

ANNUAL IMPACT REVIEW 2019

Sonas exists to support women and children

experiencing domestic abuse:

their safety is our priority,

their needs shape our response.

The Vision

No woman or child should experience, or be at risk of experiencing, domestic abuse. If abuse happens, victims should receive all necessary interventions and supports as early as possible to guarantee their safety and wellbeing.

There will always be those who seek to abuse, but domestic abuse is not inevitable. As a country, we can make a difference by:

- Recognising and upholding the rights of women and children
- Putting in place the primary prevention strategies needed to ensure domestic violence does not occur
- Providing necessary and timely support services to victims of domestic abuse
- Recognising that domestic violence is a crime. While anyone can be a victim, it is a crime that overwhelmingly and disproportionately affects women and children
- Supporting women and children to access a justice system that recognises and understands the dynamics of domestic abuse
- Ensuring our justice system holds perpetrators accountable

The Mission

Sonas works to keep women and children experiencing domestic abuse safe by providing effective frontline support services. The safety of women and children is our priority; their needs shape our response.

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4,250

**WE RECEIVED AND
MADE OVER 4,250 CALLS,
FROM CLIENTS AND ON
BEHALF OF CLIENTS**



**TOTAL SESSIONS
DOMESTICABUSE.IE**

ANNUALLY

10,069

CEO Foreword

The needs of women and children experiencing domestic abuse are at the heart of who Sonas is. We respond to victims' needs during some of the worst times of their lives: Times when the health, well-being and actual safety of victims is under threat from perpetrators.

We have spent almost three decades ensuring we are meeting victims' needs. That is why we provide emergency refuge, Supported Housing, Safe Home emergency accommodation, outreach and visiting support, court accompaniment and supports around legal processes.

In 2019, Sonas reviewed the supports we were providing women and children to ensure that we were doing even better to meeting their needs. We grew and developed new services to meet the needs of women and children experiencing domestic abuse in the Greater Dublin Region:

- We developed a co-located service for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence with the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre and Aoibhneas Domestic Abuse Support in Balbriggan, north Dublin
- We provided the TLC Kidz programme in south Dublin for mothers and their children in recovery from domestic abuse
- We expanded our emergency Safe Home accommodation so that women and children had alternative emergency accommodation support

As part of this review, 2019 marked our last year providing services in Wicklow. Sonas had been providing supports to women and children in the Wicklow area since 2013. Our base in Wicklow town had enabled us to provide accommodation and outreach supports to victims of domestic abuse. It had become apparent during the six years that it was becoming increasingly difficult operationally to continue providing services.

It was with a heavy heart that we decided as an organisation in 2018 to initiate a phased

withdrawal of services. Our priority throughout the process were ongoing follow-on supports to clients and ensuring that the property reverted to Wicklow County Council. We remain proud of the supports we were able to provide to victims of domestic abuse during our six years in Wicklow.

As we now progress through these unprecedented times, locally, nationally and globally, we remind ourselves as an organisation of who Sonas is and why it exists.

Sonas is...

- client-centred
- needs-led
- trauma-informed
- rights-based

My thanks to the board of Sonas who give their expertise and time unstintingly to the organisation, to our funders principally Tusla – the Child and Family Agency without whose support we would be unable to sustain our work, our colleagues on the frontline delivering services to victims and our colleagues who support them to do their work. Finally, my profound thanks to the women and children experiencing domestic abuse who come to us for support. We are privileged to share your journey to recovery and support you on your path to peace and freedom. You are why we are.

Thank you.

Fiona Ryan
CEO Sonas

SONAS WHAT WE DID IN 2019

4,650

WE Carried Out
4,650 Individual **One-to-One**
Sessions with Women

INDIVIDUAL VISITORS TO
DOMESTICABUSE.IE

ANNUALLY

7,720

10,069 TOTAL SESSIONS

WE Provided

235 | Family Sessions

400 | Group Sessions with Children

750 | Group and Individual Sessions to Children

WE Supported

360 | Women and Children in Refuge and Safe Homes

164 | Supported Housing Programmes supported 164 Women and Children

264 | Sonas Outreach and Visiting Support Supported 264 Women

Please note that some women used more than one Sonas service



4,250

WE received and made over 4,250 calls,
from clients and on behalf of clients



**Sonas Accommodation -
Based Services**
(Refuge, Safe Homes and
Supported Housing)
Supported 524 women and
children directly



WE supported some
310 children directly and 373
children indirectly through
supporting their mothers
around parenting in the
context of domestic abuse

Sonas: Thank You

Sonas's work is made possible by the funding support of Tusla – the Child and Family Agency and specifically the agency's Domestic Sexual and Gender-based Violence unit.

Our relationship with Tusla goes beyond funding to as we work on an inter-agency basis with Tusla staff to provide services and better outcomes for victims of domestic abuse in the four Tusla service areas of the Greater Dublin Region: Dublin North, Dublin North City, Dublin South Central and Dublin South East.

- We are thankful for the Department of Justice/ Victims of Crime contribution in 2019 to our services as they relate to accompanying victims to court and supports around legal processes
- We were delighted to partner with the HSE in 2019 as we once again provided DSGBV training to HSE staff via our specially designed resource for the HSE
- Thank you to various local authorities – Fingal County Council, Dublin City Council and South Dublin County Council whose grants in 2019 contributed to the maintenance and upkeep of Sonas properties

- Thank you to Wicklow County Council who supported Sonas's Wicklow service from 2013 until we phased-out our service in the county in the spring of 2019
- A huge thank you to the other individual, organisations and agencies, both statutory and NGO, whom we work with every day in Dublin to ensure women and children experiencing domestic abuse get the help and support that they need on their journey to recovery.

Children's Charter

Children and Young People have Rights:

1. I have the right to feel good about myself.
2. I have the right to live in a place where I am safe and cared for.
3. I have the right to get the help I want or need.
4. I have the right to understand and have a say in the decisions that affect me.

1

I have the right to feel good about myself.

This means...

- Being treated like any other child, with respect and equality.
- Knowing about my culture.
- Being able to play and have fun.

2

I have the right to live in a place where I feel safe and cared for.

This means...

- Living in a place where I won't feel scared or hurt.
- Having someone to talk to.
- Eating good food, sleeping well and keeping clean.
- Having my own "space" or a place where I can have some time on my own if I want.
- Knowing who I can go to if I have a problem or if I am worried about something.

3

I have the right to get the help I want or need.

This means...

- Going to a school that is suitable for me.
- Visiting the doctor or dentist if I need to.
- Being able to talk to a children's support worker regularly.
- I can ask someone for help.

4

I have the right to understand and have a say in the decisions that affect me.

This means...

- I can express my opinion about things that will affect me.
- I am included in what is decided about my life.
- I am heard and allowed to say what I am thinking and feeling.

Children in Sonas

Sonas supports hundreds of children experiencing domestic abuse every year.

In Sonas we recognise children are victims of domestic abuse whether they are the direct targets of the perpetrator or not. Children come to us demonstrating a range of behaviours – fearful, withdrawn, anxious, sad, traumatised, afraid to speak, afraid to move, confused, conflicted...

We have supported children in Sonas over the years who:

- were physically injured by perpetrators trying to intervene in an attack on their mother
- were at home when the perpetrator was beating the child's mother
- were at home when the perpetrator was sexually assaulting the child's mother
- were at home when the perpetrator was verbally abusing the child's mother

We have supported children in Sonas who:

- were denied their mother going to them in the night because the perpetrator forbade it
- were denied their mother's attention during the day because the perpetrator felt that attention should only be for him

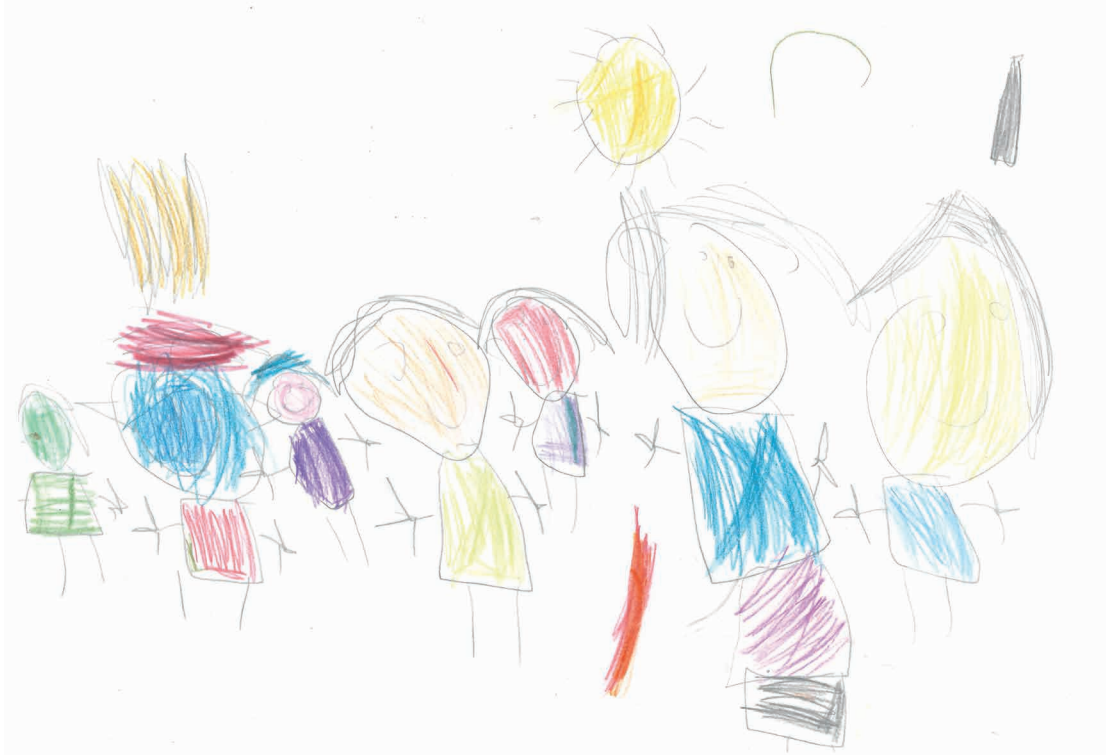
- were denied necessities such as adequate food and clothing because the perpetrator used money to control the mother
- were encouraged by perpetrators to join in the abuse of their mothers

Our children's team support children to play and process their emotions and experiences safely. We also do safety planning with children so they can learn to keep safe.

Supports to children are provided in specially designated children's rooms/family spaces in:

- our 24/7 emergency services such as Refuge in west Dublin
- our Supported Housing Programmes in Clondalkin, Ringsend and Killester

We are conscious of the equal number of children we support indirectly through support of their mothers around parenting in the context of domestic abuse through our outreach and visiting support service across the Greater Dublin Region including Safe Homes.



New Developments in 2019... TLC Kidz Programme

In 2019, Sonas began delivering the TLC Kidz programme in south Dublin. The programme, delivered by Sonas's Outreach and Visiting Support team, is for mothers and children who are recovering from domestic abuse.

A 2018 evaluation of the TLC Kidz programme commissioned by children's charity Barnardos and delivered by a multi-agency group found positive changes for children and families participating in the programme. These included¹:

- Breaking the silence and isolation regarding domestic abuse
- Appropriate expression and regulation of difficult emotions (for example, anger, anxiety, sadness)
- Knowing how to keep safe and able to identify acceptable and unacceptable behaviours
- Warm, open mother-child relationships
- Improved child confidence in peer and family interactions and ability to cope with everyday life

- Improved school engagement and involvement with sports and social activities
- Improved child physical health and emotional and behavioural wellbeing
- Mothers more actively engaged in their community, for example, employment, starting new courses, engaging with services, and getting involved in social activities
- Evidence of generalised benefits to siblings who had not attended the programme.

"This programme is such a positive contribution to women and children's recovery from domestic abuse. Perpetrators often seek to break down the mother-child bond, to undermine the mother as a parent to emotionally abuse her, to control her by leveraging her fear of harm to her child... Effectively to isolate the mother and child from each other so that the perpetrator's control becomes absolute. This programme helps to rebuild that bond and gives the mother and child new skills to aid their recovery..."

Outreach and Visiting Support Manager

¹ <https://www.barnardos.ie/media/1997/barnardos-tlc-evaluation-executive-summary-12pages.pdf>

Elise's Story*

Supported Housing Programme Client

"I was abused for as long as I can remember. I met my first boyfriend when I was in my mid-teens. He was twice my age. Things were bad at home with my parents and that made me turn to him more. Looking back now, it's like he groomed me, I was teenager and he was in his 30s.

"We had our first child I was 19 and then I was pregnant again straight after. When I was pregnant with my third baby he beat me up so bad, the Gardai had to bring me to refuge. I struggled a lot with everything but they helped me in refuge. I was lucky because I was able to get a place in Sonas Supported Housing Programme and that gave me time to get help and support.

"It is tough being on your own and somedays I just don't care anymore. I have a lot of support in place, I am not always in a good place, I resist, I rebel against everything. However, the Sonas staff support me and help me to try again..."

Elise, mother of three

*Names and certain details have been changed to ensure individuals are not identifiable

Working with Elise

Sonas Women's Support Worker

"Elise is young and has experienced a high level of abuse from a very young age. She has been let down a lot and I think that's why she fights against everything.

"When I started working with her on domestic abuse she was dismissing her experiences as normal or that's what you have to put up with "to have a man in your life". She would blame herself for what she went through. Her self-esteem was very low and she would have seen the need to have a partner no matter what the cost in her life.

"With time I have observed that she seems to be accepting and understanding of her experience and is slowly attempting to move on with her life."



Sonas Services

Every victim’s experience is unique to them; their circumstances and needs may differ considerably from each other. There are elements of their experiences that victims share with each other which allows us as a support services organisation to provide services while respecting each individual’s unique experience.

Sonas services have been developed to be client-centred, needs-led and trauma-informed. We know from working with victims that situations can deteriorate quickly and perpetrators’ risk to victims escalate rapidly. Risk in the context of domestic abuse can be dynamic and victims can and do require different supports and interventions. Sonas services are designed to recognise this dynamic and reflect client needs. All Sonas services are designed to be both stand-alone and form part of a continuum of wrap-around services depending on client needs at time of engaging with services.

In 2019, our services provided emergency accommodation, outreach, court accompaniment and visiting support to women and children in the Greater Dublin region experiencing domestic abuse. Victims disclosed to us their experiences of every type of abuse

that could be imagined – physical, sexual, psychological, emotional...

Sonas Support Services to Victims of Domestic Abuse

Sonas provides both accommodation-based (refuge, supported housing programme and Safe Homes) and non-accommodation services ie mobile services (Outreach, Visiting Support and Court Accompaniment and supports around the legal processes. In 2019, Sonas provided over 213 court accompaniments and 1,136 legal support-related hours.

Sonas services are rooted in the communities we serve across the Greater Dublin Region with physical locations in: refuge (Blanchardstown); supported housing programmes (Killester, Ringsend and Clondalkin) and Safe Homes in the Tusla Dublin South East Region/Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Region.



Outreach/Visiting Support and Court Support offered to victims of domestic abuse across the Greater

Dublin region. Sonas also provides a Visiting Support Service to women resident in Dochas Women’s Prison.



Safe Homes: Short-term crisis accommodation-based support within the community for women and their

children; an alternative to refuge for women and children at lower risk. Located primarily in Dublin South East.



24/7 Emergency Refuge:

providing emergency/crisis short supports including accommodation to women and children experiencing domestic abuse. Located in west Dublin but taking referrals from across the Greater Dublin region and outside the region as well.



Court Accompaniment and Supports Around Legal Processes:

Applying for a domestic violence order, going to court, going through custody and access proceedings, these can all be bewildering experiences for victims of domestic abuse and Sonas offers supports through these legal processes.



Supported Housing Programmes: A support programme usually provided to post-crisis victims of abuse with additional and/or complex needs. Due to the dynamic nature of domestic abuse, clients can be subject to ongoing risk from perpetrators and Sonas

continues to support them around risk assessment and safety planning etc; located in the Tusla areas of Dublin North City and Dublin South Central.

2019 Innovation

New “joined-up” service for domestic violence victims and victims of sexual violence in North Dublin.

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity, Aoibhneas Domestic Abuse for Women and Children and Dublin Rape Crisis Centre joined together in the summer of 2019 on a pilot basis to provide co-located support services to victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence in Balbriggan, north Dublin.

Sonas Head of Services Todd Prevost said of new service: “We had recognised for a long time, based on our experience of supporting adult and child victims of domestic abuse, that sexual violence by perpetrators is a reality. It is a reality for around one in five of the adult victims we support.

“It was obvious if we could streamline supports to victims by having services in one location then this would be a significant positive development in assisting victims to get help more easily. The last thing a victim needs is an unnecessary barrier on their pathway to recovery.”

The need for services to victims was highlighted in a Tusla – Child and Family Agency commissioned needs assessment of the north Dublin area. The agency provided the funding for the co-located service initiative in recognition of the highlighted need around lack of services in the north Dublin area.

Todd said: “We are really happy to be working with our partners Aoibhneas and the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre to deliver these services to victims. We want to express our thanks to Tusla for having the foresight to support this unique service delivery model and hope we can develop it even further.”

Seana's Story*

Outreach Client

"I know people say the signs are there from the start, but honestly, I didn't see them until after he was married. My ex looked like a real success from the outside, we really looked like the perfect couple, but we weren't. It started with him not wanting me to see my family and friends. It got worse when I got pregnant, he just became so cold and remote. After the baby was born, he seemed to have no affection for him. He used money a lot to control what I could or couldn't do.

"It got better when I got back to work because I had access to more money so he couldn't use it against me. That's when the verbal and emotional abuse got really bad. Looking back, I think I just couldn't imagine I was a victim of domestic abuse. I thought that only happened to unlucky girls not someone like me with a good job and a house. He never hit me so I kept doubting myself. It's when our son got older and he started to encourage our son to insult me as well.

"I saw a poster in a local chemist and rang Sonas. I spoke to a lovely girl she was the outreach support worker. We talked and we met. At this stage, I still wasn't sure whether I was experiencing domestic abuse or not because there was no physical violence. It was like the support worker was holding a mirror up for me and I could see clearly what was going on. She helped me around safety planning and advised me on how to get a safety order. She also gave me advice about my son and parenting in this situation.

"Of course, I know now there was huge emotional and verbal abuse. I couldn't bear the idea of my son being made to hate me and me being helpless to stop it. So I left with my son, my ex and I are getting a divorce and we are still trying to sort out access visits which is really hard."

*Names and certain details have been changed to ensure individuals are not identifiable

Working with Seana

Sonas Women's Support Worker

"When I first met Seana, she confessed to being slightly embarrassed about even contacting us. She explained immediately that her partner didn't hit her but did other things. I listened and as she went through the list of his behaviours, it was obvious she had been exposed over a very long time to a litany of emotional, psychological and verbal abuse to the extent she was struggling to even identify it was abuse any more. There was coercive control as well. What really made her want to act was how her son was being impacted, he was being emotionally abused and their relationship undermined. She felt she had lost all authority as a parent and respect as a person.

"It's been amazing to see the difference a few months has made. She says herself it's like coming out of a fog. We worked first on her and her son's safety, then on her own needs including her as a parent as well as those of her son."





164

**OUR SUPPORTED
HOUSING PROGRAMMES
SUPPORTED 164
WOMEN AND
CHILDREN**

Sonas: What We Believe and How We Work

Our work is guided by one fundamental goal – to keep women and children experiencing domestic abuse safe. Our work is informed by the following core principles.

Respect for Rights

We recognise that every woman and child engaging with our services is an individual with diverse needs and experiences. Each is entitled to be treated with respect and dignity in order to support them in coping with their experiences and move on from crisis to increased safety. Our model of work is an empowerment one whereby we support women to find solutions for themselves and their children. We advocate for the rights of women and children at all levels, from the individual, through to agency, to policy level.

Woman-centred

Sonas's Women's Support Team provides one-to-one support to women across all services including: Refuge, Supported Housing, Safe Home, Visiting Support/Crisis Intervention and Advice and Outreach. The approach is a key working/case management one. Our model of working with women is an empowerment one, whereby we support a woman to find the best solutions for her particular situation.

Child-centred

Sonas's Children's Support Team works across the organisation with both women who are mothers and children in Sonas services. Sonas implements Children First guidelines in policy, practice and frontline service delivery. Each Support Services team member has received current Children First training and each of our on-site services has both purpose built children's facilities staffed by a Children's Support Team member who works with both mothers and children. We believe our work actively contributes to the key national policy outcomes for children and families experiencing domestic violence by promoting: safety and protection from harm; physical and mental wellbeing; and achieving full potential (social and emotional wellbeing).

Effective Services

Sonas's approach to service provision is based on policy and practice, and evidence of what works for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. This includes our own experience of delivering front line services since 1993. Sonas services are needs-led, dynamic and adaptable with interagency work, as a core feature of service delivery. We work with both statutory and non-statutory agencies across the social care spectrum covering areas such as: education, courts and legal, child wellbeing, welfare and protection, housing, homelessness, mental health, addiction services, etc., in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for women and children engaging with Sonas services. Fundamentally, we believe the needs of women and children experiencing domestic abuse have to be the starting point of any integrated solution.

Governance within Sonas

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG is governed by a voluntary board of management lead by Chairperson Fiona Walsh. The Board provides oversight and strategic direction for the organisation. Board members do not receive any remuneration in respect of their services to the charity. Upholding the highest standards of governance is a priority for the board.

Sonas is signed up to The Governance Code: A Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable organisations in Ireland. Sonas is working towards the Charities Regulator's Charities Governance Code.

In 2019, the Board of Sonas restructured its subcommittees, moving from a Governance, Audit and Risk Committee and Finance and Property Committee structure to: Audit and Risk Committee and Governance and Nominations Committee.

The board of Sonas and its subcommittees meet a minimum of eight times a year.

The existence of the Audit and Risk Committee does not in any way diminish the overall responsibility of the board for risk management within the organisation. However, the committee provides the board with a significant level of assurance that the important issues in each key area have been rigorously examined.

The Audit and Risk Committee - Responsibilities

- To keep under review the adequacy, scope and effectiveness of accounting and internal control systems of all activities carried out by Sonas. Internal controls encompass both operational and financial controls.
- To review established systems to ensure compliance with external legislation/regulations and the organisation's objectives, policies, plans and procedures.

- To review the annual statutory accounts of Sonas before submission to the board for approval.
- Review of external audit function and advise management on the risk plan as a result of audit findings
- To report at least quarterly to the board

The Governance and Nominations Committee – Responsibilities

- To ensure governance practices, principles, guidelines and related policies upheld
- To nominate candidates for appointment to the board
- To appoint directors to board committees
- To ensure induction, training and continuing development of board members
- To review composition and evaluate board and board committees for effectiveness
- To ensure matters relating to integrity and ethics

It is recognised that the board of Sonas has ultimate responsibility for Governance of the organisation.



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WE Carried Out
231 Court Accompaniments

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360

WE Provided
Women and Children in
Refuge and *Safe Homes*

Directors and Other Information

Board of Directors

Jacqueline Cremin

Mary Connolly

Eugene Davy

Ciairín de Buis

Olive Killoury

Harry McIntyre *(Appointed 8 January 2019)*

Dervla Sugrue *(Appointed 8 January 2019)*

Fiona Walsh

Auditors

Duignan Carthy O'Neill
Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditors
84, Northumberland Road
Dublin 4

Principal Bankers

Bank of Ireland
371 North Circular Road
Dublin 7

Secretary and Registered Office

Eugene Davy *(Appointed 26 March 2019)*

Olive Killoury *(Resigned 26 March 2019)*

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG
5 Aston Quay
Dublin 2
D02 K504

Solicitors

Hayes Solicitors
Lavery House
Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 1

Chief Executive Officer

Fiona Ryan

Company Registration Number

195618

Charity Registration Number

CHY 10872

Directors' Report

for the year ended 31 December 2019

The directors present their report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 for consideration at the annual general meeting.

Principal Activity

Sonas was established to provide refuge, support and accommodation to women and children experiencing domestic abuse. The organisation has charitable status. It was established as a voluntary housing association and granted approved status under section 6 of the 1992 Housing Act by the Minister of the Environment.

Results for the year and state of affairs at 31 December 2019

The Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2019 and Balance Sheet as at that date are set out on pages 37 and 38. The surplus amounted to €45,270.

Legal Status

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG is a company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital incorporated under the Companies Act 2014. Membership of the company is not restricted. The liability of each member of the company is limited to €1. Although not obliged to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice SORP (FRS 102) as issued in July 2014 the company has implemented its recommendations where relevant in these accounts. All activities of the company are charitable.

Properties Operated by Sonas

Sonas operated 94 individual accommodation units (apartments and houses) in 2019 primarily in the Greater Dublin Region with the addition

of Wicklow Town. These properties included: a 24/7 crisis refuge in Blanchardstown, Safe Homes - an alternative accommodation-based service to refuge for women and children at lower risk/need and Supported Housing Programmes. These site-based services were provided in: Blanchardstown, Killester, Ringsend, Clondalkin, Wicklow and Stepside.

Sonas has additional properties in Ranelagh, Tallaght, Belmayne, Stepside and Ballymun which are used to provide longer term accommodation to women and children who have experienced domestic abuse. In 2019, Sonas communicated to its principal Wicklow service funder, Wicklow County Council, that the organisation wanted to transfer ownership of Bayview Wicklow back to the local authority. The decision was made by the board on the grounds of overall organisational strategy primarily how the organisation could best support victims with the resources available to it. Sonas engaged with clients, the local community and other stakeholders around the decision. We worked, in particular, with clients to ensure they received appropriate follow-on services.

Board of Management

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG is governed by a voluntary board of management established which provides oversight and strategic direction for the organisation. There are no other volunteers participating in Sonas other than the Board members.

In accordance with the Articles of Association half the members of the Board of Management shall retire from office at the Annual General Meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election.

Board members do not receive any remuneration in respect of their services to the charity. There have been no contracts or

Directors' Report

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

arrangements entered into during the financial year in which a board member was materially interested or which were significant in relation to the charity's activities.

All of the Sonas board members are independent, one board member is a former partner and current consultant in an entity from whom Sonas commissions professional services. The situation is actively managed via Sonas's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Subcommittees of the Board

The Board of Sonas had two subcommittees of the board in 2019:

The Audit and Risk Subcommittee

The Audit and Risk Subcommittee meets quarterly and reports to the overall board. The subcommittee reviews governance and risk to the organisation; risk within Sonas as a whole

organisation; responsibility lies within the board having ultimate responsibility for identifying and managing risk to the organisation. All recommendations are made to the board as per the subcommittee's terms of reference.

The Governance and Nominations Subcommittee

The Governance and Nominations Subcommittee meets annually or as needed. It takes the lead in identifying director candidates, organising board and committee membership, governance principles and practices and board self-assessments.

All recommendations are made to the board as per the subcommittee's terms of reference.

Board Attendance

Board Member	Joined Board	BM 13.03.19	BM 12.06.19	BM 26.09.19	BM 10.12.19	Total
Mary Connolly <i>Treasurer</i>	21/04/15	Y	N	Y	Y	3/4
Jacqueline Cremin <i>Former Chairperson</i>	20/11/13	Y	N	Y	Y	3/4
Eugene Davy <i>Company Secretary</i>	13/12/16	Y	Y	Y	Y	4/4
Ciairín De Buis <i>Chairperson of Audit and Risk Committee</i>	20/05/17	N	Y	N	Y	2/4
Olive Killoury	21/04/15	N	Y	Y	Y	3/4
Harry McIntyre	08/01/19	Y	N	Y	Y	3/4
Dervla Sugrue	08/01/19	Y	N	Y	Y	3/4
Fiona Walsh <i>Chairperson</i>	14/12/16	Y	Y	N	Y	3/4

Directors' Report

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

Board Member	AR 28.02.19	AR 23.05.19	AR 10.09.19	AR 1.10.19	AR 27.11.19	Total
Mary Connolly <i>Treasurer</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5
Jacqueline Cremin <i>Former Chairperson</i>	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	4/5
Eugene Davy <i>Company Secretary</i>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Ciairín De Buis <i>Chairperson of Audit and Risk Committee</i>	Y	Y	Y	N	N	3/5
Olive Killoury	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Harry McIntyre	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5
Dervla Sugrue	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fiona Walsh <i>Chairperson</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5

Staffing

In 2019, Sonas employed an average of 40 staff, and a relief panel which varied between 3 and 5 part time staff.

Of the 40 full time staff, 32 work directly with women and children across Sonas site-based services and in its community team. Two other staff members work directly with women around accommodation-related needs.

The Sonas executive management team in 2019 consisted of the CEO, the Head of Services and the Head of Finance and HR.

Funding and Income

Sonas in 2019 received €2,133,971 from Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. Some additional funding was re-ceived from Wicklow County Council for services in Wicklow town. There were in addition annual Housing Maintenance and Management fees received from relevant local authorities.

There were in addition smaller specific grants from the HSE and the Victims of Crime Office.

Rents receivable make up 10% of total income, and amounted to €277,059 for the year.

Donations represent less than 1% of total income, and amounted to €4,937 for the year.

All of the above funding received, with the exception of monies donated, is restricted funding.

The balance of grant and revenue funding is for revenue expenditure. These revenue funds are to cover the running of all support services, accommodation and non-accommodation-based services.

Out of the €277,059 of rental income, the board agreed to transfer €95,000, into a building maintenance reserve with the balance going towards the annual running costs associated with the provision of high-quality accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic abuse.

Directors' Report

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

The building maintenance fund is a statutory requirement by the Housing Regulator for all Approved Housing Bodies, of which Sonas is one.

Reserves

Sonas's approach to reserves has been influenced by a combination of recognised good practice in business and the Charities Regulator's guidance on charity reserves. The board of Sonas is conscious of the need to regularly review the organisation's reserves position. The board has operated a minimum reserves approach based on a working capital policy. The latter is done in the context of the organisation's overall risk management framework.

The board has opted for a "minimum reserve" level of three months working capital with a "minimum plus wind down reserve level" based on three months working capital requirements plus amounts payable in the event of the company being wound down.

General Information

Sonas is a leading provider of support services to women and children experiencing domestic abuse.

For over two and a half decades, Sonas has provided support to women and children traumatised by domestic abuse; many of whom were facing intersecting challenges of poverty, disability, poor mental health, history of childhood abuse and substance misuse issues. In more recent years, these challenges have expanded as Irish society changed to include language barriers and immigration status.

Sonas has a rights-based perspective on service provision to women and children experiencing domestic abuse.

In 2019, we provided direct frontline support services to hundreds of women and children

experiencing domestic abuse across the greater Dublin Region from Dun Laoghaire to Balbriggan, Blanchardstown to Ringsend.

Supports included risk assessment and safety planning, information and advice, emotional support and advocacy around accessing housing, legal processes such as applying for a domestic violence order, support around custody and access etc. Sonas carried out over 200 accompaniments of victims to court in order to secure domestic violence orders.

New Services

Thanks to Tusla funding, Sonas was able to partner with the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre and Aoibhneas Domestic Abuse for Women and Children to provide a new co-located service for victims of domestic and sexual violence in Balbriggan, north county Dublin.

Pensions

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG operates a defined contribution pension scheme in respect of the majority of the employees; all staff are offered a pension once they have successfully passed probation.

The pension scheme is separate to the charity and is managed by Zurich with an oversight role held by TAB and an annual review undertaken by an independent actuary Platinum Pioneer Trustees.

The assets of the scheme are held separately from the company in independently administered funds.

The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contribution payable by the company during the year.

Directors' Report

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

Internal Controls

Sonas follows the financial reporting protocols of its statutory funders including quarterly reports; management accounts and audited accounts.

The company prepares quarterly management accounts which are reviewed by the Audit and Risk Subcommittee and by the board.

An independent audit is undertaken annually.

There is a formal organisational structure in place: with clearly defined lines of responsibility; division of duties and delegation of authority; and a dedicated Head of Finance and HR. There are policies regarding spend and delegated levels of authority based on levels of spend.

Sonas has strict policies and procedures in place for the receipt, recording and control of donations as well as procurement and payments.

Risk

Sonas directors are aware of the statutory obligations in relation to providing a fair review of the organisation's development and performance. The directors understand that the identification, management, monitoring and oversight of risk is a key responsibility of the board and that this risk awareness and responsibility is cascaded through the organisation in accordance with the Sonas risk register and risk management framework. The framework is in place which provides for systemic identification, management and review of risk in the organisation.

Every organisation in the course of doing business is exposed to risk. Sonas as a leading provider of support services to women and children experiencing domestic abuse engages with multi-level risks. Our starting point with clients is a risk assessment.

The directors in 2019 are satisfied that a principal risk facing the company is sustainability based on the availability of continued adequate funding from the Government. The directors have addressed this risk by overseeing competent spending of the funds received to provide quality services to women and children, ensuring tenancies are sustained and properties adequately maintained.

In 2019, Sonas was required by the Labour Court to pay a salary increment to staff which the organisation implemented. (The executive management team – CEO, Head of Services and Head of Finance and HR were excluded from this increment). This increment is recurring and will also require payment in 2020.

Sonas has written to Tusla to ask for additional funding to pay the Labour Court mandated increment which the agency has declined to do. Therefore, Sonas has been undertaking a cost containment exercise but there is a risk of the organisation needing to use reserves to pay the increment. Tusla has strongly advised the organisation against using reserves to pay the increment. The board of Sonas is acutely aware of its responsibilities ethical and financial and to that end is seeking to find a solution to the current situation.

Covid 19

In the first half of 2020, the Covid 19 pandemic impacted with social care services in Ireland registering the risk from the end of February. The initial impact of this has been severe and has resulted in a significant worldwide slowdown in economic activity. In Ireland, the economic impact of this pandemic has been characterised by the temporary closure of many businesses in "non-essential" areas to ensure that people's movements are restricted in order to slow down the spread of the virus.

Directors' Report

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

Sonas, like other domestic abuse support services, was classed as an essential service. Domestic abuse support services were named by Sonas's principal funder, Tusla, as one of the agency's top three priorities during the Covid crisis. Sonas implemented its business continuity plan with a specific services contingency plan reflecting the "essential" designation of the service. We also knew to expect a risk in the reported cases of domestic abuse from jurisdictions already experiencing Covid 19 as victims were put at increased risk from perpetrators due to confinement.

The operations of Sonas continued through this period, but we implemented measures early before government mandated lock-down, prioritising ongoing safe provision of services to victims and health and safety of staff. Sonas expanded its services to victims by bringing an additional three Safe Home units online from existing supported housing programme units and expanding our outreach services to provide additional support to victims.

The effect of Covid 19 presents many risks for Sonas, the effects of which cannot be fully quantified at the time of approving the financial statements. As a result, the directors consider the implications of the Covid 19 pandemic to be a significant uncertainty at the time of approving the financial statements. Although the effects cannot be fully determined, the directors believe that the main risks associated with Covid 19 are as follows; these risks as set out below are organisational. The board recognises the range of increased risks to the clients Sonas supports – An Garda Síochána recorded a 25% increase in reported domestic abuse incidents. The board also recognises the risk to the majority of victims who need supports but who will not receive them even under normal circumstances and the exponential risks to those victims:

- an increased demand in the support, outreach and accommodation services provided by Sonas
- a prolonged period of government recommendations and restrictions on the movement of people to contain the virus
- a potential reduction in the initiatives and collaborations that the company may be able to participate in, due to the government restrictions
- increased costs in dealing with the health and safety implications of the pandemic
- increased restrictions on work practices and the implications of same
- potential for a second wave of Covid 19 to impact services

Corporate Governance

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity is fully committed to implementing the highest governance standards. The directors understand their responsibility as a board is to set the strategic direction of the organisation and oversee the implementation of this strategy.

As a recipient of public funding; a provider of social care support to women and children experiencing domestic abuse trauma; and a partner in service provision with both statutory and non-statutory agencies, our responsibilities to our stakeholders are core to all decision-making. While monies we receive in the form of private donations are relatively small, we are equally acutely aware of our responsibilities for the prudent management and spending of these funds.

Directors' Report

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

As an organisation Sonas strives to conduct our business, including our stakeholder engagement, according to the principles of fairness, integrity, transparency and accountability.

Sonas is required to meet the governance requirements of a number of regulators including the governance framework as set out by its principal funder, Tusla - the Child and Family Agency which in itself reflects a number of other governance frameworks including the Governance Code - a code of practice for good governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable organisations in Ireland.

Sonas has signed up to the DOECLG Voluntary Regulation Code for approved housing bodies, published in July 2013 and is compliant with the Tier 2 requirements. Sonas aligns with the key principles of the Charities Regulator's Governance Code and is currently auditing itself for ongoing compliance with said code.

Sonas's strategic plan is available on the Sonas website domesticabuse.ie.

Future Developments

The directors are not expecting to make any significant changes in the nature of the business in the near future. At the time of approving the financial statements, the company is exposed to the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic which has been challenging for operations since the year end and has resulted in increased costs together with an increased demand for its services.

The directors are highly conscious of the company's obligations to victims, staff, partner agencies, and funders. In planning its future activities, the directors will seek to develop the company's support activities whilst managing the effects of the difficult period caused by this outbreak.

Sonas's starting point is always the needs of women and children experiencing domestic abuse; their safety and welfare shape our response. We will continue to provide effective services, innovating and adapting services to: produce the best outcomes for the women and children; support our partners whom we work with, and our funders.

Events after the Balance Sheet Date

In early March 2020, Sonas, like many other organisations was forced to deal with the consequences of the outbreak of Covid 19 in Ireland.

The company reacted to these conditions by implementing health and safety precautionary and operational procedures ahead of government instruction with the focused priority being the welfare and safety of staff and clients: Measures included but were not limited to: implementation of business continuity and services plans; updating as appropriate; IT networking and data sharing across all sites and homeworking; alternating rosters; closure of playrooms etc; securing PPE supply; engaging with relevant stakeholder information briefings; inter-agency working, with particular reference to high risk cases, involving significant levels of cooperation with An Garda Síochána and Tusla; individual site and role based health and safety assessments in context of implementing return to work protocol and associated measures.

Whilst this has resulted in the company remaining operational during the period, there has been an increase in operational costs as a result of Covid 19. The company also during this period worked with Wicklow County Council to ensure the transfer of Sonas's Wicklow property to the local authority for its eventual intended use by a homeless services organisation. As a named essential service, the directors are confident that the company will continue with its operational capacity.

Directors' Report

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

Governance and Compliance

Sonas is committed to the principles of integrity, fairness, transparency and accountability as well as the continuing systemic implementation, including processes and procedures, of direction and control to affect a well governed organisation. In common with other organisations, we have noted and welcomed the increased emphasis on good governance via the General Data Protection Registration (GDPR) and the increasing compliance requirements accompanying it. Increased emphasis requires increased capacity and with that are the resulting resource implications. GDPR came into force in May 2018. Sonas was audited by the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner in 2017. We received a generally positive report and implemented the Commissioners recommendations in 2018.

Property

The Sonas building maintenance reserve is a fund designated by the board to be used to meet the future costs of maintaining the Sonas housing units in good order and to maximise their useful life.

Sonas completed in 2019 the reinstatement works in our Clondalkin supported housing service following a tragic fire in 2017.

Sonas provides services in the Greater Dublin Region and Wicklow. The organisation announced its intention to all stakeholders in May 2019 of its phased withdrawal of its Wicklow service for operational, primarily logistical reasons.

In the interests of ensuring our operations are as lean as possible, Sonas transferred 4 properties under the Sonas Housing Partnership in Navan, Co. Meath to a social housing provider with significant housing representation in the local area.

Accounting Records

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities under sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014 to keep adequate accounting records for the company. To this end, the directors allocate appropriate resources to secure compliance with the requirements of the Act. The books and records are kept at 5 Aston Quay, Dublin 2.

Statement on Relevant Audit Information

Each of the persons who are directors at the time when this directors' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as the director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware, and
- the director has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a director in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Duignan Carthy O'Neill Limited, have indicated their willingness to continue in office in accordance with the provisions of Section 383(2) of the Companies Act, 2014.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 2 September 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

Fiona Walsh	Mary Connolly
Director	Director

Directors' Responsibilities Statement

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with Irish law and regulations.

Irish company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under the law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with Irish Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (Irish GAAP) giving a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and the surplus or deficit of the company for each financial year. Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of assets, liabilities and financial position of the company at the financial year end date and of the surplus or deficit of the company for the financial year and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP

The directors are responsible for ensuring that the charitable company keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of

the charitable company; enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and results of the charitable company to be determined with reasonable accuracy; enable them to ensure that the financial statements and Directors' Report comply with the Companies Act 2014; and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the board:

Fiona Walsh **Mary Connolly**
Director Director

Date: 2 September 2020

Independent Auditors' Report

to the members of Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG

We have audited the financial statements on pages 37 to 52 of Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG for the year ended 31 December 2019 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Funds, Statement of Cashflows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is Irish law and FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

This report is made solely to the company's members as a body in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters that we are required to state to them in the audit report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company or the company's members as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company's affairs as at 31 December 2019 and of its result for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to Going Concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (Ireland) require us to report to you where:

- the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the directors have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Independent Auditors' Report

to the members of Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG (continued)

Other Information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual report, other than the financial statements and our Auditors' report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the auditor otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report this fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on Other Matters Prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

Based solely on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- in our opinion, the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements; and
- in our opinion, the Directors' Report has been prepared in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

We have obtained all the information and explanations which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit.

In our opinion the accounting records of the company were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited, and financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

Matters on which We are Required to Report by Exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Directors' Report.

The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions required by sections 305 to 312 of the Act are not made. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Respective Responsibilities

Respective Responsibilities of Directors for the Financial Statements

As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities' Statement, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the

Independent Auditors' Report

to the members of Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG (continued)

going concern basis of accounting unless the management either intends to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditor's Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the IAASA's website at: [https://www.iaasa.ie/Publications/ISA-700-\(Ireland\)](https://www.iaasa.ie/Publications/ISA-700-(Ireland)). The description forms part of our Auditor's Report

Elizabeth Murphy

for and on behalf of

Duignan Carthy O'Neill Limited Chartered
Accountants Registered Auditors
84 Northumberland Road
Dublin 4

Date: 2 September 2020

Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 31 December 2019

Income and Expenditure - Continuing Operations

		Restricted Funds 2019	Designated Funds 2019	Unrestricted Funds 2019	Total Funds 2019	Total Funds 2018
	Notes	€	€	€	€	€
Incoming Resources						
Corporation and Grant Funding	2.8	2,232,232	-	-	2,232,232	2,243,012
Other Income		10,614			10,614	313,977
Rental Income		182,059	95,000	-	277,059	291,305
Donations and Fundraising	3	-	4,937	-	4,937	54,316
Amortisation of grant income	4	-	-	355,370	355,370	363,577
		-	-	66,202	66,202	
Total Incoming Resources		2,424,905	99,937	421,572	2,946,414	3,266,187
Resources Expended						
Crisis Intervention and Provision of Support Services		(2,268,759)	-	-	(2,268,759)	(2,609,132)
Depreciation	4	-	-	(410,640)	(410,640)	(423,359)
Legal, Professional and Administration		(127,595)	-	-	(127,595)	(134,157)
Total Resources Expended		(2,396,354)	-	(410,640)	(2,806,994)	(3,166,648)
Net Movement in Funds		28,551	99,937	10,932	139,420	99,539
Provision for building maintenance reserve		-	(95,000)	-	(95,000)	(95,000)
Surplus on ordinary activities before interest	4	28,551	4,937	10,932	44,420	4,539
Interest Receivable	5	-	-	850	850	2,018
Surplus for the Year		28,551	4,937	11,782	45,270	6,557
Surplus Retained for the Year		28,551	4,937	11,782	45,270	6,557

Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Assets	8	13,292,942	14,112,188
Current Assets			
Debtors	9	30,196	31,319
Cash at bank and in hand	10	1,232,153	1,144,711
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	(163,265)	(162,866)
Net Current Assets		1,099,084	1,013,164
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities		14,392,026	15,125,352
Restricted Government Grants	12	(13,298,620)	(14,130,648)
Net Assets		1,093,406	994,704
Capital and Reserves			
Building Maintenance Reserve	13	530,511	477,079
Accumulated Funds		562,895	517,625
Funds	14	1,093,406	994,704

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 2 September 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

Fiona Walsh **Mary Connolly**
Director Director

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	€	€
Reconciliation of operating surplus/(deficit) to net cash and cash equivalents		
Cash flow from operating activities		
Operating surplus/(deficit)	44,420	4,539
Depreciation	410,640	423,359
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	1,123	(2,469)
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	398	19,418
Government grant released	(355,370)	(363,577)
Provision for building maintenance reserve	95,000	95,000
Surplus on transfer of asset		
Net cash flow from operating activities	130,009	176,270
Statement of Cash Flows		
Net cash flow from operating activities	130,009	176,270
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest receivable	850	2,018
Capital expenditure	(1,849)	(91,086)
Capital Grants Received	-	-
Building Maintenance Reserve Expended	(41,568)	(183,236)
Net cash flow from investing activities	87,442	(96,034)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Deferred reserves/Income	-	-
Capital Grant received	-	-
Net cash flow from financing activities	-	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	87,442	(96,034)
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds		
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	87,442	(96,034)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2019	1,144,711	1,240,745
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2019	1,232,153	1,144,711

Statement of Changes in Funds

for the year ended 31 December 2019

	Accumulated Funds	Building Maintenance Reserve	Total Funds
	€	€	€
		(Note 13)	
At 1 January 2019	517,625	477,079	994,704
Retained surplus for the year	45,270	-	45,270
Utilisation of Building Maintenance Reserve	-	(41,568)	(41,568)
Transfer to Building Maintenance Reserve	-	95,000	95,000
At 31 December 2019	<u>562,895</u>	<u>530,511</u>	<u>1,093,406</u>
In respect of prior year:			
At 1 January 2018	511,068	565,315	1,076,383
Retained deficit for the year	6,557	-	6,557
Utilisation of Building Maintenance Reserve	-	(183,236)	(183,236)
Transfer to Building Maintenance Reserve	-	95,000	95,000
At 31 December 2018	<u>517,625</u>	<u>477,079</u>	<u>994,704</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019

1. General Information and Statement of Compliance

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in the Republic of Ireland on the 13 November 1992. The company's registered office address is 5 Aston Quay, Dublin 2, D02 K504.

These financial statements of Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG incorporated in the Republic of Ireland have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2014.

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG is a public benefit entity with the main objectives of working towards the elimination of violence towards women and children and assisting them with their housing needs arising from the abuse they have suffered. The Charity does not carry out any income generating activities.

2. Accounting Policies

2.1. Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accounting standards generally accepted in Ireland and Irish statute comprising the Companies Act 2014, and the Charities SORP (FRS 102). Accounting Standards generally accepted in Ireland in preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view are those published by Chartered Accountants Ireland and issued by the Financial Reporting Council.

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG is constituted under Irish company law as a company limited by guarantee and is a

registered charity and has adopted and reported its performance in accordance with the format provided for in the Charities SORP and in particular reports its performance for the financial year in the format of the SORP's Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA).

Companies Act 2014 which became effective in law on 1 June 2015 and from that date applied the format and content of financial statements requirements appropriate for a company trading for the profit of its members to a company that is a not for profit organisation. In order to provide information relevant to understanding the stewardship of the directors and the performance and financial position of the charity, Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG has prepared its financial statements in accordance with the formats provided for in the Charities SORP (FRS 102) consistent with the prior year.

The directors consider the adoption of the SORP requirements is the most appropriate accounting to properly reflect and disclose the activities of the organisation. Had the Companies Act format and content of financial statements requirements suitable for a company trading for the profit of its members been presented instead, a profit and loss account with related notes showing items such as Turnover and Cost of Sales would have been reported along with a "Surplus" on ordinary activities before taxation.

2.2. Judgments and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of these financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

Judgements and estimates are continually evaluated and are based on historical experiences and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The company makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed below.

Long-lived assets comprising of property represent significant portion of total assets. The annual depreciation and amortisation charge depend primarily on the estimated lives of each type of asset and, in certain circumstances, estimates of residual values. The directors regularly review these useful lives and change them if necessary, to reflect current conditions. In determining these useful lives management consider physical condition and expected economic utilisation of the property assets. Changes in the useful lives can have a significant impact on the depreciation and amortisation charge for the financial year. The net book value of Tangible Fixed Assets subject to depreciation at the financial year end date was €13,292,942.

2.3. Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

All tangible fixed assets are recorded at historic cost.

Depreciation is on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value, of each asset systematically over its expected useful life, as follows:

Land and Buildings	2% Straight Line
Office Equipment	20% Straight Line
Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	20% Straight Line
Motor Vehicles	20% Straight Line

The carrying values of the tangible fixed assets are reviewed annually for impairment in periods if events or changes in circumstances indicate the carrying value may not be recoverable.

2.4. Pensions

Pension benefits for employees are met by payments to a defined contribution pension fund.

The regular cost of providing retirement pensions and related benefits is charged to the Statement of Financial Activities over the employees' service lives on the basis of a constant percentage of earnings. The assets of the scheme are held separately from the company in independently administered funds.

2.5. Taxation

The company is exempt from taxation due to its charitable status.

2.6. Government Grants and Loans

Grants and loans are accounted under the performance model as permitted by FRS 102. Grants relating to expenditure on tangible fixed assets are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities at the same rate as the depreciation on the assets to which the grant relates. The deferred element of grants is included in creditors as deferred income.

Grants of a revenue nature are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the same period as the related expenditure.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

2.7. Financial Instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

The company only enters into basic financial instruments transactions that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable.

Debt instruments like accounts receivable and payable are initially measured at present value of the future payments and subsequently at amortised cost using effective interest method. Debt instruments that are payable or receivable within one year, typically trade payables and receivables, are measured, initially and subsequently, at the undiscounted amount of the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received.

2.8. Income

Income represents the total of grants, donations and rental income related to the year.

Income is received in cash by way of donations, gifts, grants and fund-raising events. Cash donations, gifts, and grants are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities as soon as they become receivable. Cash collected from fund-raising events is included in the Statement of Financial Activities as soon as it is credited in the bank.

Bank interest received is included in the Statement of Financial Activities as soon as it is credited to the bank account. Rental income is accrued for the year to which it relates.

Revenue-based Grant Income

	2019	2018
	€	€
Tusla	2,149,358	2,108,139
Dublin City Council	15,747	15,747
Fingal County Council	4,344	4,344
HSE Training Delivery Grant	18,040	4,500
South Dublin County Council	10,860	10,860
Department of Justice (Victims of Crime)	10,800	13,500
Irish Youth Foundation	-	3,750
Meath County Council	-	2,172
Wicklow County Council	23,083	80,000
	2,232,232	2,243,012

Expenditure

All expenditure is charged in the period to which it relates.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

3. Donations and Fundraising

	2019	2018
	€	€
Microsoft donation	-	41,573
Other donations	4,937	12,743
Fundraising	-	-
	4,937	54,316

4. Surplus for the Year

	2019	2018
	€	€
Operating surplus/(deficit) is stated after charging:		
Depreciation of tangible assets	410,640	423,359
Auditors' remuneration (inclusive of VAT)	9,152	9,152
Auditors' remuneration non-audit	-	1,902
and after crediting:		
Government grants amortised	(355,370)	(363,577)

5. Interest Receivable

	2019	2018
	€	€
Bank interest	850	2,018

6. Pension Costs

The company operates one defined contribution scheme for eligible employees. Pension costs amounted to €36,683 (2018 - €43,599). The assets of the fund are held separately from the company in independently administered funds.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

7. Employees

Number of Employees

The average monthly numbers of employees during the year were:

	2019	2018
	Number	Number
All employees	41	40
Employment Costs		
	2019	2018
	€	€
Wages and salaries - support staff for women and children	1,149,261	1,267,479
Wages and salaries - administration support staff	425,069	299,015
Social welfare costs - support staff for women and children	124,427	136,780
Social welfare costs - administration support staff	46,021	32,298
Pension costs - support staff for women and children	24,922	31,735
Pension costs - administration support staff	11,761	11,864
	1,781,461	1,779,171

The total remuneration for key management personnel for the financial year amounted to €340,726 (2018: €240,472). Employment costs have increased from 2018 due to unfilled roles within the Organisation.

Remuneration includes basic pay and employers PRSI and Pension Contributions.

Employment Benefits Breakdown

	2019	2018
	Number	Number
€60,000 - €69,999	-	1
€70,000 - €79,999	1	-
€80,000 - €89,999	-	-
€90,000 - €99,999	-	-
€100,000 - €109,999	1	1
€110,000 - €119,999	-	-
€120,000 - €129,999	-	-
€130,000 - €139,999	-	-
€140,000 - €149,999	-	-
€150,000 - €159,999	-	-
€160,000 - €169,999	-	-

Directors salary for 2019 was €Nil (2018: €Nil).

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

8. Tangible Assets

	Land and Buildings	Fixtures, Fittings Equipment	Office Equipment	Motor Vehicle	Total
	€	€	€	€	€
Cost					
At 1 January 2019	18,637,420	345,384	207,487	16,700	19,206,991
Additions	-	-	1,849	-	1,849
Disposals	(a) (662,026)	-	-	-	(662,026)
At 31 December 2019	17,975,394	345,384	209,336	16,700	18,546,814
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2019	4,640,144	250,915	187,044	16,700	5,094,803
On disposals	(251,571)	-	-	-	(251,571)
Charge for the year	359,180	39,022	12,438	-	410,640
At 31 December 2019	4,747,753	289,937	199,482	16,700	5,253,872
Net book values					
At 31 December 2019	13,227,641	55,447	9,854	-	13,292,942
At 31 December 2018	13,997,276	94,469	20,443	-	14,112,188

Sonas have secured title to 94% of the Land and Buildings included above at 31 December 2019. The company continues to apply resources to secure full title to the remaining 6% of these properties.

(a) Sonas transferred its four properties in Meath to another Housing Authority. Under the terms of this transfer, the Net Book Value and associated grant transferred, resulting in neither a surplus or deficit for Sonas during 2019. There was no cash benefit to Sonas as a result of this transaction.

9. Debtors: Amounts Falling due within One Year

	2019	2018
	€	€
Rent Receivable	14,214	15,344
Staff Tax Saver	(421)	(306)
Prepayments	16,403	16,281
	30,196	31,319

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

10. Cash at Bank and in Hand

	2019	2018
	€	€
Current Accounts	123,872	129,379
Deposit Account		
- Amount set aside to provide for a Building Maintenance Reserve	530,511	477,079
- Amount set aside to provide for a Belmayne Maintenance Reserve	-	-
- Other Deposits	574,022	534,765
Petty Cash	3,748	3,488
	1,232,153	1,144,711

11. Creditors: Amounts Falling due within One Year

	2019	2018
	€	€
Credit Card	(937)	1,419
Trade Creditors	64,892	71,026
Pension	(893)	30
Forsa Union Fees	2,841	1,530
Other taxes and social security costs	42,090	14,193
Accruals and Deferred Income	40,659	41,642
Other Creditors	-	3,025
Deferred Income	14,613	30,001
	163,265	162,866
Other taxes and social security costs include:		
PAYE and PRSI	42,090	14,193

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

12. Housing Grants and Loans - CLSS and CAS

	2019	2018
	€	€
At 1 January 2019	14,130,648	14,768,968
Released in year	(355,370)	(363,577)
Transferred	(410,456)	(274,743)
Surplus on transfer of assets	(66,202)	-
At 31 December 2019	13,298,620	14,130,648

The company owns properties in Killester, Clondalkin, Navan, Ringsend, Ballymun, Blanchardstown, Stepaside, Belmayne, Tallaght and Wicklow. Housing grants and loans are secured by specific charges on the charity land and housing properties. No capital or interest repayments are required to be made on the above loans provided that the charity continues to comply with certain specific requirements of the local authorities with regard to the properties for which housing grants and loans have been provided.

13. Building Maintenance Reserve

The company has a building maintenance reserve. This reserve is to meet contingency building maintenance expenditure that may arise on housing stock. This reserve has a balance of €530,511 at 31 December 2019 (31 December 2018: €477,079). The total expenditure incurred in 2019 was €41,568 (2018: €183,236).

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

14. Reconciliation of Movements in Funds

	2019	2018
	€	€
Restricted Funds - Current Year	28,551	10,005
Designated Funds - Current Year	4,937	54,316
Unrestricted Funds - Current Year	11,782	(57,764)
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	45,270	6,557
Increase/(Decrease) in Building Maintenance Reserve	53,432	(84,989)
Increase/(Decrease) in Belmayne Maintenance Reserve	-	(3,247)
Transfer between Revenue and Building Maintenance reserve	-	-
	98,702	(81,679)
Opening Funds brought forward	994,704	1,076,383
	1,093,406	994,704

Closing Reserves allocated as follows:

	Opening Surplus/(Deficit) 01/01/19	2019	Closing Surplus/(Deficit) 31/12/19
	€	€	€
Restricted Funds	894,103	28,551	922,654
Designated Funds	216,226	4,937	221,163
Unrestricted Funds	(914,922)	11,782	(903,140)
Un-allocated reserves prior to 1/1/07	322,218	-	322,218
Building Maintenance Reserve	477,079	53,432	530,511
Belmayne Maintenance Reserve	-	-	-
	994,704	98,702	1,093,406

Reserves consist of designated reserves specifically held to cover the cost of future capital works on the Sonas property portfolio.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

15. Tusla Grant

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG received grant funding of €2,133,971 from Tusla, during 2019. An amount of €2,149,358 has been taken to the Statement of Financial Activities during 2019. Deferred Tusla grant income at 31 December 2019 was €14,613 (2018: €30,001). The funding is spent solely for the purposes of the Tusla-funded activity and programme outlined in their agreement.

These grants awarded are not capital in nature.

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG have obtained an up to date Tax Clearance Certificate and are in compliance with the relevant circulars, including circular 13/2004.

	Total Tusla
	€
Income	2,149,358
Expenses	
Refuge and support services staff	1,287,503
Relief Support Staff	86,556
Administrative support staff	331,103
Operating costs	263,957
HR Costs (incl training)	30,846
Health and Safety/Security of Services	6,818
Service-Related Family Support Activities	9,785
Professional Services	46,091
General expenses	11,949
Total expenses	<u>2,074,608</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>74,750</u>

16. Ultimate Parent Undertaking

The company is controlled by its members and the board of directors.

17. Related Party Transactions

Hayes Solicitors is deemed to be a related party by virtue of having a director on the board. During the year Sonas paid €6,371 (2018: €34,647) in legal fees to Hayes Solicitors and €5,535 was outstanding at 31 December 2019.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019 (continued)

18. Post Balance Sheet Events

In the first half of 2020, the Covid 19 virus spread worldwide. In common with many other countries, the Irish government issued guidance and restrictions on the movement of people designed to slow the spread of this virus. In early March 2020, many businesses closed voluntarily and throughout the month more restrictions were placed on people and businesses. On 28th March, all “non-essential” businesses were ordered to close temporarily.

At the time of approving the financial statements, the directors consider that the balance sheet has not been impacted based on events since the year end and as a result no adjustment has been made to these financial statements.

19. Going Concern

The company made a surplus of €45,270 has net current assets of €1,099,084 and net assets of €1,093,406 at the year end.

During the first quarter of 2020, The Covid 19 pandemic has spread initially from Asia to Europe and subsequently worldwide. The initial economic effect of this has been a worldwide slowdown in economic activity and the loss of jobs across many businesses. In Ireland there are restrictions placed on “non-essential” businesses which has resulted in many businesses temporarily closing in measures designed to restrict the movement of people and to slow down the spread of the virus.

Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG has continued to provide its services during this period and has not seen a significant effect on its service activities as a result of the virus. The directors have prepared budgets for the upcoming 12 months which show that the company will continue as a going concern.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.



20. Contingent Liabilities

As outlined in Note 2, the company has received government grants for revenue and capital purposes. Should these grants not be used for the purpose specified, the grants will become repayable in whole or in part.

21. Approval of Financial Statements

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 2 September 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

Fiona Walsh	Mary Connolly
Director	Director



Sonas is there 24/7
365 Days of the Year

Emergency Help Number

01 866 2015

For Advice, Outreach, Court Accompaniment

087 952 5217



Sonas Main Office, 5 Aston Quay, Dublin 2 **Tel:** 01 671 8092 **Eircode:** D02 K504

Sonas Refuge **Tel:** 01 866 2015

Email: info@sonasdomesticabuse.ie www.domesticabuse.ie

Company No. 195618 Sonas Domestic Violence Charity CLG is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity (Chy 10872)

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