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**“Sonas can help  
to build your life  
back up and think  
positively of your  
future.”**

## Chairperson's foreword

2009 was a significantly challenging year for Irish society and for NGOs working to address inequality and discrimination. As economic recession bites, many of its first casualties have been those experiencing inequality, poverty and discrimination and those organisations working to advocate on their behalf.

Amid this changed context Sonas continues to give evidence of the need for specialist domestic violence housing support services in this country and continues to deliver a quality and much-needed service to women and their children who are out of home due to domestic and gender-based violence. For many families the services and support which Sonas offers are even more vital in these current times of economic hardship. Sonas also continued to develop new services in 2009, with a new 15-unit development in Stepside opening in September 2009 and another 15 units acquired in Belmayne in December 2009.

During 2009, Viva House, the Blanchardstown refuge development, was brought to fruition following many set-backs caused by the crisis in the

construction sector and increasingly onerous conditions on capital grant funding from public sector agencies. Sonas pays tribute to the commitment of the board of the refuge who worked for many years in securing vital support from a range of stakeholders for the development of this much-needed service.

The reconfiguration of the homeless sector during 2009 and into 2010 marks a changing context within which Sonas is operating. The board commends the commitment, expertise and flexibility of our CEO and her staff team working to ensure that Sonas Housing meets the challenges and opportunities of this process of change.

As Chairperson, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the board of Sonas and all the staff for their commitment and hard work over the year. Despite all the challenges and changes that may lie ahead, the board is confident that the organisation will continue to lead in the provision of high-quality accommodation and expert support to women and children who are homeless due to gender-based violence.

**Rachel Mullen**  
Chairperson



## CEO's message

In 2009, Sonas continued to provide specialist transitional housing services and security and safety for women and children who have ongoing support needs after they have been through emergency services, such as refuges.

In our support services in Dublin we supported 70 women and 88 children in 2009 with referrals continuing to come from refuges, domestic violence services, addiction services and HSE teams. We are proud to report that during the year 10 women moved on into independent living, achieving an 84% success rate in escaping domestic violence and leaving homelessness behind.

As well as improving our existing services, we continue to work to address the gaps in service provision for women and children who are made homeless due to domestic violence. We acquired a further 30 units of accommodation in 2009 and managed the development of Viva House in

Blanchardstown in a time of uncertainty of capital funding and a national crisis in the construction sector. In addition, Sonas led the completion of a feasibility study looking at the need for a refuge in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area, with the support of partners, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and the Homeless Agency.

The focus on quality standards in service delivery continued in 2009, with policies and procedures revised for the work with women, the children's service, and health and safety. A new support service database was developed and piloted, which will be rolled out to all services in 2010.

At management and board level a great deal of attention was given in 2009 to the Pathway to Home model and its impact on service users and Sonas services. This involved many meetings, discussion papers, investing in staff training and beginning a change management process which will

manage the reconfiguration of Sonas' transitional housing into specialist domestic on-site supported and visiting support service by the end of 2010. This has been enormously challenging and resource intensive.

Personally I would like to thank everyone involved in Sonas – the staff, the board, our partners and the fundraisers for your continued support.

**Sharon Cosgrove**  
Chief Executive



**“If it were not  
for the support  
I received, I would  
not be here and  
moving on with  
my life.”**

## **Sonas strategic priorities**

**Sonas Housing Association provides supported housing to women and children made homeless because of domestic and gender-based violence. It has four main Strategic Priorities, as per its 2008-2010 Strategic Plan.**

### **Priority 1 Housing development, provision and maintenance**

**Objective: To provide good-quality accommodation to women and children out of home primarily because of domestic and gender-based violence.**

### **Priority 2 Support services for women and children**

**Objective: To provide the supports necessary for women and their children to equip them with the skills to be able to live independent lives.**

### **Priority 3 Influencing policy and building strategic alliances**

**Objective: To influence housing and social policy decision-making as it relates to women and children out of home primarily because of violence.**

### **Priority 4 Organisational development**

**Objective: To ensure that the people, structures, procedures and policies of the organisation are adequate to deliver the objectives of the company.**

# 1. Housing development, provision and maintenance

**Objective: To provide good-quality accommodation to women and children out of home primarily because of domestic and gender-based violence.**

## 1.1 Housing development

### New apartments

In 2009, Sonas acquired 30 new apartments in Part V developments in Stepside and Belmayne, availing of Capital Assistance Scheme funding through the local authorities, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and Dublin City Council.

The 15 units in Stepside were occupied in September 2009 and a support worker is on site delivering support services. The other 15 units in Belmayne were acquired in December 2009 and will be occupied in June 2010, once snagging works are completed and the units have been fitted out.

### Viva House, Blanchardstown Women's Refuge

For the past 12 years, Sonas has been working in partnership with Womens' Aid, as well as a number of individuals and local organisations in the Blanchardstown area to develop a much-needed women's refuge. Sonas took on the role of developer and in late 2008 secured the funding to develop the refuge in Blanchardstown. The site was provided by Fingal County Council and in February 2009, the construction began on site. The development consists of eight self-contained units of accommodation and a large support service building.

### Sonas Housing Partnership

The Sonas Housing Partnership (SHP) is the name given to a management arrangement between Sonas Housing Association Limited and three services, Dundalk Women's Aid, Meath Women's Aid Housing Association Limited, and the Mayo Women's Support Service. Established in 1998, its aim was to replicate the Sonas model of support. Funding is accessed by Sonas from the relevant local authorities and distributed according to the terms contained in a management agreement with each partner. At the beginning of 2009, Meath County Council withdrew funding for the service in Navan.

## 1.2 Supported housing provision

With the launch of the Sonas complex in Stepside in September 2009 and the acquisition of Belmayne units in December 2009, the Sonas housing stock increased to 95 units in 2009, 69 of which are supported housing units and 26 permanent.

**Table 1 Profile of Sonas Supported Housing Stock as at Dec 2009**

Area	Supported housing	Permanent housing	Total
<b>Clondalkin Complex Total</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>10</b>
2 bed apartments	3		3
3 bed apartments	1		1
2 bed houses	3		3
3 bed houses	3		3
<b>Killester Complex Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25</b>
1 bed houses	4	2	6
2 bed houses	4	5	9
3 bed houses	7	3	10
<b>Ringsend Complex Total</b>	<b>10</b>	-	<b>10</b>
1 bed apartments	1	-	
2 bed apartments	1	-	
3 bed apartments	1	-	
2 bed houses	5	-	
4 bed houses	2	-	
<b>Ballymun Complex Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
1 bed apartments	2	-	
2 bed apartments	1	1	
3 bed houses	1	1	
<b>Fortunestown Complex Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>
2 bed apartments	4	2	
2 bed houses	1	1	
3 bed houses	1	1	
<b>Ranelagh Complex Total</b>	-	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
1 bed apartments	-	2	2
2 bed apartments	-	2	2
<b>Stepside Complex Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>
1 bed apartments	5	3	
2 bed apartments	4	1	
3 bed apartments	-	2	
<b>Belmayne Complex Total</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>
1 bed apartments	3		
2 bed apartments	10		
3 bed apartments	2		
<b>Overall units of housing</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>95</b>

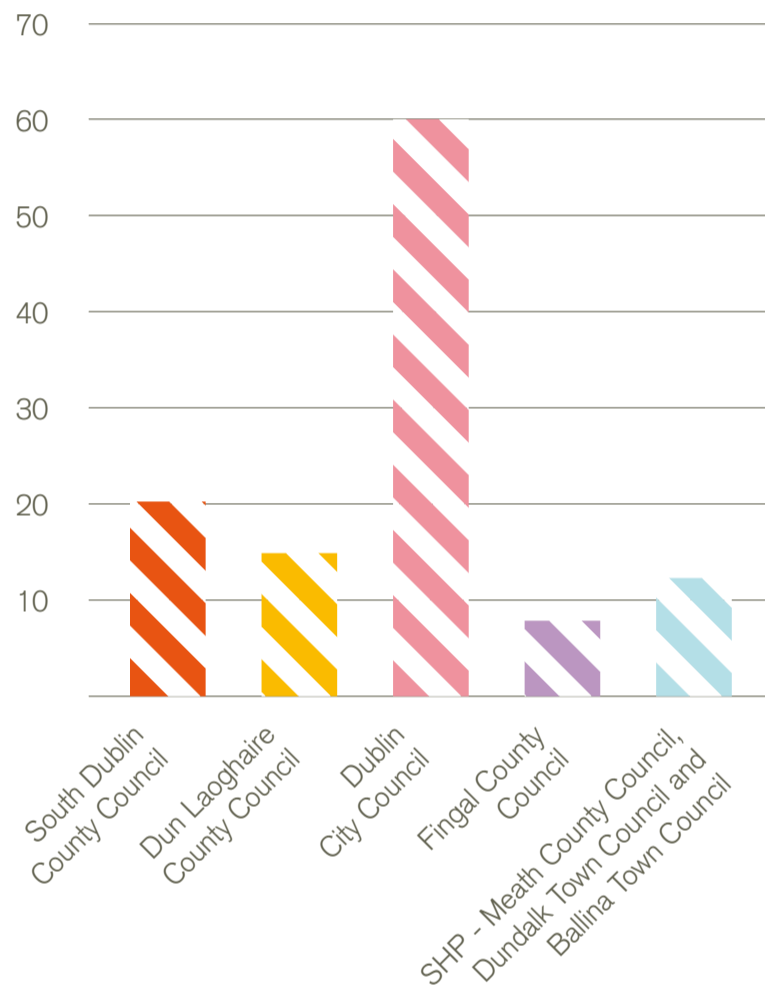
As at June 2010 Sonas Housing Association has a further eight units of housing stock (with the opening of Viva House) bringing its housing complement to 103 units. The housing stock is spread throughout the four Dublin local authority areas, with the majority, 60, in Dublin City Council. We also have housing stock in three regional areas, Meath, Dundalk and Ballina, through the Sonas Housing Partnership. Figure 1 demonstrates the number of units by local authority area.



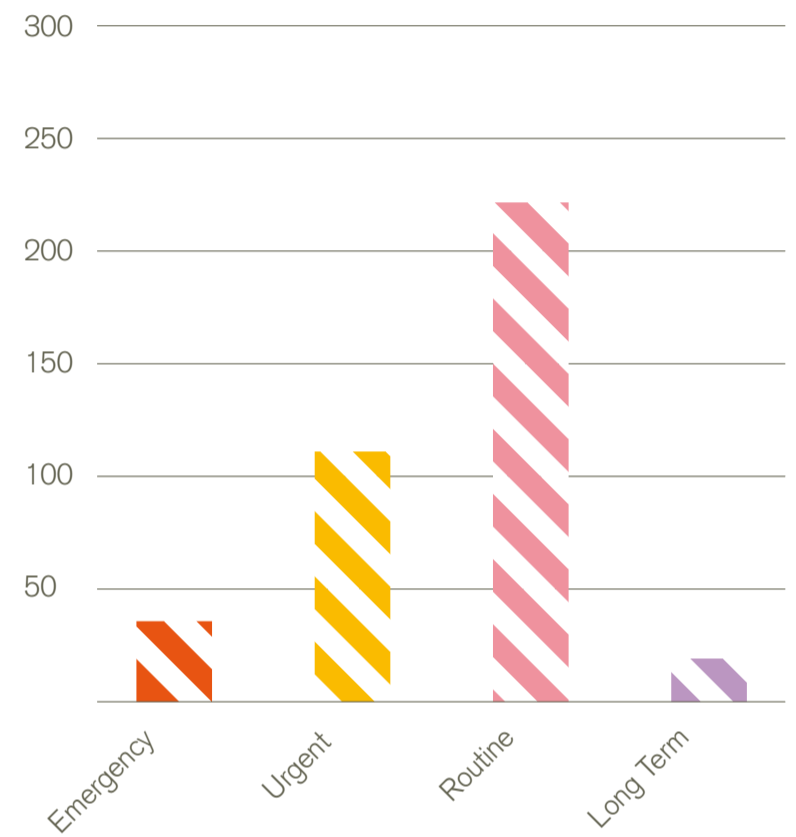


Viva House

**Figure 1 Number of units by local authority area as at 30th June 2010**



**Figure 2 Reported & Completed Repairs 2009**



### 1.3 Housing management

Sonas had a very successful year in relation to housing management with a rise in rents collected and a drop in percentage of voids (unoccupied units).

#### BER assessments

A total of 40 Building Energy Rating (BER) assessments were completed in 2009. Units vary in terms of their assessment results, the highest assessment Sonas attained was for the new units in Belmayne and Stepside. For all other units, insulation upgrades are planned for 2010.

#### Maintenance

Sonas achieved a high standard in terms of its housing maintenance in 2009. There were 392 repairs reported and completed in 2009 comprising, long-term maintenance, emergency repairs and routine maintenance as demonstrated in Figure 2.

- 100% of long-term maintenance was completed on time
- 99% of routine maintenance was completed on time and
- 92% of all emergency repairs noted were completed on time

### Grounds and security

In our Ringsend complex the CCTV system was upgraded and additional security lighting was installed.

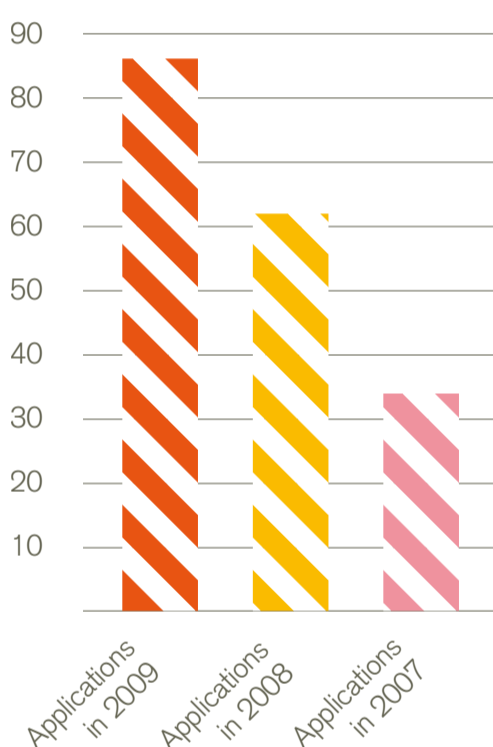
## 2. Support services for women and children

**Objective: To provide the supports necessary for women and their children to equip them with the skills to be able to live independent lives.**

In 2009 Sonas supported 70 women and 88 children. Sonas offers a confidential support service on a Monday to Friday 9am-5pm basis to the women and children in its service. The support is women-centred and is based on a keyworker system. Each tenant is allocated a Women's Support Worker as soon as she is offered accommodation with Sonas and an individual support plan is devised.

Each service user with children (physically with her or not) is also allocated a Children Support Worker. The child/ren's individual and group needs are assessed by the Children Support Worker in consultation with the women and the children and the appropriate supports are put in place to meet this need. The support workers are the main point of contact for women and children in the Sonas services.

**Figure 3 Demand for Sonas services**



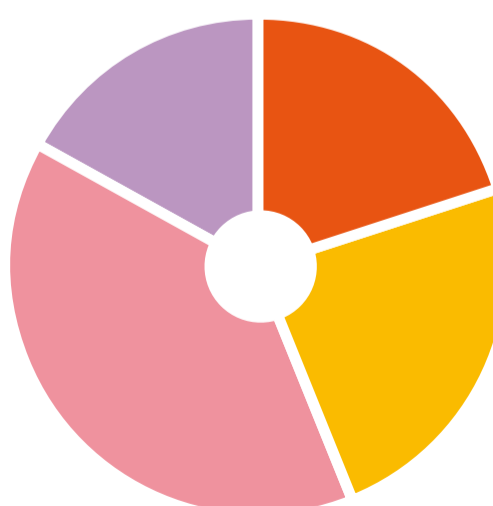
### 2.1 Demand for Sonas

Demand for Sonas has increased drastically in the past three years as Figure 3 demonstrates. There were 84 applications for supported housing into Sonas in 2009, representing an increase of 37% in the number of applications into Sonas Housing compared with 2008 figures.

### 2.2 Multiple needs of Sonas applicants

Increasingly women are presenting with complex needs on application to Sonas. Other presenting needs (in addition to domestic violence) were recorded for the majority of applications. Figure 4 demonstrates the breakdown

**Figure 4 Multiple needs (in addition to domestic violence) of the 84 Sonas applicants in 2009**



- Number for whom no other presenting issues were recorded – 20%
- Number with addiction issues (in addition to domestic violence) – 24%
- Number with mental issues (in addition to domestic violence) – 39%
- Number with combination of addiction and mental health issues – 17%

### 2.3 Referral sources

Figure 5 shows the breakdown of our referral sources. The majority of our applications (38%) came from women's refuges in the eastern area (with the exception of two who came from refuges in other countries). Applications also came from local authorities, HSE offices, homeless services, women's services and addiction services. Figure 5 demonstrates the breakdown.



Figure 5 Sonas referral sources

- Woman's Refuge – 39%
- Local authority – 17%
- HSE referrals – 13%
- Homeless services – 8%
- Woman's services – 7%
- Addiction service – 6%
- NGO community services – 6%
- Self-referral – 2%
- Probation service – 2%

### 2.4 Sonas outcomes in 2009

In 2009 there were 12 move-ons from the Sonas housing service. Of these, 10 moved on to independent living (primarily into local authority housing), achieving an 84% success rate. Figure 6 demonstrates the move-ons.

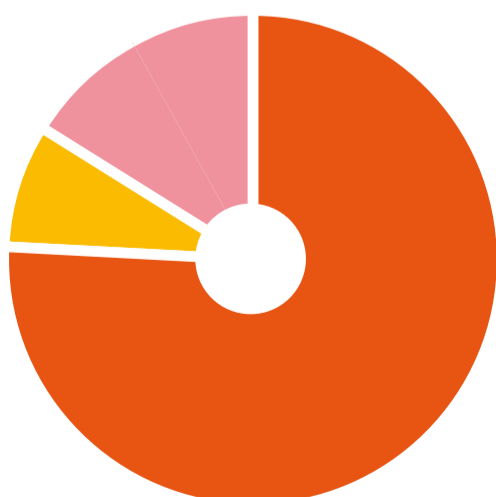


Figure 6 Move-ons from Sonas in 2010

- Independent living – LA Housing – 76%
- Independent living – other – 8%
- Other – 16%

### 2.5 Main areas of support

The main areas of support for Sonas service users are the following:

#### Work with women

- Dealing with the aftermath of domestic violence
- Substance misuse
- Physical and mental health
- General well-being
- Tenancy sustainment and settlement
- Education and employment
- Advocacy
- Securing long-term suitable housing
- Personal development
- Finance and living skills
- Legal issues
- Social welfare and entitlements
- Work with service users as mothers

#### Work with children

- Workshop dealing with specific issues (bullying, conflict resolution, dealing with anger, family stress)
- Domestic violence workshop (keeping safe, understanding what happened and how it makes the child feel)
- Cultural and gender awareness workshop
- Individual and group work with children
- Teenager drop-in
- Seasonal activities and celebrations
- Summer project offering age-appropriate activities for all the children

## 2.6 Quality standards in service delivery

Sonas is dedicated to ensuring it is delivering the best service possible. In 2009 Sonas concentrated on improving ways of working and developing an individual-centred approach.

Dr Cris Sullivan, a US academic and advocate specialising in empowerment approaches in working with survivors of domestic violence, delivered two-day training to all support workers in March 2009. Following this, Sonas developed needs assessments and goal planning tools that support workers use with the women at the woman's own pace.

Following a review of children's services for domestic violence victims internationally and within Ireland, new methods and approaches to needs assessments and tools were developed for the children's support service in Sonas. These children-centred tools are age-specific and easy for the children to read and understand.

In 2009 Sonas also developed new quality standards policies and procedures for the work with women and children in its service. The Sonas individual-centred and flexible way of working is reflected in these policies and procedures which were finalised in early 2010.

Sonas has also been proactive in putting in place Homeless Agency tools and protocols. Since participating in the Homeless Agency Case and Care Management Pilot, Sonas support services have remained involved in the implementation process and all the support workers have received training and are working along the case and care management protocols and practice. These complement the existing key-working practices and quality standards in place in the Sonas service.

## Performance monitoring

Sonas conducted a survey with its service users in early 2009. Results showed that the majority of our service users were extremely happy with the support they received while in Sonas, with 100% saying they felt empowered and treated with respect and dignity in Sonas and 96% saying they were more hopeful about the future because of Sonas.

The survey will be repeated in 2010 to ensure consistently high service delivery.

## SPriNT system

Sonas introduced a highly recommended IT system in 2009, developed by a Welsh housing provider in the UK Supporting People programme. This database system was piloted in late 2009 with development and rollout ongoing in 2010. While not directly related to service users, the SPriNT system will ensure greater transparency and efficiency in the Sonas support service.

It is expected that it will assist analysing the outcomes for service users, identifying blocks and will facilitate better reporting to the board and to funders.

The image shows a screenshot of a web-based form titled 'Client Record'. The form is organized into several sections: 'Personal' (Name, Gender, Birthdate, ID Number, Date of Birth, Date of Death), 'Address' (Street, Town, County, Post Code), 'Contact' (Tel, Mobile, Other, Email), and 'Support' (Service Group, Category 1, Category 2). There are also checkboxes for 'Red Alert', 'Amber Alert', and 'Green Alert', and a 'New Alerts' button. The form includes 'Save' and 'Get' buttons at the bottom. The date '07 July 2010' is visible in the bottom right corner.

The Sprint system



## Children's parties

Sonas children service runs an annual children's summer project as well as various festivities and events such as Halloween and Christmas parties.

In 2009 the Sonas Summer Project ran from July 7th until July 23rd. During these 3 weeks children and mothers from all of the Sonas locations gathered 3 days per week in our Killester complex to partake in a range of activities from arts and crafts, outdoor activities to day trips.

**“Thanks to Sonas support, my life is back to normal.”**

### **3. Influencing policy and building strategic alliances**

**Objective: To influence housing and social policy decision-making as it relates to women and children out of home primarily because of violence.**

#### **3.1 Homeless services reconfiguration**

Due to the changes outlined in the Homeless Agency document Pathway to Home, 2009 saw many changes for organisations delivering housing support services to people who are homeless.

Sonas met with the Homeless Agency and developed a reconfiguration plan for the organisation in line with the Pathway model. At each stage of the process, Sonas stressed the need for services specifically dedicated to women and children made homeless because of domestic violence.

This policy work helped in establishing the need for specific specialist housing support services for victims of domestic violence contained in the 2010 Mapping Homeless Services document.

#### **3.2 DLR refuge feasibility study**

In 2009 Sonas helped bring a feasibility study for the development of a refuge in Dún Laoghaire Rathdown to fruition. The study, completed by Monica O'Connor and Jane Pillinger, was led by a steering group co-ordinated by Sonas and comprising members from Safe Ireland, Southside Women's Action Network (SWAN) in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, the Homeless Agency and Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.

The study, which will be published in 2010, confirmed that there is a need for a refuge in the DLR area, given the prevalence of domestic violence in the area.

#### **3.3 Dignity**

Sonas continued its involvement in the Dignity partnership in 2009. Dignity is a joint-agency initiative that is developing a best-practice model of working with women who have been victims of sex trafficking. In 2009, the partnership conducted study visits in European centres. Sonas took part in three of these visits – in Scotland, Lithuania and Spain as well as the Dublin gathering in November 2009. Each of these trips provided a great opportunity for Sonas to gain an insight into developing housing support services for victims of sex trafficking in Ireland.



#### **3.4 Study visits**

Sonas visited a similar housing support service for domestic violence victims in Wales during 2009 to gain insight into their ways of working and to discuss changes in domestic violence services in the UK.

#### **3.5 Policy submissions and consultations**

Sonas reviewed consultative drafts and provided feedback to Cosc, the national office for the prevention of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, on its national strategy and to the HSE on its policy on domestic violence.

## 4. Organisational development

**Objective: To ensure that the people, structures, procedures and policies of the organisation are adequate to deliver the objects of the company and this strategic plan.**



www.sonashousing.ie

### 4.1 Board and governance information

In May 2009, the board approved the governance pack developed by the governance sub-group of the board. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of the board, develops guidelines for board renewal and includes the main governance documents.

In 2009, a number of members retired from the Board. The work of Jackie Gilroy, Natasha Bailey and Siobhan Fearon was very much appreciated by Sonas. A recruitment process began with a number of potential new members identified and invited to join the Board in early 2010.

### 4.2 Staff training

- Four support workers successfully completed the Homeless Agency Case Management accredited training in 2009. One project leader completed the Homeless agency management module in 2009.
- Sonas administrator completed a certificate course in housing management and an advanced course in Microsoft Word.
- An empowerment way of working training was delivered by Dr Cris Sullivan of the University of Michigan in March 2009.
- Cultural awareness training for all support staff was delivered in June 2009 by the Immigrant Council of Ireland and Pavee Point.
- Two project leaders attended the Safe Ireland Substance Misuse and Domestic Violence training in November 2009.

### 4.3 IT developments

Sonas has developed a server system in its Foley Street offices and rolled out a new email platform for all workers. In 2009, SPriNT (an IT database system) was adopted for support workers to ensure greater transparency and efficiency in the Sonas support service.

### 4.4 Health and safety policies

A health and safety statement was reviewed and a comprehensive set of health and safety policies and procedures were developed and implemented in 2009.

### 4.5 New communications materials

In 2009 Sonas revamped its image by producing a new referral pack, incorporating leaflets, information, posters and application forms. The new look of the Sonas communications materials are clean and modern. Sonas was able to produce these thanks to funding from Cosc.

### 4.6 New website

Sonas redeveloped its website in 2009 at the same URL [www.sonashousing.ie](http://www.sonashousing.ie). The look of the website is in keeping with our new printed materials. We also developed an e-newsletter, which is used to inform our stakeholders and contacts about news from Sonas.

### 4.7 Media work

Sharon Cosgrove, CEO of Sonas Housing, was interviewed in 2009 by the Irish Times, the Irish Examiner and by RTE in relation to domestic violence and housing issues. Sonas Housing was also interviewed by local radio stations and Sharon wrote a piece for the Homeless Agency's Cornerstone publication. Paula McGovern of Sonas Housing was also requested to submit a blog piece on domestic violence to the Women's Aid 16 Days' blog.

### 4.8 International Women's Day

Sonas Housing held a very successful event in Sonas Killester to mark International Women's Day 2009. The event showcased both Irish and international women who had made their mark on society in positive ways.

### 4.9 Christmas cards

For the first time Sonas developed its own stock of Christmas cards. The cards were funded through the 2009 Cosc awareness-raising stream. The children in the Sonas service developed the images used on the front of the cards during specially organised art workshops in summer 2009. The cards were then sold in the Body Shop, limited local shops and on our website in November and December 2009.

### 4.10 Sonas Christmas angels

Thanks to the Sonas fundraising committee, Tierney's Gift Shops in Dun Laoghaire, Ilac Centre and Blanchardstown Centre chose Sonas as its chosen charity for 2008 and 2009. Tierney's sold angel decorations in all three shops and the total proceeds went to Sonas. Each angel cost €10 and the total raised over the two years was €2,000.



Sonas Christmas card



Sonas Christmas angel sold in Tierney's shops

## Profile of fundraising activities

**In 2009, the Sonas Fundraising Committee raised €30,990. Some of the events organised by the Sonas fundraising committee are detailed below:**

### Coffee mornings

Arising out of a previous event, some women volunteered to hold a coffee morning in their homes, asking their friends to visit for coffee and craic, hear a little about Sonas and what it does, eat delicious goodies and donate.

### Cookery demonstration

The committee was fortunate to have Irene Compton volunteer to run a cookery demonstration in Shankhill tennis club. Irene is renowned for her wonderful ability to make cooking fun and a great night was had by all, watching, learning, laughing, drinking and tasting the wonderful food.

### Súil for Sonas

The committee and volunteers met at Dún Laoghaire pier and Howth head on what started out as a beautiful sunny day with lots of walkers in both locations who generously donated to Sonas. The changeable Irish weather proved just that and the group decided to call it a day early in the afternoon. However, the committee were very pleased with the funds raised despite the terrible weather conditions.

### Bloomsday garden party

Sandycove and Dún Laoghaire are very proud of their association with Joyce and there are always great celebrations in homes and on the street. One of our committee had a garden party that went on all day, serving tea, coffee and goodies. People brought home-baked goods and family members helped by making tea and coffee.

### Clothes fair

Responding to the changing economic realities, Sonas decided to replace the traditional shopping trip to Ikea in Belfast with a local shopping extravaganza. So the committee put out a call to all who would listen looking for donations of second-hand designer clothes, accessories and unwanted gifts. The response was phenomenal and an Aladdin's cave was created. We borrowed clothes rails from Tierney's shops and friends, and those with a good eye helped to price everything. The bargains were unbelievable! At the end of the day, everything was reduced to €10 or €5. We still managed to put together 20 bags of good-quality clothes to pass on to Women's Aid. The sale raised approximately €4,400.

### St Gerard's School no-uniform day

St Gerard's School in Bray Co. Wicklow has provided wonderful support to Sonas over the last couple of years. This year the students paid not to wear their uniform on 'No Uniform day' and they raised in excess of €2,000 for Sonas.

### Coin collection

A wonderful supporter of Sonas suggested that we ask people for their coins, which we did and we received several donated 'coin jars'.

### Christmas Day Ceoil at the 40 Foot

For the last two years a group of musicians from Craobh Phiarais Uí Ghreagain, a branch of Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann, have entertained the crowd at the 40 Foot swimming cove on Christmas morning. The young musicians played for one hour each time and raised approx €700 euro each year.



## Faces of Sonas

### Fundraiser profile Mairead Tierney

Mairead Tierney was one of the first members of the Sonas fundraising committee when it formed in 2005. Mairead is the mother of four children who despite the demands of that job has worked tirelessly for Sonas in its efforts to raise funds and awareness. Her creative brain and 'can-do' attitude inspired many an event.

She and her husband Michael, and ably assisted by her children and family members, held our first ever fundraising event which was a brunch in their garden. Mairead went to the local shops and got much of the food sponsored, her husband provided prizes for the raffle and her nephew, a chef cooked. Her family served and also sold tickets. The event was a roaring success inspiring us all with hope and faith in our ability to do the same.

Mairead believes in Sonas and introduced Sonas to everyone she met. She is so committed that she inspired those around her to get involved. Her mother was the instigator of the successful bridge night held last year and also of the coin collection idea. Her husband was the man behind Tierney's Angels and her children help out at many events (Pictured below with her husband Michael)

### Staff profile Kate McHale

Kate McHale retired in June 2010 after almost nine years of working with Sonas Housing in her role as Women's Support Worker.

*"I began working in Sonas on September 10th 2001. I remember it clearly because of 9/11. Prior to Sonas I worked in domestic violence services for many years, including Haven House and Rathmines refuge.*

*I helped set up the service in Clondalkin. I feel I was privileged to work with women through a difficult period in their lives. The most enjoyable aspect of my work was seeing people moving on, when things are good for them and having a very small role in their journey.*

*I love people and interacting with people. I like seeing the funny side of life and I think humour is important. In the darkest of times there can always be a good laugh and this can often be initiated by the women in the Sonas service.*

*The challenging aspects of my work involved dealing with wheelie bins, rubbish, broken glass and keys! Anti-social behaviour in areas is very troublesome and the impact it has on women who are already in a stressful situation is tough."*

### Staff profile Amy Quinn

One of the newest staff members, Amy Quinn began work in Sonas in 2009. She works as a Children's Support Worker in a Sonas supported housing complex.

*"The most interesting and enjoyable aspect of my job as Children's Support Worker for me is the direct work with the children. They are wonderful children who just want to understand what they have been through in their lives. Gaining their trust and helping them work through their varied experiences is really rewarding.*

*The most challenging aspect of the job for me is trying to meet both the mothers' and the children's needs - their experiences of the domestic violence are very different. The challenge can be helping the mother get to the stage where she understands that talking about the violence in an age-appropriate way with her children is therapeutic for them. The children get their questions and concerns answered and don't have to use their imaginations and think the worst.*

*Mothers often just want to protect their children especially when they have been through such a trauma as a family; it's understandable that she wouldn't want to upset the children by talking about the domestic violence. But not talking about the violence as a family leads to confusion and pent up emotions; communication is so important."*

### Board member profile Yvonne McKenna

Yvonne McKenna is the CEO of Volunteer Centres Ireland and a board member of Sonas Housing since February 2008.

*"I was interested in joining a board of a non-profit organisation and Sonas interested me most, primarily because of its focus: domestic violence. I've always been interested in gender studies and pursued this academically for some time. There's no such thing as an acceptable level of domestic violence. Sonas is an organisation that is addressing the issue very practically - by providing accommodation, drawing attention to the issue and influencing policy.*

*Broadly speaking, the main challenge for Sonas is domestic violence itself and the kind of homelessness that results from it. More particularly, the challenges have been providing these vital services in the context of Ireland slipping into recession and the considerable changes that are occurring in the way the state addresses homelessness.*

*I hope that Sonas can continue to provide the vital services it does and in the way it does: through empowering women to regain control of their lives. I'm also very hopeful, given the organisation it is and its fantastic staff, that it will!"*



# Financial statements

## Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2009

### Income and Expenditure

	Restricted Funds 2009 €	Designated Funds 2009 €	Unrestricted Funds 2009 €	Total Funds 2009 €	Total Funds 2008 €
<b>Incoming Resources</b>					
Corporation & Grant Funding	1,082,631	-	-	1,082,631	1,093,069
Rental Income	112,428	73,213	-	185,641	146,616
Donations & Fundraising	-	30,990	-	30,990	22,114
Amortisation of grant income	-	-	232,444	232,444	162,977
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>1,195,059</b>	<b>104,203</b>	<b>232,444</b>	<b>1,531,706</b>	<b>1,424,776</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>					
Crisis Intervention & Provision of Support Services	(1,102,523)	(3,870)	-	(1,106,393)	(1,127,480)
Depreciation	-	-	(264,826)	(264,826)	(169,784)
Legal Professional & Administration	(90,434)	-	-	(90,434)	(94,448)
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>(1,192,957)</b>	<b>(3,870)</b>	<b>(264,826)</b>	<b>(1,461,653)</b>	<b>(1,391,712)</b>
<b>Net Movement in Funds</b>	<b>2,102</b>	<b>100,333</b>	<b>(32,382)</b>	<b>70,053</b>	<b>33,064</b>
Provision for sinking fund		(73,213)		(73,213)	(58,647)
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) on ordinary activities before interest</b>	<b>2,102</b>	<b>27,120</b>	<b>(32,382)</b>	<b>(3,160)</b>	<b>(25,583)</b>
Interest receivable and similar income			1,792	1,792	21,459
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</b>	<b>2,102</b>	<b>27,120</b>	<b>(30,590)</b>	<b>(1,368)</b>	<b>(4,124)</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) retained for the year</b>	<b>2,102</b>	<b>27,120</b>	<b>(30,590)</b>	<b>(1,368)</b>	<b>(4,124)</b>

There are no recognised gains or losses other than the surplus or deficit for the above two financial years.  
The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 13th April 2010 and signed on its behalf by:

**Gearoidin Charlton**  
Director

**Rachel Mullen**  
Director

## A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2009

	2009 €	2008 €
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Tangible assets	16,259,844	8,157,553
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors	41,544	70,292
Cash at bank and in hand	931,027	577,955
	972,571	648,247
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>(582,731)</b>	<b>(443,284)</b>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>389,840</b>	<b>204,963</b>
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>	<b>16,649,684</b>	<b>8,362,516</b>
<b>Restricted Government Grants</b>	<b>(16,338,869)</b>	<b>(8,050,333)</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>310,815</b>	<b>312,183</b>
<b>Capital and Reserves</b>		
Accumulated Funds	310,815	312,183
<b>Funds</b>	<b>310,815</b>	<b>312,183</b>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 13th April 2010 and signed on its behalf by:

**Gearoidin Charlton**  
Director

**Rachel Mullen**  
Director



