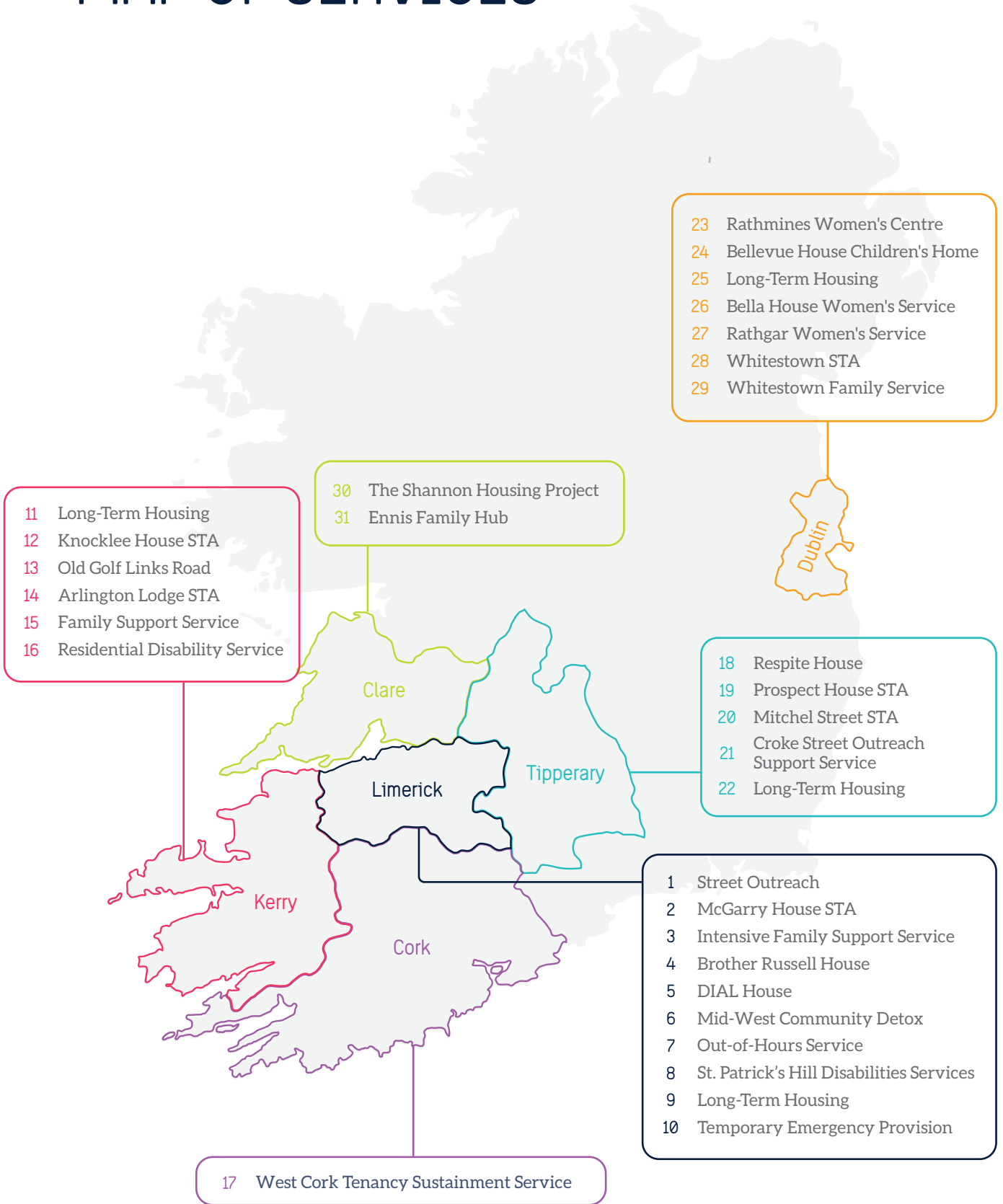
I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our funders in government, the HSE, the Department of Housing, the local authorities in the areas we work and Tusla. Thank you for enabling us to serve the people that need us the most.

Thank you 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.

Finally, I wish to thank our clients and tenants who entrust their support to us. It is an honour to serve you.

**Una Deasy**  
**CEO**

# MAP OF SERVICES



# TIMELINE 2002 - 2022

- 
- 2002** ▶ **BRIDGELAND HOUSE:** NOVAS opens its first service, a temporary supported direct-access homeless accommodation service for men and women in Limerick City.
- 
- 2003** ▶ **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** ▶ **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** ▶ **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** ▶ **MOUNT BROWN:** Dublin's only low-threshold dedicated female homeless service.
- 
- 2008** ▶ **PROSPECT HOUSE:** Temporary supported accommodation in single apartments for men and women requiring a low level of support in Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.
- 
- 2009** ▶ **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.
- ▶ **RESPIRE 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** ▶ **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** ▶ **MID-WEST COMMUNITY DETOX:** Providing support and services to people wishing to detox from prescribed and non-prescribed 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 long-term supported housing in one, two and three-bed apartments.
- 
- 2013** ▶ **HOUSING FIRST LIMERICK:** Commencement of Housing First on a pilot basis in Limerick City, supported by a multi-disciplinary 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 long-term 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, intellectual 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.

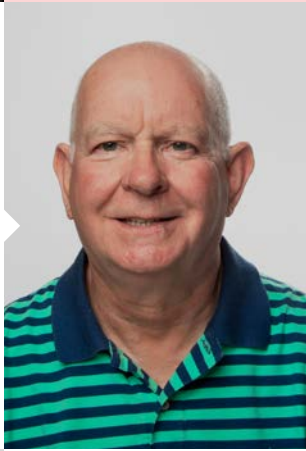
## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Greg Maxwell**  
Chairperson



**Pat Claffey**



**Siobhan Wheeler**



**Tracy Leonard**



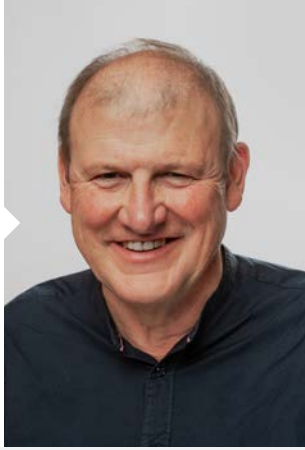
**Dian Loposso**



**Martina Murphy**



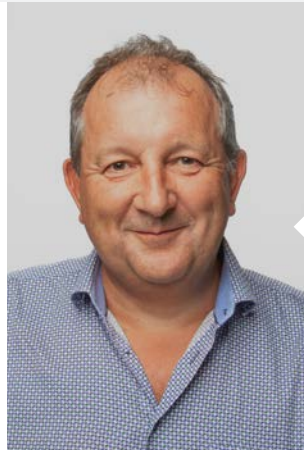
**Michael O'Connell**



## SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM



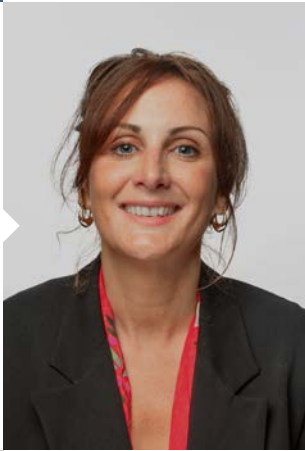
**Donal O'Carroll**  
Head of Finance



**John Rogers**  
Head of Housing and  
Development



**Una Burns**  
Head of Advocacy  
and Communications



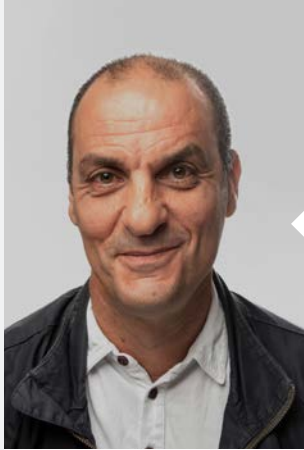
**Darren Crowe**  
Head of Operations



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



**Pam Gunter**  
Head of Human  
Resources



**Jackie Leonard**  
Head of Fundraising



# VISION, MISSION, OBJECTIVES & VALUES

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 ARE

- > Equality
- > Diversity
- > Dignity
- > Self-determination
- > Strengths-based
- > Rights-based

# NOVAS MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE 2023



**Pat Claffey**  
Board of Directors



**Dian Loposso**  
Board of Directors



**Michael O'Connell**  
Board of Directors



**Greg Maxwell**  
Chairperson  
Board of Directors



**Siobhan Wheeler**  
Secretary  
Board of Directors



**Tracy Leonard**  
Board of Directors



**Martina Murphy**  
Board of Directors



**Una Deasy**  
Chief Executive Officer



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



**John Rogers**  
Head of Housing  
and Development



**Jackie Leonard**  
Head of Fundraising



**Darren Crowe**  
Head of Operations



**Pam Gunter**  
Head of Human  
Resources



**Donal O'Carroll**  
Head Of Finance



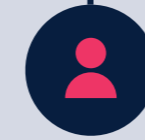
**Una Burns**  
Head of Advocacy &  
Communications



**Julie McKenna**  
Senior Health &  
Recovery Services  
Manager



**Billie Stoica**  
Senior Outreach Services  
Manager



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



**Patrick Healy**  
Senior Disabilities &  
Young Persons Services  
Manager



**Jenny Doyle**  
Senior Residential  
Services Manager (East)



**Fronline Services  
Management and Staff**



**Housing Management  
and Staff**

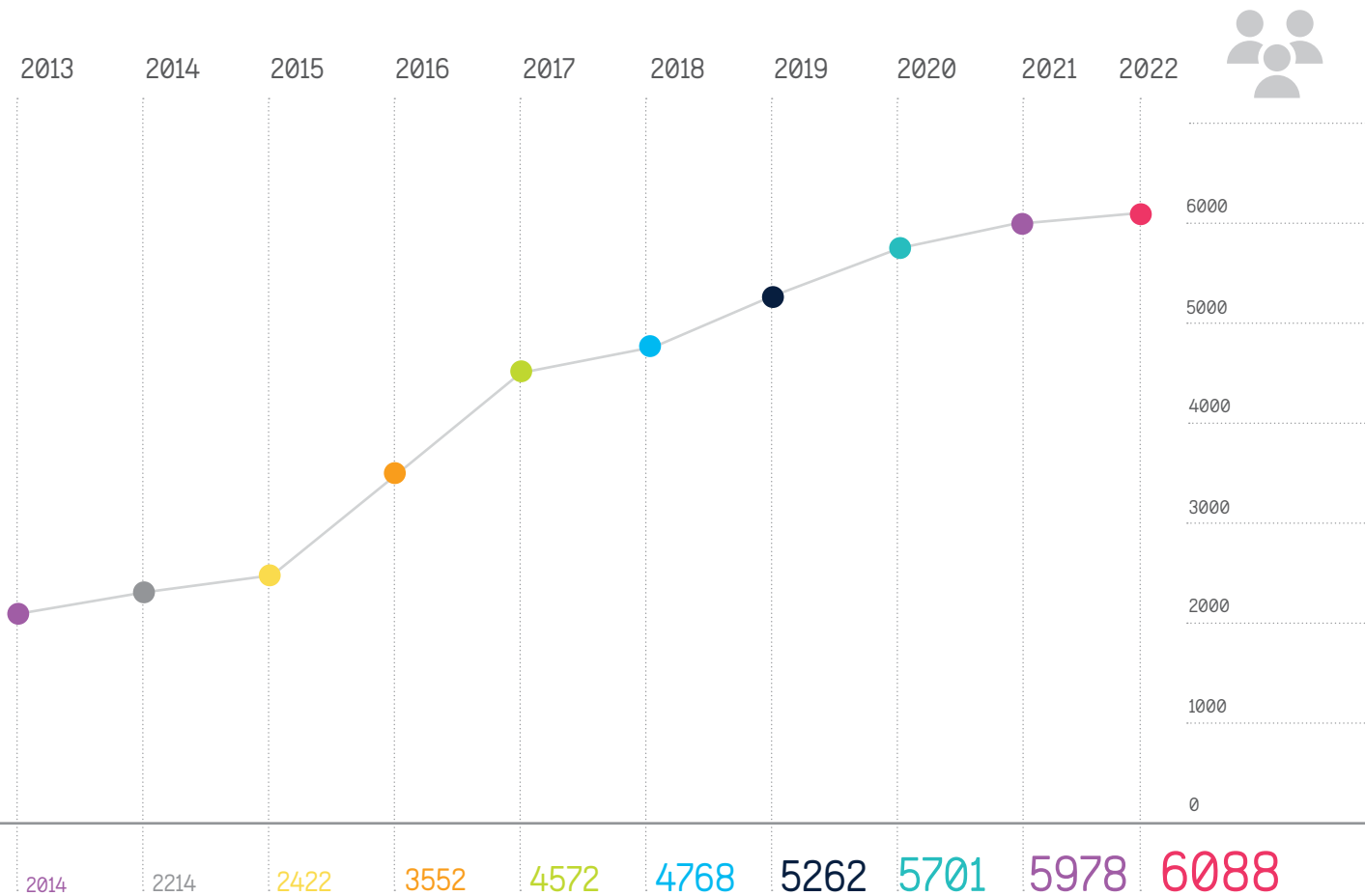


**Facilities Management  
and Staff**

# 2022: A YEAR IN REVIEW

By the end of 2022, the number of homeless people in Ireland stood at a record 11,362, a 30% increase in the 12-month period from December 2021. This increase had profound implications for people seeking to access emergency and temporary homeless accommodation and for service providers throughout the country.

NUMBER OF CLIENTS 2013-2022



In 2022, NOVAS provided support, accommodation and housing to 6,088 people, an increase of 1.8% compared to the previous 12-month period and 202% over 10 years.

Across this 10-year period, there was a substantial rise in people supported by NOVAS, however the rate of growth has slowed recently, despite unprecedented demand for services and a simultaneous rise in NOVAS' social housing stock. This is largely due to the reduction in the number of people moving through NOVAS' Temporary Supported Accommodation (STA). Move-on from homeless accommodation has slowed considerably in recent years, due to the lack of exit pathways for single individuals. Services designed for stays of six-months or less have unintentionally become long-term accommodation for many. Single people bear the brunt of this.

A dearth of one-bed units of accommodation in the private rented market, soaring rents and an under supply of social housing stock, means that single people can spend years living in emergency accommodation. At a time when demand for such accommodation is higher than ever, fewer people are able to access because of the length of time existing clients are living there, which often exceeds the recommended duration.

Of residents who left our accommodation services last year, 19% had been there for longer than six months and for those who were unsuccessful in moving on, just over 30% has been there for longer than six months, with 9% living in our services for more than two years.<sup>1</sup> This is a sector-wide issue, with significant implications for the people stuck in emergency accommodation for protracted periods of time, which often leads to deteriorating mental and physical health, institutionalisation and exacerbated issues relating to addiction.

However, despite these difficulties in securing long-term units of accommodation, many clients successfully moved on to properties in the private rented market and social housing provided by local authorities and approved housing bodies, including NOVAS' own stock. Indeed, our 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, has identified this need and has committed to developing more units of housing for single homeless people during the length of the plan.

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1. These statistics do not account for people living in different homeless services, which would have increased length of stay even further.

From the outset of a resident's stay with NOVAS, there is an emphasis on securing long-term, independent accommodation, supported by a range of programmes including, innovative life-skills and social engagement programmes, dedicated health and wellbeing workers in our STA's, tenancy sustainment staff and effective collaboration with external statutory and community partners. Our life-skills programmes include cooking, cleaning and personal hygiene, budgeting and money management and addiction and recovery (TOPPLE). There is also an important focus on preventing loneliness and fostering social connection, as this can often be the most difficult aspect of independent living for people who were previously homeless.

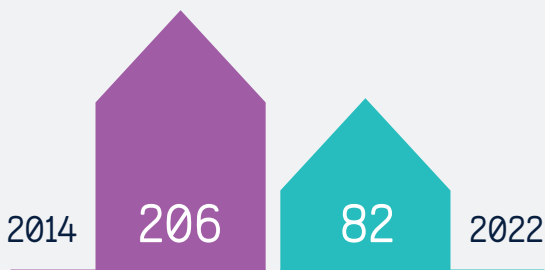




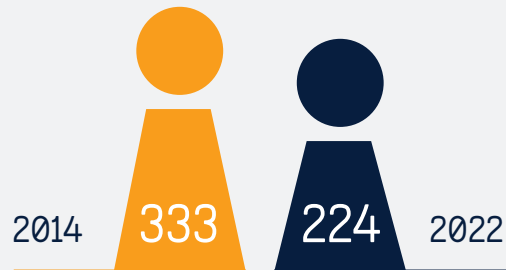
In all our Supported Temporary Accommodation services, the number of people who successfully accessed during 2022 dropped. For example, in 2014, in McGarry House in Limerick, 206 people lived there over the 12-month period. Last year, just 82 people accessed accommodation onsite. In our female-only services in Dublin, the numbers who lived there dropped from 333 women to 224 women, despite more than doubling capacity from 26 to 58 during the same period.

In 2018, our Temporary Emergency Provision (TEP) in Limerick provided accommodation for 320 people, falling to 181 in 2022. Last year there were 1,895 presentations to TEP, with 1,065 successfully securing accommodation. Some 794 presentations, or 43%, were unable to access accommodation throughout the year. These were people who presented to the service after 9pm, leaving them in a precarious position for the night ahead.

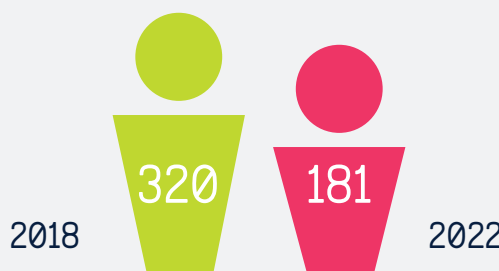
NUMBER OF PEOPLE ACCESSING ACCOMMODATION ONSITE IN MCGARRY HOUSE, LIMERICK



NUMBER OF WOMEN LIVING IN THE FEMALE-ONLY SERVICE IN DUBLIN



ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED IN NOVAS TEMPORARY EMERGENCY PROVISION (TEP) IN LIMERICK

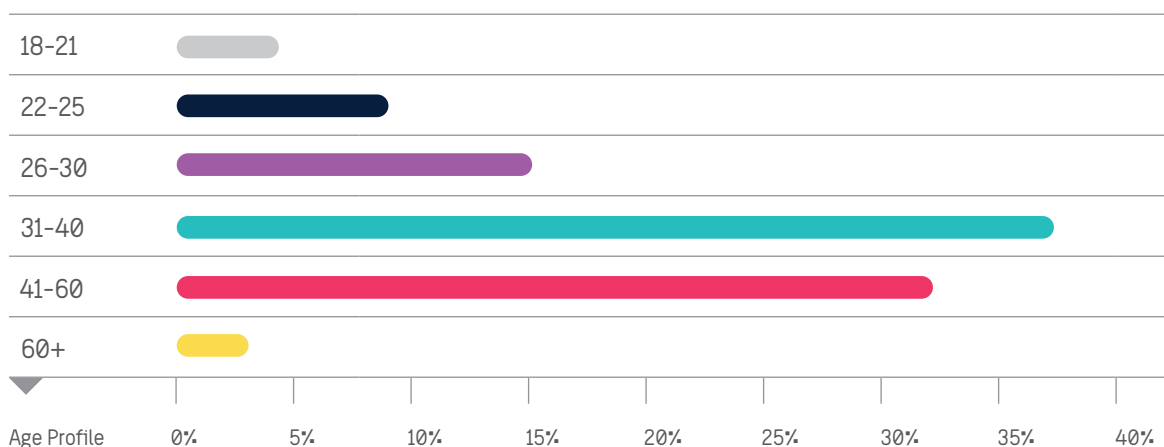


These figures highlight stagnant throughput through services, which has profound impacts both for people trying to access accommodation and for those living in unsuitable accommodation for long periods of time. However, despite fewer opportunities to access these services, more than 600 people secured accommodation in NOVAS' STA services throughout the year.

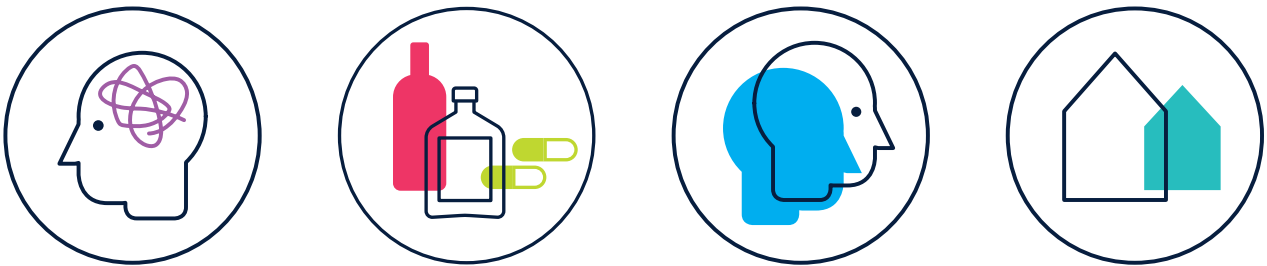
NOVAS strives to provide a high standard of temporary and emergency accommodation and create environments reflective of our trauma informed approach. Some 70% of all bedrooms in our STA services are single occupancy and in buildings owned by NOVAS, 95% of our rooms are single occupancy. Single bedrooms provide a sense of safety and privacy that cannot be afforded to individuals in multi-occupancy or shared rooms. Safety underpins trauma informed practice and is an essential component to recovery from homelessness, trauma or addiction for our clients. It is NOVAS' ambition to increase the number of single rooms in our services during the lifetime of our current strategic plan.

The age profile of our clients remained young through 2022, with 65% of people in our residential services under 40 years of age. Over the last two years, from February 2021 to February 2023, the number of young adults (18 to 24 year olds) experiencing homelessness rose by 82% from 776 to 1,457 individuals and this group now comprises 17% of the officially recorded national homeless population. We also know that young adults are more predisposed to hidden homelessness than their older counterparts. NOVAS provide dedicated residential and outreach services to young adults aged 18 to 24 years, many of whom have experienced state care and are at high risk of homelessness. These are preventative services, designed to support young people to acquire the skills, resources and confidence to live independently in the community.

#### AGE PROFILE OF CLIENTS ACCESSING EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION



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.



While fewer people were able to access STA services throughout the year, more people were supported with advice and information, prevention and tenancy sustainment services. Additionally, the number of clients presenting to Street Outreach was higher than ever, 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 support 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 others the nightly interaction with volunteers and other clients may be their only social connection of that day.



856

people supported with advice and information



30,000+

presentations to street outreach



1,130

presentations to our Out-of-Hours services

## HEALTH AND RECOVERY

While safe, sustainable housing is the single biggest factor impacting the health of homeless people, psychosocial support, access to clinical interventions and dedicated low-threshold dual diagnosis programmes are essential to enhanced wellbeing of this population. During 2022, NOVAS provided a range of health and wellbeing interventions for our clients in residential and community settings, including addiction and grief counselling, community detox, family respite and overdose prevention programmes. For example, our addiction counselling service in Kerry supported 61 people throughout the year, which included 256 one-to-one sessions, 32 brief interventions, 58 phone support sessions and 105 group facilitations.

Throughout the Mid-West, 114 people were supported through our Community Detox programme, providing interventions for people to detox in their own homes and preparing others for residential treatment. Our health and wellbeing workers were available to all our STA clients in the region and delivered life-saving, overdose preventions programmes throughout the year. Considering the recent figures published by the Health Research Board on drug related deaths in Ireland, which are among the highest in Europe, services like these are more important than ever.

## FAMILY AND CHILDREN

While single people spent long periods of time in emergency homeless accommodation, there was also a simultaneous rise in family and child homelessness throughout the year. Unfettered rent increases, stagnant HAP payments, a further contraction of properties in the private rented market and insufficient social housing made it increasingly difficult for low-income families to secure and maintain long-term housing options. By December 2022, there were 3,442 children experiencing homelessness in the state. This was a 40% increase from the previous year.

While the reasons families seek support from NOVAS are complex and multi-faceted, they are inextricably bound to the housing shortage, with more households than ever impacted by the crisis. During 2022, NOVAS provided support to families in all the regions in which we work. Established in 2005, our flagship Intensive Family Support Service (IFS) in Limerick worked with more than 1,400 adults and children, through a range of supports and interventions including intensive family support, a dedicated service in

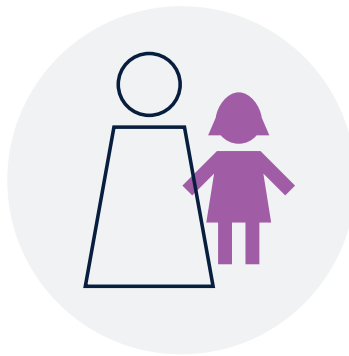
St. Mary's Park for marginalised households and out-of-hours support for people who found themselves unexpectedly homeless. In addition, the service ran our Christmas Toy Appeal, supporting 840 children in the region.

### INTENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT, LIMERICK



156

people advice and information



394

adults and children received intensive family support



195

adults and children supported through St. Mary's Park service



574

presentations through Out-of-Hours services



840

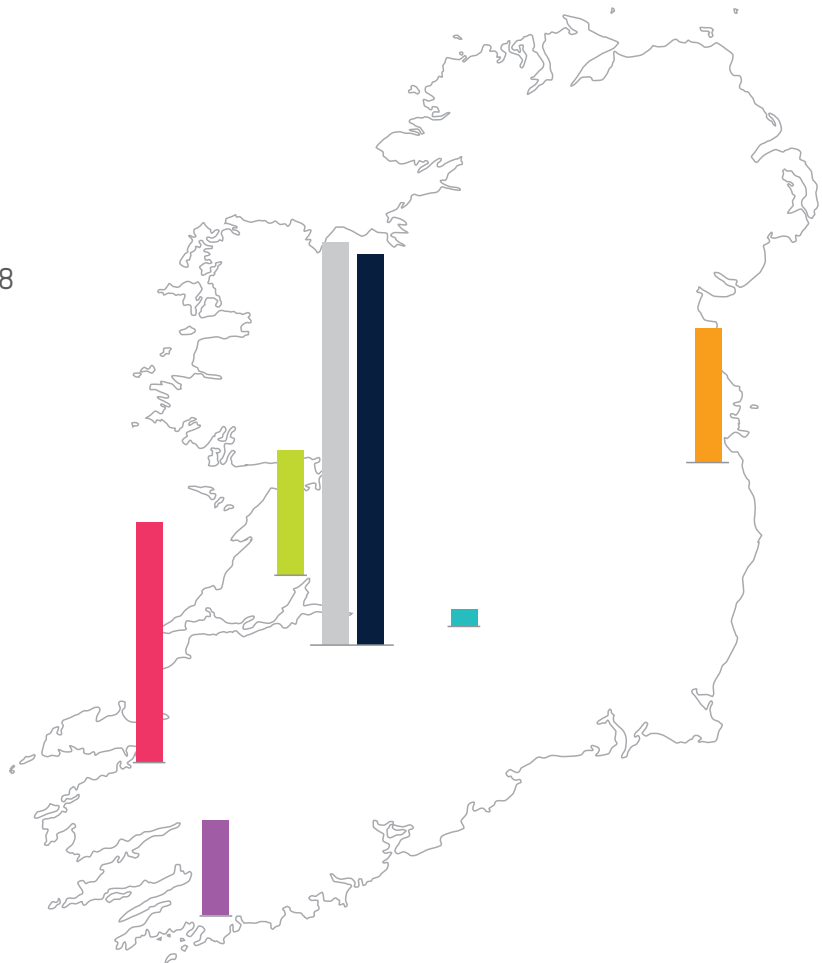
children supported through Christmas Toy Appeal

Families in receipt of NOVAS' services throughout the year primarily required support in accessing new or maintaining existing housing, life-skills, support with schooling and access to education, signposting to other services and community integration. While housing pressures in urban centres are well documented, households in rural settings are equally disadvantaged with a similar contraction in the private rented market. This issue is exacerbated

in tourist regions, where rental accommodation is even more difficult to secure. In West Cork (from Bandon to Mizen Head), NOVAS is the only homeless organisation to provide supports to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Throughout the year, the service supported 140 clients, including 44 families with 65 children. In this region, access to housing is extremely difficult, the issue compounded by tourism, with availability of short-term lets far outweighing long-term housing. Rents in the region are also extremely high. These issues are made worse by the lack of dedicated homeless accommodation in the region, with households who required emergency accommodation having to rely entirely on tourist hotels, B&B's and short-term lets. NOVAS' Tenancy Sustainment Service plays an important role in preparing households to live independently with a range of targeted life-skills programmes as well as advocating for clients to access social and private rented housing and seeking to prevent homelessness by keeping families in their existing housing if at all possible.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN BY NOVAS SERVICE 2022

- IFS & St Mary's Park - 338
- Tenancies - 343
- Whitestown - 115
- West Cork - 65
- Kerry - 149
- Tipperary - 8
- Clare - 92



# A SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES

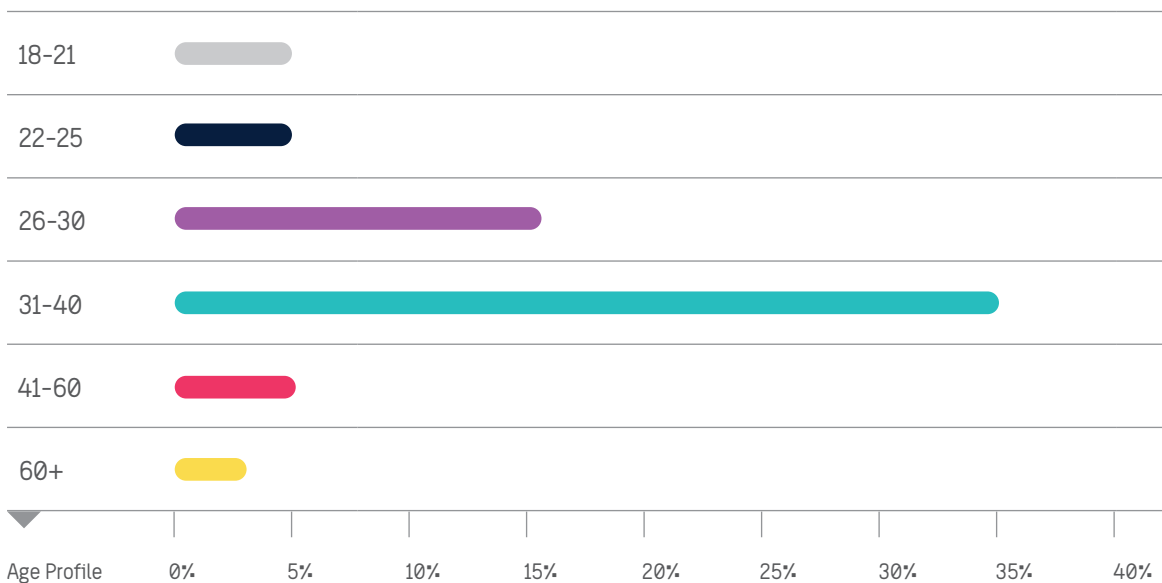
## NOVAS' WOMEN'S SERVICES

While women comprise approximately one-third of the homeless population in Ireland, some 59% of people who accessed NOVAS' residential services in 2022 were women, in part due to our female-only service provision in Dublin. Across our three dedicated women's services, NOVAS worked with 224 female residents last year. The vast majority of the women that live in our services have experienced domestic, sexual or gender-based violence at some point of their lives and segregated services can enhance a sense of safety and foster engagement among some women.

With a capacity for 58 women on a nightly basis across the three sites, NOVAS provided dedicated temporary accommodation for homeless women with co-occurring and complex needs, many of whom came directly from rough sleeping and street homeless arrangements. 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.

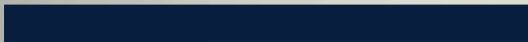
Issue facing the women in our services include addiction, mental health, housing, life skills, dual diagnosis of mental health and addiction, physical health and intellectual disabilities.

### AGE PROFILE OF RESIDENTS LIVING IN NOVAS FEMALE TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION





DESPITE SHARED ACCOMMODATION,  
WE HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT  
INROADS IN TRANSFORMING THE  
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS OF OUR  
WOMEN'S SERVICES, BOTH INSIDE  
AND OUT.



Previously, NOVAS provided 40 units of single-room accommodation for women in Dublin. In 2021, due to a multiple-site relocation of our incumbent service, the number of single rooms was reduced to 18. While the reduction in single rooms enabled capacity for additional homeless women, it created significant challenges in supporting those with the most complex needs who have experienced enduring trauma in their lives. Single rooms permit a degree of safety and privacy that promotes recovery and engagement that is not possible within shared sleeping arrangements.

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 the buildings. This has been very important in welcoming new clients and maintaining engagement with the residents who have the most complex needs.



## LEANNE'S STORY

I have been homeless on my own since 2014 but I did also experience a period of time when I was homeless with my kids for two years.

I have experienced it all in terms of homelessness; from sleeping on people's sofas, squats and also the streets there was a period of time when I slept in my own car.

I feel like every time I do forms or have meetings with the council they want me to jump through hoops. Nothing is ever straight forward all I want is a home. My eldest daughter is now 20 years old. I am a grandmother. Why have I never been offered a home?

I am now 40 years old and unwell. I am placed in Drumcondra. I need to be in a service in a different location, near all my family. I want to be close to my grandmother, she reared me and she doesn't have a lot of time left. I worry about this.

NOVAS is one of the best hostels I have experienced but I am ready to be housed. If I could make changes to the service I am in now, it would be in relation to sharing a bedroom. I should have my own space for privacy.

The GP comes to the service every two weeks, this is good as I do suffer mentally and I am chronically ill.

Being a mother when you're in one of these places and your kids are not with you is very hard. I have to get two trains out and two trains back to see them. On top of being sick it's very hard, I miss my family I just want to go home to them.

A photograph of a woman sitting at a table, holding a dark mug. She is wearing a white top with a floral pattern. The background shows a room with a bed and a chair. A quote is overlaid on the left side of the image.

“

I SHOULD HAVE MY OWN  
SPACE FOR PRIVACY.

## McGARRY HOUSE

McGarry House is a mixed-gender STA service in Limerick, providing up to 46 units of single-room accommodation for people experiencing homelessness. It is a low-threshold service, operating from a harm reduction, trauma informed perspective. Clients present with complex and co-occurring issues relating to dual diagnosis, social isolation and generational poverty, including experiences of episodic child homelessness.

In 2022, exit pathways for clients living in McGarry House were very limited, with some 53% of residents living there for longer than six months. Lack of throughput from the service was bound to the lack of one-bed units of accommodation, combined with soaring rents. Many residents have spent years on the social housing waiting list, ready to move out of homeless accommodation and on with their lives.

With our partners in Limerick City and County Council, we are working hard to find new opportunities for independent living for McGarry House residents, including repurposing vacant city centre buildings into one-bed apartment complexes. Two of these buildings will be tenanted by quarter four 2023 and will be a home for life for some of our current residents.

“

MY PLAN FOR THE  
NEAR FUTURE IS TO  
GET BACK ON MY FEET  
AND SECURE FULL TIME  
EMPLOYMENT.



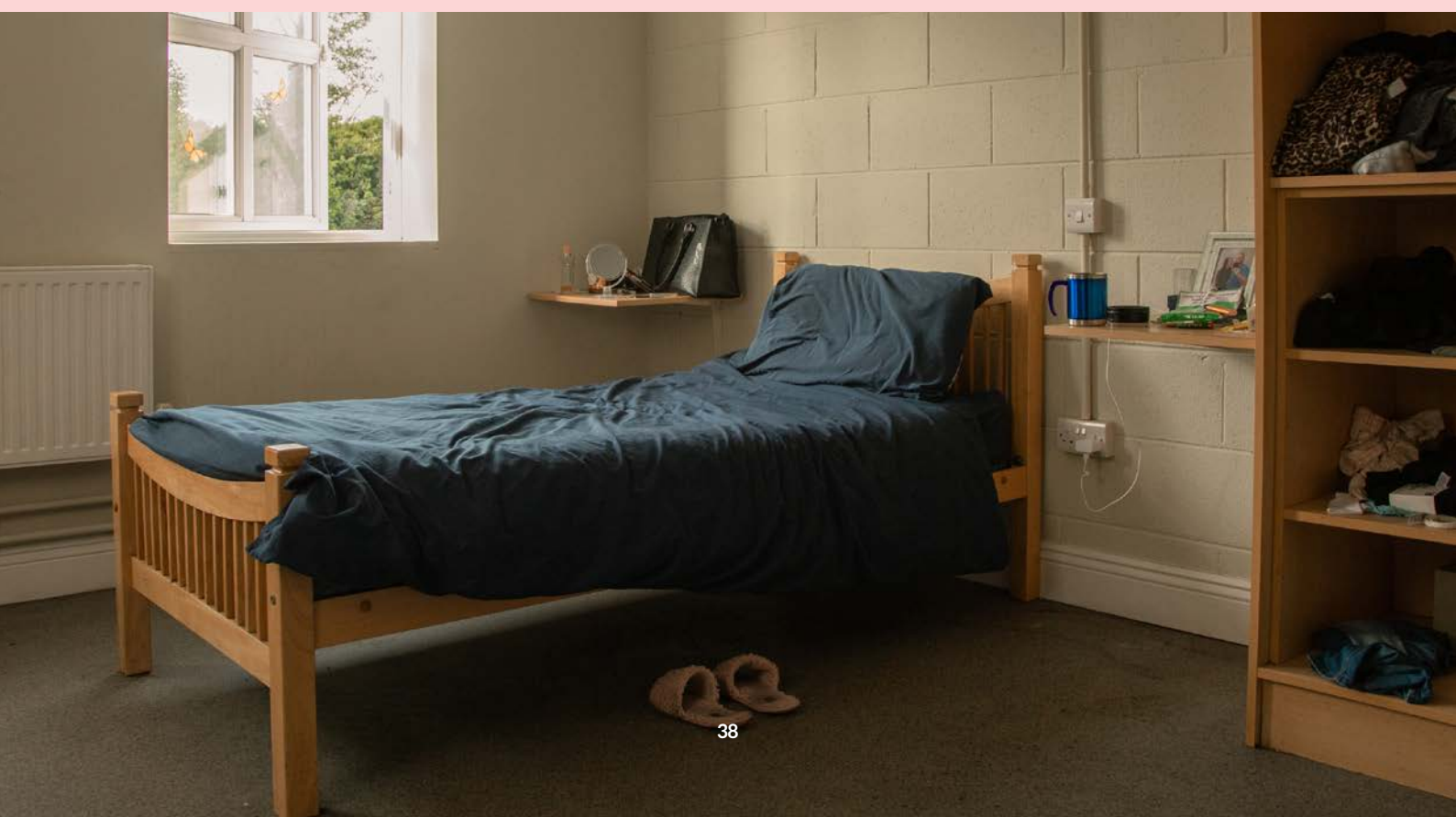
## RACHEL'S STORY

My name is Rachel. I am currently a resident in McGarry House and before that I lived in other homeless services in Limerick. Before that, I was a playschool teacher for four years. I really enjoyed my job and working with kids.

I have been residing in McGarry House for seven months. Since living in McGarry House, I have made a lot of new friends. The staff go over and beyond for each one of us and are very helpful and supportive. I have my own room and that's really important to feeling safe and having privacy.

My plan for the near future is to get back on my feet and secure full time employment in the childcare sector. I really want to return to work. When I was first homeless I continued to work. I left the hostel and walked to work every morning. That was difficult. I'm now actively looking for work and I'm very hopeful I'll get something soon. I try very hard to keep my routine while I live here. I'm the first up every morning and the first to bed at night.

Hopefully with the help of McGarry staff and external services that I am linked in with, I can live independently in my own place. I am ready to move on, but there is no housing available. I am linking in with my housing officer regularly, I'm ready to move on with my life.



## WHITESTOWN

### **Jennifer Doyle, Senior Residential Services Manager, East region**

My name is Jennifer Doyle, and I am the NOVAS Senior Residential Services Manager for the East region. I have held the position of Senior Services Manager for Whitestown since 2021.

Whitestown Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) is a small service that provides temporary accommodation for up to six months to single individuals and couples experiencing homelessness in the North Dublin region. The service is unique in that it creates a shared home environment, departing from the traditional STA model. Staff and clients share kitchen spaces, communal areas, and the outdoor garden. Cooking, cleaning, and gardening are shared responsibilities among both staff and clients.

Through collaborative efforts and co-designing, clients, along with their key workers, create person-centred support plans that focus on life skills, independent living skills, connection to the wider community, and exploration of education, training, and employment opportunities, all with the overall aim of identifying pathways to their own sustainable homes.

Whitestown STA is funded by our partners in Fingal County Council and the Dublin Homeless Regional Executive (DRHE). Through strong collaboration and innovation with Fingal County Council, Whitestown STA staff are empowered to proactively support the most vulnerable homeless individuals in the area. Service delivery is rooted in a Trauma-Informed Practice and a Harm Reduction approach. It is person-centred and focused on safety and quality.

The Whitestown STA Service aligns with the DRHE action plan for 2022-2024 and can provide evidence of outcomes related to the core objectives of the action plan, which are:

- > Prevention of homelessness and recurrent homelessness.
- > Protection of persons experiencing homelessness.
- > Progression from homelessness.

There are numerous examples where clients have been protected as they navigate the experience of homelessness in our Whitestown STA, with identified progression pathways to long-term housing. Furthermore, the

funding model allows for two Tenancy Sustainment Workers. These workers can support clients in maintaining their tenancies once they move on from Whitestown STA, thus minimising the risk of tenancy breakdown and preventing clients from returning to homelessness.

In 2022, Whitestown worked with nine clients, six of whom successfully transitioned to long-term housing within the same year. All six clients continue to reside in their respective tenancies to this day.

I look forward to the continued success of both clients and staff of the Whitestown service in the years to come. Together, with our funders, we will ensure that we provide a safe and effective service, continually improving all aspects of service delivery, and identifying long-term sustainable homes for our clients.





## DARRAGH'S STORY

My name is Darragh Costello. I became homeless a couple of years ago. My life went downhill and I was depressed because I was staying on a friend's sofa. I felt in the way so I turned to drugs to numb the pain I was in. That year was very hard. I was miserable and felt every other negative emotion you can think of. One day I rang the homeless Freephone and they got me a hostel in the city centre. I stayed there for two weeks with four others in the room. That wasn't a nice experience. It was difficult to share a room with people in active addiction, smoking heroin and crack. It was hard as my drug of choice was benzos. The two weeks I spent there made me even more depressed.

One day I got a phone call from a woman named Sharon Doyle from NOVAS. She asked me if I wanted to view a room in a house in Whitestown. I immediately asked when could I move in. I moved in straight away, towards the end of the year. I knew it was a nice place to live and it was in Blanchardstown, where I'm from.

At the start I was shy but after two weeks I felt at home. Staff treated me like a human being. I had lost my self-worth until I moved into NOVAS' Whitestown. All the staff were really nice; they would go out of their way to help me. At Christmas time they even got me presents, which was one of the nicest gestures that happened to me in a very long time.

I started to believe in human decency again. Not all services are nice and staff don't treat you as well. After a while at Whitestown, I started to become independent again, getting back into cooking, cleaning and cutting the grass. It helped me to get my self-worth back. I moved out of Whitestown a couple of months ago. I had lived there for eight months. In them eight months the staff helped me get back on my feet. I moved into my own apartment which is really nice. I wouldn't have got it if it wasn't for the staff there and they still check in on me to see how I am getting on. If NOVAS didn't come into my life, I wouldn't know where I would be today and I will be forever grateful for that.

## **Sam, Deputy Manager, Whitestown STA**

We provide accommodation for up to eight adults comprising of three shared bedrooms and two single rooms. All our referrals come through Fingal County Council and we provide supported accommodation for male and female residents.

On arrival to this service, each client is nominated a key-worker who then devises an individual Support Plan, in collaboration with the client and dedicated to their needs. We work with all our clients through a Trauma Informed Practice approach and this underpins the culture and values of our small service. We have a dedicated Trauma Informed Rep within our team who helps to embed this model in our daily practice.

In our Whitestown service we engage with all our residents to learn or maintain the life skills they'll need to live independently. The benefits of this approach are so valuable to our residents who move on to their own place. Life skills include being able to cook and clean and do a weekly shop, make and keep medical appointments and access the services they need. With the tenancy sustainment officer, we work on softer skills such as social engagement and trying to ensure residents aren't lonely once they move on. This can be a really big challenge and the thing tenants can struggle with the most. We also do check-ins with residents who move on just to give that extra support when they leave. It's really important that the move from homeless accommodation to housing is a staged process and that the withdrawal of support is done slowly and in collaboration with the resident.

At NOVAS, we take pride in our ethos of working from a client-centred approach. We refer to our clients as 'residents'. This, we feel, is a more informal title and it appears to make residents more at ease when working alongside them. Their best interest is always at the heart of what we do. We always try to have as much involvement from residents in everything we do. To allow for this we hold resident's meetings where everybody is allowed the opportunity to voice their opinions, concerns or ideas.



# HOUSING

Accelerated provision of social and affordable homes is the cornerstone of permanently reducing the number of people who experience homelessness in the state.

By the end of 2022, NOVAS provided 227 tenancies, with the cumulative total of 311 adults and 343 children living in these homes. These properties range from one-bed units of accommodation to large homes that accommodate families with up to seven children. The majority of properties are owned by NOVAS but we also have a number of leased houses from local authorities, where we provide intensive tenancy sustainment support to households with complex needs. Once tenancies are stabilised and life-skills are adequately enhanced, these tenancies are handed back to local authorities. All our housing developments and acquisitions are done in collaboration with a local authority and funded by the Department of Housing. Tenants come from the social housing waiting list and nominations are decided by the council.

In 2022, NOVAS added 33 units of accommodation to our housing stock; 24 new acquisitions and nine leased properties from local authorities. We also had a number of developments in progress throughout the year, including a small development for older people in Finglas, North Dublin. This was built on an infill site and was tenanted in early 2023.





In 2022, we launched our new Strategic Plan 2023-2027, which committed to doubling our housing stock during the four-year duration of the plan, with a particular emphasis on increasing our stock of single units of housing. We currently have a number of developments of one-bed units in Limerick city that are close to completion.

NOVAS' Housing Team comprises of a Head of Housing and Development, a Tenant Engagement Manager, Housing Officers and personnel charged with procurement and maintenance. Our Tenancy Sustainment and Resettlement Officers also work across our housing and services 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.

## **Resettlement Officer, Dee Kirwin**

I start by linking in with the women in an informal way to introduce myself, and invite them to come and meet with me to see what I can do to help with their particular situation.

Most women are eager to discuss their housing issues, and they work to overcome any barriers they face. I am kept busy trying to untangle some of the problems that arise when people are in addiction or have language barriers, have a history of rough sleeping, were hidden homeless or moving through different homeless services. Important documents can get lost, absences from the system can force people down waitlists, and people can fall deeper through the cracks.

While there are barriers due to personal circumstances, there's also systemic barriers that make it hard to get housed. Obviously, the lack of supply is a visible issue, but on top of this I have found that there are bureaucratic issues that are hard to navigate.

For example, when applying for long-term accommodation, the person must complete an application providing evidence for the level of additional support required. This includes information about intellectual disabilities, acquired brain injury, physical health, needs like mobility issues or chronic disease, mental health diagnoses and alcohol and drug addictions. The applicant must meet the level of staff support and independence needed to gain the points for placement.

The person must also be registered for housing, have been homeless for an extended period of time and have a history of rough sleeping. It's a real Goldilocks situation whereby the applicant and their needs must be "just right" and unfortunately when these places arise, all too often the perfect candidate is not ready and won't be considered.

I work to keep the women happy while they live in our services but have everything ready for when an opportunity to move on arises. It is imperative to take the opportunities when they arise.

# 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.

During 2022 we continued to grow our suite of internal TIP training, including specific training for managers, which enabled our management team to develop and enhance the support and supervision structures we offer to our staff. We now provide a range of trauma training for all staff, for trauma reps and for managers, as well as refresher training for those who need it.

Each NOVAS service has a TIP rep who, along with their manager, endeavours to embed structures and systems of trauma informed practice within their service or department. Change and development is overseen by our TIP Steering Group and supported by our CEO and voluntary Board of Directors.

In August 2022, NOVAS conducted the first trauma audit in the sector. Bellevue House Children's Home underwent an external TIP audit, led by the clients and underpinned by the TIP Quality Standards, which reviewed the physical environment, culture, client wellbeing and staffing arrangements within the service. The voice of the client was central to this audit. The results were extremely positive and enabled us to implement targeted measures in identified areas of improvement, specifically for that service.

During the year, NOVAS was delighted to present at the FEANTSA conference on the enhanced wellbeing of staff due to trauma practice and at the National Trauma Informed Conference on NOVAS' trauma journey.

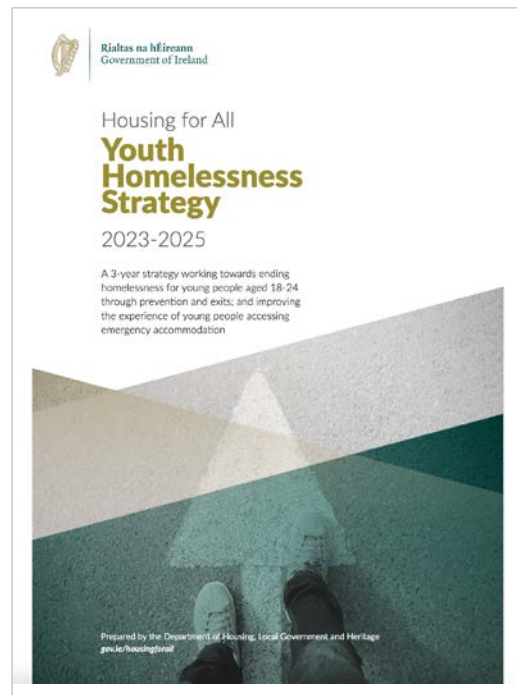


# ADVOCACY AND INNOVATIONS

NOVAS warmly welcomed the publication of the Youth Homeless Strategy in November 2022. As a member of the Irish Coalition to End Youth Homelessness, we had been advocating for such a strategy for a number of years. The coalition is an association of 19 organisations across the housing, homelessness and youth sectors working together to end youth homelessness.

In early 2022, in advance of the strategy publication, NOVAS made a detailed submission to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, as part of the consultation phase of the strategy. We also contributed to the submission made by the coalition, which represented the broad views of organisations working across the sector and advocated particularly for ring-fenced housing for young people as a means of preventing further homelessness and creating exit pathways from emergency accommodation for this group. The government's commitment to developing Supported Housing for Youth (SHY) within the strategy is most welcome and we look forward to the roll-out of this model of housing in 2023.

NOVAS' DIAL House residential and outreach services in Limerick and the continued support for young adults leaving Bellevue House Children's Home in Dublin demonstrates our commitment to targeted interventions for young people. These are effective services in preventing homelessness and preparing young people to live independent lives in the community with strong social support networks.



“

THROUGHOUT MY TIME  
IN DIAL I HAVE SEEN A  
LOT OF SUCCESS WITH  
THE PEOPLE WE HAVE  
WORKED WITH.



## JOE'S STORY

Firstly, I would like to introduce myself and my role within NOVAS. My name is Joe, I am 34 years old and I have been a project worker within the DIAL house service for over seven years now.

DIAL is an abbreviated name for a service with the goal of Developing Independent Active Living amongst the people we work with. It is a residential service, which provides support within a residential setting and on an outreach basis primarily to young adults who have exited the care system and young adults who have experienced family breakdown and are in need of support and or accommodation.

DIAL is an early intervention program operating in response to the recognition that care leavers are more vulnerable to the risk of experiencing poverty or homelessness. Neurobiological science highlights the impacts of adverse childhood experiences on the developing brain and how such can impede a trauma survivors ability to memorize or think logically at times. Therefore, supportive environments, which understand hyper or hypo arousal as being part of a survival mechanism rather than an anti-social behaviour are essential to provide the support necessary to a young person with care experience at such a pivotal time in their lives, which can help to steer the direction of their development.

Isolation appears to be a key trend experienced particularly amongst care leavers with no family support and DIAL house can often be recognised as a hub whereby residents and outreach clients come together to develop supportive relationships and lifelong friendships.

The goal within DIAL house is to engage the people we work with in a program, which promotes the development of life skills, which will inevitably contribute to their ability to live in an independent living situation.

We really recognise the inherent power imbalances that can exist between staff and residents in a service such as DIAL house and strive to identify any opportunity we can to empower the residents involvement in relation to all aspects of service delivery. Flattening the pre-existing power curve is vital to create an environment compliant with the values of Trauma Informed Practice, which undermines all elements of our working here.

Being a project worker within DIAL house provides me with the role of key working with some of the residents and other people we work with.

Key working is a continuous and collaborative interaction between the key worker and resident to develop a care plan based on the needs of the resident.

The development of professional, safe and trusting connections are primary to the establishment of a key working relationship.

Some elements of key working within DIAL include facilitating the development of basic and more life skills such as cooking, cleaning, budgeting, personal hygiene, sexual health and wellbeing, exploring coping mechanisms and identifying the impacts of substance use etc.

The role of key worker within DIAL house is very broad and often difficult to define due to the complexity of needs amongst the cohort of people we work with.

The creation of a homely environment that allows the people we work with to feel a sense of safety, trustworthiness and empowerment, which can formulate the foundations by which they can develop skills and abilities within a supported environment is another key element to the role of all staff working within DIAL house.

Throughout my time in DIAL I have seen a lot of success with the people we have worked with. We have had young people complete training courses and those who have gone on to study higher education degrees. We have had young people who have obtained starter jobs and those who have obtained long term and secure employment. We have had young people secure long-term housing and we have had young people secure medium-term housing, but most importantly, they will have gained skills to improve their ability to compete within the community to the best of their ability. Our wish is that everybody who leaves our service does so with skills by which they will gain lifelong benefits.

It is our vision to see the expansion of DIAL house as far too many young people with similar circumstances to those we are working with are unfortunately ending up in hostel environments prevalent with long-term homelessness and the associated complexities of these environments.





## ROB'S STORY

My name is Robert Dawson, I'm a 21 year old from Limerick, and I'm also a singer/songwriter. I receive support from DIAL House which is a part of NOVAS.

My experience with DIAL House began back in August of 2022 when I became unexpectedly homeless. I was linked in with them by my aftercare worker.

My first few weeks in DIAL were difficult for me as my mental health was in serious decline. It took me about two weeks to leave my bedroom. I finally began leaving my bedroom after speaking to some of the other residents and building friendships. DIAL staff also provided me with emotional support by offering me a cup of tea and a listening ear, this helped me to break out of my shell.

DIAL House provides a life skills programme to all residents which involves weekly tasks such as cooking, cleaning and basic personal hygiene. They also assist with finding you suitable education in subjects that interest you and making sure that you attend (even on the early winter mornings when all you want to do is stay in bed).

The overall experience in DIAL House is positive and it is a key service as it provides a comfortable home like environment while also strengthening your daily living skills.

I think a beneficial extension of DIAL House would be to purchase apartment blocks and provide a more independent living environment where all residents have their own individual apartments but also with a communal kitchen & sitting room with staff on call if they need support, this could also include weekly dinners with all residents', movie nights, etc. with the idea of the current DIAL house being used to cater for those who need more extensive support.

In an ever changing and ever evolving world with homeless figures on the rise and a mental health system that's failing, services like DIAL HOUSE have never been needed more than they are right now.

In order to improve the service and provide more young adults with suitable living environments we must provide a platform for those who wish to share their story and personal experiences. That's why I'm grateful to be sharing my story in the NOVAS annual report and being able to honestly share my experience with DIAL house.

Throughout the year NOVAS advocated for additional supports, services and housing for people experiencing homelessness in Ireland. Our 2023 Pre-Budget Submission focused on accelerated delivery of housing, better standards of accommodation and security of tenure for tenants in private rented accommodation and a ring-fenced health budget for the homeless population. People who experience homelessness have poorer physical and mental health outcomes than the general population but despite this, find it difficult to access mainstream services. The delivery of targeted, low-threshold supports for people with dual diagnosis of addiction and mental health is essential to creating opportunities for recovery.

Throughout 2022, NOVAS' Senior Health and Recovery Services Manager, Julie McKenna, was the voluntary and community sector representative on the National Working Group for the Dual Diagnosis Model of Care, created to develop a new national strategy for supporting people with dual diagnosis of co-existing mental health and addiction.



## 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 curriculum. Thereafter, participants volunteer as Peer Overdose Workers for three to six month periods, or longer if they wish.

During 2022, the programme was rolled out in all our services throughout the country, supporting clients to prevent and respond to overdose. The programme has equipped our clients to respond to overdose and save lives in services and in the community.



## TOPPLE STORY

I have lived in Arlington Lodge for the past 19 months. Doing the TOPPLE programme has made me realise that I can do things when I am in a hostel, I never thought that I would be able to do. By doing the course, I have the confidence to try another course, which I will be starting with Coolmine service in Tralee, three days a week. It means that I have something to do three days a week which gets me out of the hostel and away from drugs. I don't think I would have done it without the TOPPLE programme. It's hard living in a hostel and being around drugs, it's hard to stay clean and away from stuff. I really want to make a better life for myself and I can now see that I am able to do a course and stick with it.

A few weeks after I completed the TOPPLE programme I was with a friend of mine in his apartment and noticed that he was using a lot. He overdosed. I did get a fright but I was able to act and give naloxone and help him. I don't think I would have managed to do it if I had not done TOPPLE. I am more aware now of situations and more aware of others.

I have been looking back through my life since I did the programme and have realised how lucky I am to be alive. I am trying to work on getting out of the hostel I am in and going to a place where I would be closer to my daughter.

I want to work on myself and get my own place where I can have my daughter on overnights and get a job to live a normal life.

# FUNDRAISING AND VOLUNTEERING

Throughout 2022, 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 basic support 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 2022. They organised and participated in a range of events, for which we are immensely grateful. Our Christmas Sleep-Out was once again, our single biggest fundraising event of the year and was supported by many local businesses including Master Chefs and JP Construction. We are immensely grateful for their financial support, which helped extend frontline services in the Limerick region.



Throughout the year, Master Chefs provided a dedicated space in one of their Limerick restaurants for families living in emergency accommodation to enjoy a meal, do homework and participate in arts & crafts programmes. The initiative between Master Chefs and NOVAS Intensive Family Support Service, provided a brief reprieve from hotel living for homeless families. They also catered for our Thursday morning Women’s Group and a variety of celebrations throughout the year.



Enhancing the physical environment of our services was central to our trauma informed practice throughout the year. In Limerick, in response to the rising number of families living in hotel accommodation, our family service transformed a former office space into a laundry room for homeless families without such facilities. This vital transformation was funded by Engine Lease Finance Corporation and would not have been possible without their financial donation.

Bella House Women's Service in Dublin underwent an extensive redesign and upgrade of its courtyard and communal spaces, which enhanced the experience for the residents living there. This would not have been possible without the generous support and funding by DFS, Carton Interior Design and O'Carroll Consulting.



During the year we also secured funding from the Smurfit Kappa Foundation to renovate the gardens of our Rathmines Women's Centre, which took place during 2023.



# GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

## 2022 GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR ANNUAL REPORT

NOVAS is fully committed to ensuring and maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance. We achieve this by adhering to standards and principles that promote transparency and equity to all our stakeholders, particularly to the people who access our services. We see this as fundamental to the sustainability and performance of our operations.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The directors and secretary who currently hold office, or who held office during 2022:

Greg Maxwell (Chairperson)
Siobhan Wheeler (Secretary)
Tracy Leonard
Patrick Claffey
Michael O'Connell
Dian Loposso
Martina Murphy

The Board is responsible for providing leadership, oversight of strategy, and ensuring effective controls are in place. The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring the operational functions are in line with best practice and that governance of the organisation meets all its legal and statutory obligations. There is a clear division of responsibilities between the Board and the CEO, with the Board having ownership of all legal and financial activity and maintaining an overview of policy and strategic direction. The CEO is responsible for devising strategy and policy 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 comprises of volunteers with backgrounds in; finance, housing, social care, clients' rights, advocacy, planning and human resources. For good governance the Board has established four sub-committees to facilitate their duties.

## AUDIT AND FINANCE

The Audit and Finance Sub-Committee monitors and reviews financial performance. The committee meets four times per year and consists of Board Members and NOVAS executives. The functions of the committee are:

- Consider and recommend to the Board an annual budget of income and expenditure.
- Monitor & Review Quarterly Financial Performance and advise on points of risk.
- Monitor the integrity of our financial statements and any formal announcements relating to financial performance.
- Review Fundraising income and grant applications in process.
- Monitor the sustainability and maintenance of sinking fund allocation.
- Review our financial control systems and control and risk management systems.
- Review and make recommendations to the Board for new or revised Human Resources Policies
- Review arrangements by which staff may, in confidence, raise concerns about any possible improprieties in matters of financial reporting or other matters.
- Make a recommendation on the appointment, reappointment, and removal of an external auditor.
- Each year, consider whether there is a need for an internal audit function and make recommendations to the Board.
- Monitor the participation of external statutory and funder audits of financial procedures.

## QUALITY CLIENT'S SERVICES

The Client & Quality Services Sub-Committee monitors and reviews service provision and practices associated with service delivery. The committee meets four times per year and consists of Board Members, NOVAS executives and volunteers. The functions of the committee are:

- Communicate discussion items to the Board.
- Ensure the voice of the client informs decision making about service development.
- Review defined key performance indicators.
- Review national public policy research and advocacy work conducted by NOVAS or in collaboration with sector or academic partner.
- Support the development of operational policies for the effective and safe delivery of quality Homeless and Children's services.
- Ensure preparation of annual funding applications and service level agreements are proceeding effectively.
- Review and oversight of the implementation of recommendations that arise from internal Quality Audits.
- Ensure services are following the applicable National Quality Standards Framework.
- Oversight of the effective management of client complaints.
- Review incident trends to identify safety and risk factors.
- Review and oversight of risk registers associated with service delivery.

## GOVERNANCE

The Governance Sub-Committee's purpose is to support the Board in managing the organisations' governance programme and ensuring that the Board possesses the necessary knowledge and skillset. The committee meets four times per year and consists of Board Members and NOVAS executives. The functions of the committee are:

- > Oversight of recruitment practices of the organisation
- > Ensure the Board fulfils its statutory obligations as an employer.
- > Ensure the organisation has an appropriate HR function.
- > Review and make recommendations for implementation to the Board for new or revised Human Resources Policies.
- > Review and make recommendations for implementation to the Board for any changes to salary pay scales or compensation and benefits.
- > Manage the recruitment process when the CEO role becomes vacant and setting remuneration and performance expectations for the role.
- > Consider reports on employee engagement and review reports on organisational interventions to address needs.
- > Liaise with members of the executive team in relation to Statutory Compliance requirements.
- > Monitor and review compliance with statutory, regulatory, and voluntary codes.
- > Review and make recommendations to the board for any matters arising to changes with statutory, regulatory, and voluntary codes.
- > Monitor the integrity of statements of compliance with Codes of Practice required by legislation and regulatory authorities and relevant documents concerning the overall corporate governance framework.
- > Review and making recommendations for implementation to the Board for new or revised organisational policies.
- > Monitor and review the adequacy of the internal organisational risk register, risk management systems and related matters.

- › Monitor the handling of public relations and media announcements to maintain the good name of the organisation.
- › Communicate discussion items to the Board.

## HOUSING & TENANTS

The purpose of the Housing & Property Sub-Committee is to assess and make recommendations to the Board in relation to capital projects and developments related to NOVAS service or facilities and to oversee and monitor compliance of the housing and property operations with all regulatory and compliance requirements. The committee meets four times per year and consists of Board members and NOVAS executives. The functions of the committee are:

- › Monitor and evaluate management and operational performances of NOVAS Housing and Property activities in relation to the organisations strategic, operational, financial, and business plans.
- › Maintain oversight of NOVAS facilities and the investments in property and services.
- › Receive and make suggestions on methods of improving facilities and services to all residents, clients, employees, etc.
- › Make recommendations on all development and acquisition proposals and seek board approval on these recommendations as required.
- › Work with the management team to review and critique existing and proposed developments to ensure they maintain a strategic fit with the organisations wider aims and objectives.
- › Organise and conduct risk assessments and evaluations on all housing and property operations and any development proposals.
- › Overview and monitor the Health and Safety and Regulatory compliance matters relevant to the organisation's housing, property, and development operations.
- › Review all regulatory submissions and advise the Board of all compliance issues and requirements in relation to housing and property matters and operations.

	< BOARD MEETINGS	< CLIENTS & QUALITY SC	< AUDIT & FINANCE SC	< HOUSING SC	< GOVERNANCE	JOINED	RESIGNED
<b>BOARD MEMBERS</b>							
GREG MAXWELL (CHAIR)				3 / 3	3 / 3	2016	
SIOBHAN WHEELER (SECRETARY)		1 / 2			2 / 3	2018	
PATRICK CLAFFEY		2 / 2				2020	
DIAN LOPOSSO				2 / 2		2021	
MICHAEL O'CONNELL			3 / 4	3 / 3		2021	
TRACY LEONARD			4 / 4			2020	
MARTINA MURPHY						2022	
<b>SC VOLUNTEERS</b>							
MARY O'SHEA >		1 / 2					
MARTINA SHEEHAN >							
GILLIAN DUNNE >				2 / 2			

## 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 Charity Regulator in the Charities Governance Code, which have statutory effect from 2020. In addition, it operates the standards of best practice for Approved Housing Bodies.

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 (FRS; Financial Reporting Council) 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 created by the Irish Charities Tax Research organisation (ICTR).

## 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.

## NOVAS STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2022, NOVAS launched a new Strategic Plan for the period 2023 to 2027. Within the plan, there were four strategic goals that were designed to equip the organisation to effectively prevent and respond to homelessness, increase our social housing stock and enhance our organisational systems and structures to meet growing demand. Strategic Goals 2023-2027:

**1. Provide innovative and effective solutions for clients with complex needs to prevent and address homelessness.**

**2. Generate viable pathways out of homelessness and equip our clients with the skills for sustainable independent living.**

**3. Increase our Social Housing provision while providing excellent tenant support and engagement.**

**4. Develop our organisation and people through structures and systems to serve our clients now, and in the future.**



FINANCE

In 2022, the total income generated by Arlington NOVAS Ireland CLG was €13.892M (a decrease of 3.2% from 2021). Revenue based grants received by our organisation from the HSE, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and various local authorities amounted to €12.154M (down 2.35% from last year). This represented 87.4% of our total income. Our income fell from 2021, mainly due to the consolidation of services in the East of the country.

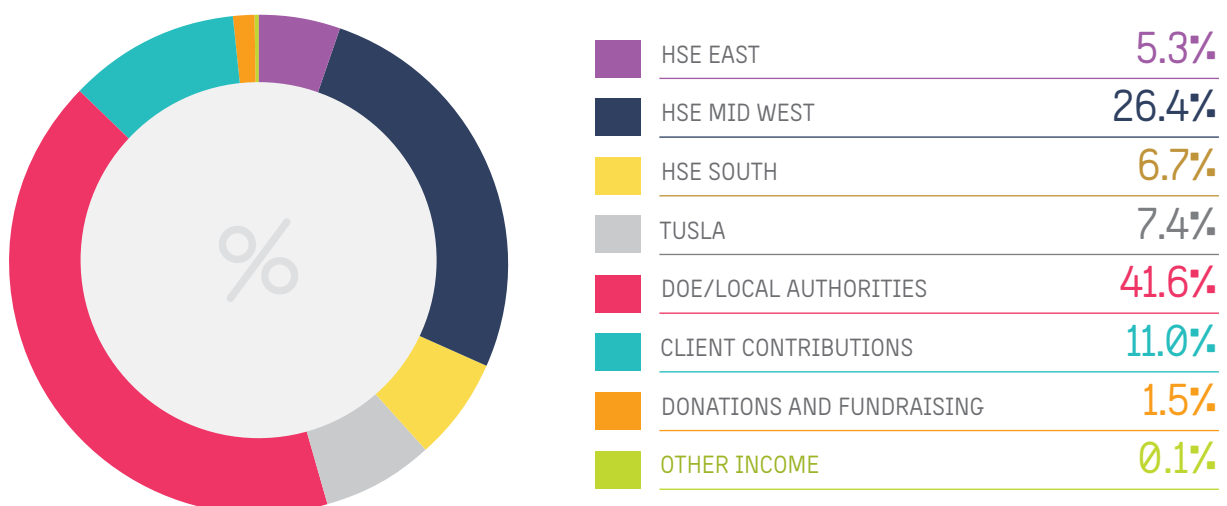
As in previous years, there was no increase in core funding during 2022 for most of our existing services. Some funders provided retrospective once-off funding of 3.5% in respect of the increased cost of living and while welcome, it was not sufficient to meet the additional costs in areas such as energy and food. Funding for some of these services remains lower than 2008 levels, which continues to be a major issue, particularly with the recruitment and retention of staff. We do not expect to see any improvement in this in the immediate future.

Other income was €1.737M (a decrease of 8.8%). This other income consists of contributions from our service users, development levies, return on investments, donations, legacies and fundraising. There continued to be some difficulties in respect of the collection of client contributions and recommencing our normal fundraising events following the pandemic.

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

Set out below is a breakdown of our income for 2022 by source.

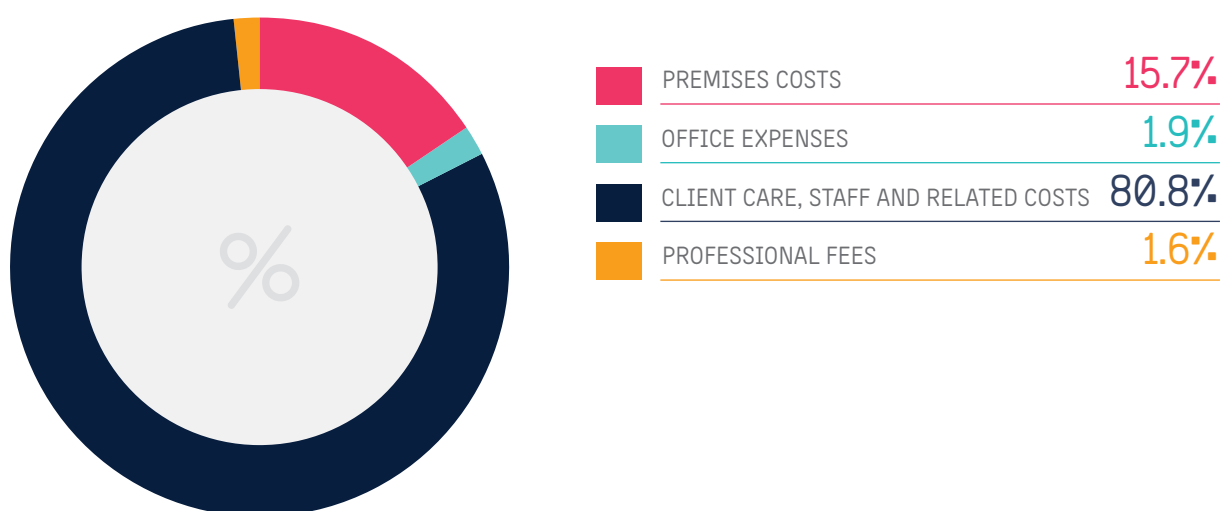
### BREAKDOWN OF INCOME 2022



We have continued to manage expenditure in the most prudent way possible with the support of our staff and suppliers. Client care, staff and related costs made up 81% of our overall expenditure, while costs associated with housing, both long-term and short-term accounted for 16%. The cost of essential products and services were seriously impacted by the cost of living crisis, in particular in the areas of energy, food, subsistence, cleaning and maintenance.

Set out below is a breakdown of the expenditure for 2022.

## BREAKDOWN OF EXPENDITURE 2022



In summary, there was a surplus of €19k (2021 - €580k) in income over expenditure before transfers to the property sinking fund. Any surpluses we attain are reinvested in our services.

The remuneration of the CEO for the year was €73,333. The company also made contributions at the standard rate to the company pension scheme in respect of the CEO. A new CEO was appointed in February 2022.

We are committed to managing our costs as tightly as possible, and ensuring that the vast majority of our expenditure continues to be spent on providing for our clients.

The Finance and Audit Committee met on four occasions during 2022.

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

## Arlington NOVAS Ireland Company Limited by Guarantee

### STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022	2021
	€	€
INCOME	13,891,913	14,310,704
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	(13,788,892)	(13,684,042)
OPERATING SURPLUS	103,021	626,662
INTEREST RECEIVABLE AND SIMILAR INCOME	-	40,790
INTEREST PAYABLE AND SIMILAR EXPENSES	(83,846)	(87,083)
SURPLUS BEFORE TAX	19,175	580,369
SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	19,175	580,369
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR		
UTILISATION OF DESIGNATED FUNDS	(46,140)	(20,929)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	(46,140)	(20,929)
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	(26,965)	559,440

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

All amounts relate to continuing operations.

Signed on behalf of the board:

**Greg Maxwell**

CHAIRPERSON

27 July 2023

**Siobhan Wheeler**

DIRECTOR

27 July 2023

## Arlington NOVAS Ireland Company Limited by Guarantee

## BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	2022	2021
	€	€
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
TANGIBLE ASSETS	36,597	70,860
TANGIBLE ASSETS - HOUSING PROPERTIES	42,364,205	38,712,445
	<b>42,400,802</b>	<b>38,783,305</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
DEBTORS	1,324,237	1,137,442
CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND	3,859,325	6,673,327
	<b>5,183,562</b>	<b>7,810,769</b>
CREDITORS : AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	(1,682,948)	(1,554,803)
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>3,500,614</b>	<b>6,255,966</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>45,901,416</b>	<b>45,039,271</b>
CREDITORS : AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR	(35,120,484)	(34,172,832)
GRANTS	(2,065,248)	(2,092,785)
<b>PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES</b>		
OTHER PROVISIONS	(139,282)	(170,287)
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>8,576,402</b>	<b>8,603,367</b>
<b>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>		
DESIGNATED FUND	3,543,676	3,186,540
PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT	5,032,726	5,416,827
	<b>8,576,402</b>	<b>8,603,367</b>

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

**Greg Maxwell**

CHAIRPERSON

27 July 2023

**Siobhan Wheeler**

DIRECTOR

27 July 2023



## FRIENDS & PARTNERS





87 O'Connell Street, Limerick, Ireland.

Ph. 061-370325 / [info@novas.ie](mailto:info@novas.ie)

[www.novas.ie](http://www.novas.ie)

 [NovasInitiatives](#)

 [@novasireland](#)