

Annual Impact Report 2023



Supporting women
through generations

Women's Aid

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Supporting women
through generations



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Section 1

Welcome

Sharon's Story*

I loved him so much. I idolised him. Handsome. Funny. His family were lovely. I was so proud to be his girlfriend. I remember being thrilled when he asked me to move in with him. But not long after, his put-downs started. They were subtle at first. Then they got really cruel. He began to pressure me into sex and humiliate me. He would bombard me with questions about where I'd been and who I'd talked to. He took my phone. He took my bank cards. He dominated every aspect of my life.

Even though I was terrified and confused, I started to think about leaving him. But then I found out I was pregnant. I think he sensed I might do something, so he began to manipulate me again. He said, "I'll change. I'll get counselling for my issues. I'll be a good dad."

I wanted to believe his lies. But after a few weeks of calm, the verbal abuse, the controlling behaviour, the threats, and violence – it all started again. I felt lost. Powerless. Trapped in hell. I had no one to turn to.

I had no one in my corner – until I turned to Women's Aid

The worst abuse I suffered – and the turning point for me – came when I was 26 weeks pregnant. He went into a rage over what I cooked him for dinner. It was the most frightening night of my life. I can't fully describe everything that happened. He punched me in the face. Then, while I was on the ground, he started kicking me.



I curled up into a ball to protect my stomach. I was certain I was going to die. I was certain I was going to lose my baby. It was a miracle we survived. As I was recovering in hospital, I knew I had to report what was happening to the Gardaí. This was no longer just about me. It was about protecting my baby.

I also spoke to one of my maternity nurses and a hospital social worker, who were incredibly supportive. They told me about Women's Aid and its Maternity Outreach Project and said they'd refer me to it. That conversation changed everything for me. The nurses and midwife were amazing. They listened to me. They told me I was safe. They said Women's Aid was my path to safety.

After I was assessed by my Maternity Outreach Support Worker, I was given financial support so I could buy food, pay my bills, and change the locks on my home. I was also given ongoing emotional support that's helped me work through my trauma and take back power from my ex-partner. This meant that when I faced him in court, with Women's Aid standing by my side, I no longer felt afraid. With Women's Aid's support I had built my resilience back up, bit by bit, and I now saw him for what he really is – a violent, controlling abuser. I'm in a much better and more secure place in my life.

Women's Aid was always there for me

Women's Aid gave me a map of hope. They held my hand and helped me walk to freedom and safety. They provided real, practical support. I began to see the reality of the life I was in and that it wasn't my fault. I got legal help. I escaped because of a mixture of bravery and desperation. And most importantly, with the support of the amazing services of Women's Aid.

Every 5 minutes, someone like Sharon reaches out to Women's Aid for information and support.



Read more
women's stories
of courage
and hope.

*Please note: all names, including of those who have shared feedback throughout this report have been changed for safety and confidentiality reasons.

What we do

Our Purpose

Women's Aid is a national, feminist organisation working to prevent and address the impact of domestic violence and abuse including coercive control, in Ireland since 1974.

We do this by:

- advocating, influencing, training, and campaigning for effective responses to reduce the scale and impacts of domestic abuse on women and children in Ireland

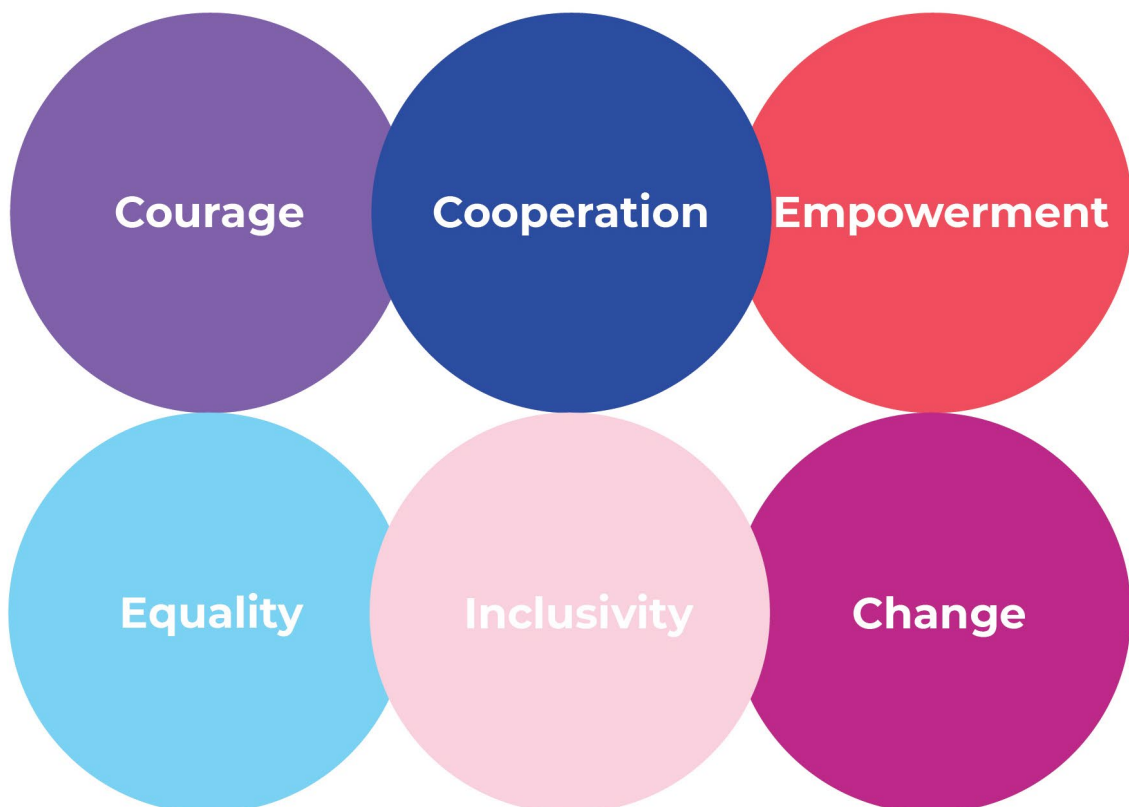
and

- providing high quality, specialised, integrated, support services.

Our Vision

Women's Aid's vision is an equal Ireland, with zero tolerance of domestic abuse and all other forms of violence against women.

Our Values



Enablers

Creating awareness
Educating audiences
Influencing audiences
Contributing to national service provision
Service outcomes
Sustainability
Valuing and developing Staff and Volunteers
The Survivor voice

Inputs

Staff
Volunteers
Expertise
Resources
Collaboration
Donor Funding
Peer Organisation
Survivors/Survivor Voice

Assumptions

Society is capable of change
Building and drawing attention to the impacts of DVA builds a platform for change
Survivors must be heard
Empowering survivors is the centre of society change
Working with our stakeholders enable a social change
Change is rooted in a feminist analysis of DVA
Resources will be available to support our theory of change

Purpose

Working for the prevention of domestic violence and abuse by:
Influencing, educating and advocating for effective responses, to reduce the scale and Impacts of domestic abuse
and
Providing high quality, specialised, integrated, support services

Social Change

Shared Agenda
Understanding
Awareness
Training
Education
Advocacy
Campaign

Stakeholder Community Change

Working with stakeholders to enable change
Collaboration
Alignment for Change
Engagement

Individual Change

Empowering Survivors
Enhancing Services
Acknowledging & Supporting Women

Vision

An Ireland where there is equality, with zero tolerance of domestic abuse and all other forms of violence against women

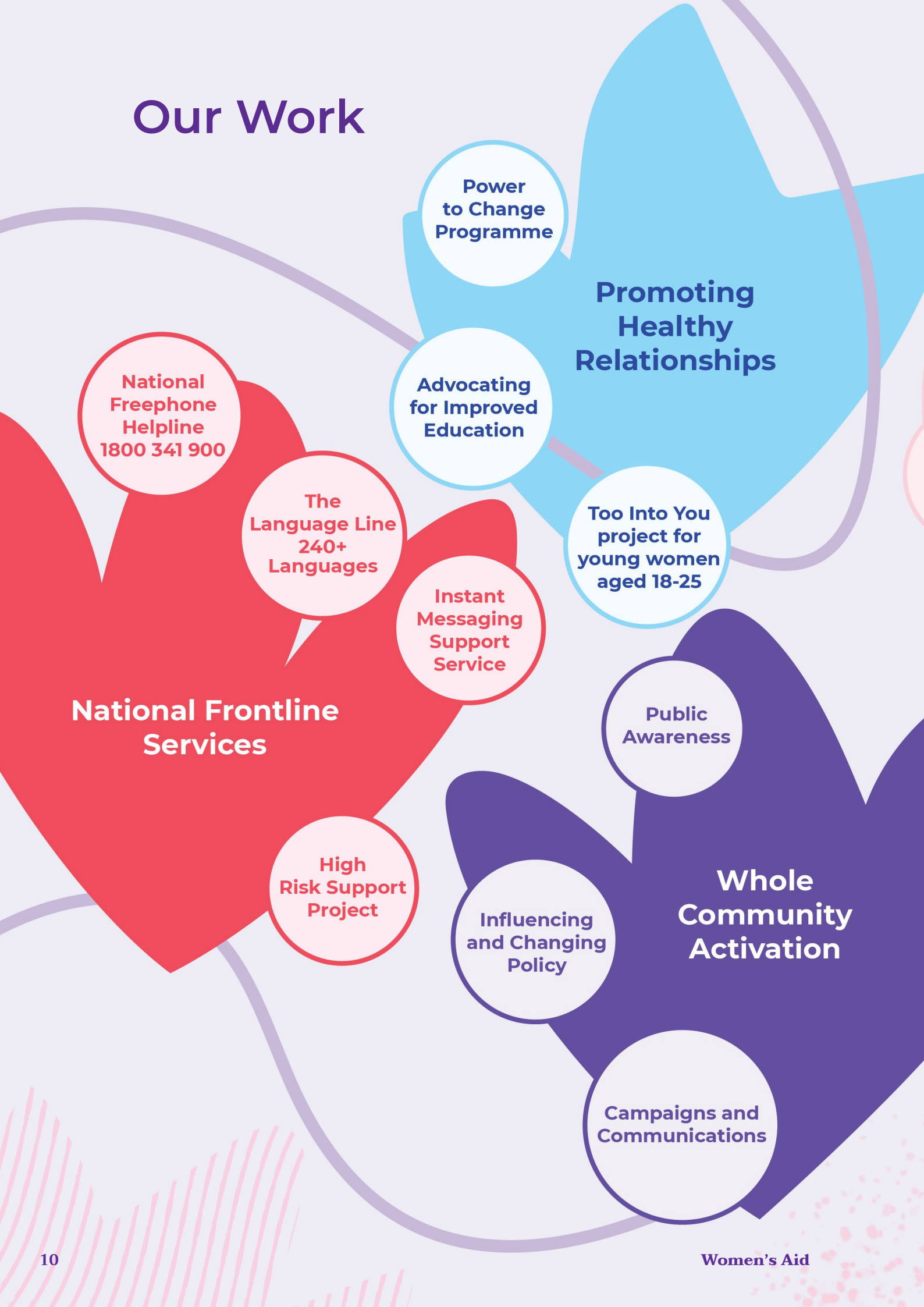
- **Change Tolerance Levels**
- **Change Legislation**
- **Change Policy**
- **Change Service Provision**

Our Strategic Priorities

Our strategic priorities are based on a strong dedication to the women we serve and an unwavering focus on bringing about the social change in Ireland that will deliver our vision. During the period 2022-2024, we have framed our work around three strategic priorities.



Our Work



Promoting Healthy Relationships

Power to Change Programme

Advocating for Improved Education

Too Into You project for young women aged 18-25

National Frontline Services

National Freephone Helpline
1800 341 900

The Language Line
240+ Languages

Instant Messaging Support Service

High Risk Support Project

Whole Community Activation

Public Awareness

Influencing and Changing Policy

Campaigns and Communications

National
Polling

Strategic Research

Commissioned
Research

Femicide
Watch

Domestic Abuse
Information and
Support Service
at Dolphin
House

Court
Accompaniment

Maternity
Outreach
Service

Regional Frontline Services: Greater Dublin Area

One-to-One
Support
Services

Practical
Assistance for
Women

Counselling
Support

Employer
Engagement
Project

Training &
Development

Specialist Training and Policy Support

Maternity
Project



Read the full
Women's Aid
Statement of
Strategy
2022-2024.

Chairperson's Welcome



I am delighted to welcome all readers to the 2023 Annual Impact Report from Women's Aid.

In addition to sharing our huge body of work during 2023, we launch this report in 2024 which marks an incredibly significant anniversary of Women's Aid. Having started in 1974 as the very first specialist domestic abuse service in Ireland, Women's Aid have now been working for an incredible 50 years supporting generations of women and children across the country.

We know domestic abuse affects every community in Ireland. This Annual Impact Report 2023 gives us important insights into the lived experiences of the women we support, as well as the critical work that

Women's Aid conducts to help make Ireland a safer and fairer place to live. Our model of work ensures that we combine a range of innovative frontline responses to those in need with strategic advocacy, campaigning, research, and delivery of specialist training. We ensure that we help to improve systemic social responses to combat this persistent scourge.

As we reflect on what has changed over 50 years, we can pinpoint positive developments in legislation, service provision and public recognition of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. We can also recognise that some issues such as victim blaming and stigma persist, and we face new challenges that were barely conceived of 50 years ago: the internet as a new tool of abuse and victim shaming, ubiquitous pornography. Irish society has changed for the better in so many ways over the last five decades. Yet, it is an undeniable fact that Women's Aid persists because we still live in an unequal society. At this very moment, there are many thousands of women and children living in fear of the person who should love, respect and care for them.

I am proud to be a part of Women's Aid, which exists to create an equal Ireland with zero tolerance of domestic abuse, and all forms of violence against women. Despite the challenges presented, Women's Aid continued to innovate and adapt to meet women's needs in these desperately acute circumstances.

**One in four women
in Ireland have
experienced
domestic abuse
from a current or
former partner.**

Thank You to our Team and our Supporters and Partners

I want to thank our incredible staff, volunteers, and my fellow highly dedicated Board members for their tireless work. I also want to thank all our partners in the community and voluntary, private, and statutory sectors, who collaborated with us in 2023, to progress a concerted whole of community response to tackle domestic violence and abuse.

As an organisation that relies on a combination of statutory funding and significant fundraising, I want to thank our funders in the Department of Justice, Tusla and Pobal, and newly in 2024 the Domestic Sexual and Gender Based Violence Agency, Cuan. As well as our many incredible donors for your support which is vital to enable us to uniquely combine our frontline services and direct support to women with social change advocacy, specialist training, strategic research, and campaigning to such significant effect. You have ensured that all Women's Aid vital services could continue as a lifeline to thousands. We have also been able to continue and develop a range of new and innovative projects including commissioning strategic research, to help increase our positive impact for women and children at risk of or subjected to abuse.

Governance Standards

As a charity with 50 years' experience, we also take very seriously the trust we hold and the public confidence that enables us to do our work. We operate transparently, and to the highest standards of good governance and compliance.

As Chairperson, myself, and my colleagues on the Women's Aid Board work in lockstep with the executive team to ensure we meet and maintain these standards. We are proud to be fully compliant with the Governance requirements of the Charities Act and meet the Triple Lock Standard of the Charities Institute Ireland.

In Women's Aid, we know that we cannot achieve zero tolerance alone. Therefore, we must be a part of a cooperative community alongside our colleagues in civil society and community organisations, with statutory partners and survivors, and the public.

We are currently delivering our Strategic Plan 2022-2024. Women's Aid will continue to advocate, to seek opportunities, work in partnership, create reliable data and research and innovate our direct service provision.

We need to promote positive and healthy masculinities and equality and ultimately reduce that shocking number of one in four women suffering domestic abuse for future generations. We will work steadily and with determination alongside our partners, survivors, funders, and peers across the sector, collaborating where our interests are aligned and working to bring about the required fundamental social change that will achieve gender equality and end male violence against women.

We have come a long way in 50 years but there is still a journey ahead. We warmly invite you to join with us in achieving this vision for Ireland.



Ailbhe Smyth

Chairperson, June 2024

CEO's Introduction



Every year the Women's Aid Annual Impact Report serves as a harrowing and poignant reminder of the level of domestic violence and abuse against women and children that prevails in homes and relationships across Ireland. Unfortunately, 2023 was no different. This report provides an insight into the coercive and controlling emotional, physical, economic, and sexual abuses inflicted upon women and their children at the hands of current and former intimate partners, whom we supported during just one year.

Providing Support and Making an Impact in 2023

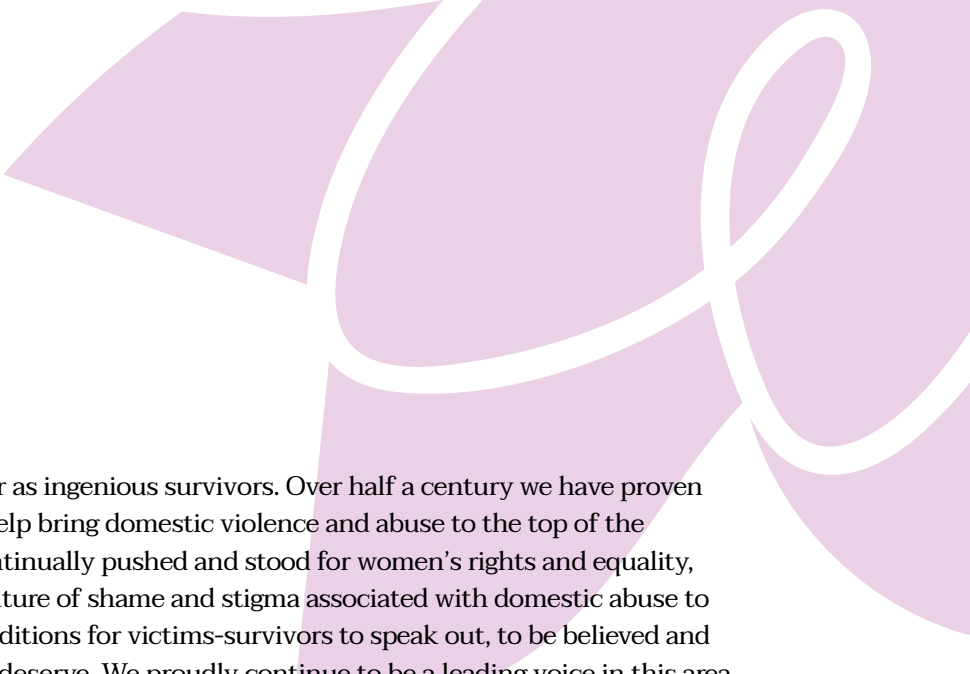
In just twelve months, our team had **28,638** contacts through our frontline services during which we heard a staggering **40,048** disclosures of abuse – including **35,570** reports of domestic abuse against women and **4,478** reports of abuse of children. Victims-survivors and their supporters accessed our websites (womensaid.ie & toointoyou.ie) **319,986** times for vital information and support. Our Specialist Training Team delivered training to **1,162** participants and awareness sessions to **1,461**, people including many employers in a year where we welcomed some landmark new legislation including a statutory paid domestic violence leave for all workers who need it. We also saw legislation covering the darkest sides of abuse including new offences for stalking and non-fatal strangulation, which highlight the urgent need to keep delivering support in a country where so many are still targeted with terrifying abuse and violence.

We know that our frontline figures represent just the tip of an enormous iceberg whereby our National Helpline is a referral point to all the other local services across the country - and because we know that so many victims and survivors still suffer alone, in silence and without any specialist support. This is something Women's Aid remains fully committed to changing.

I am so immensely proud of the work of the Women's Aid team, including our incredible staff, volunteers, and Board members, for the organisation's achievements in 2023. Our amazing team goes above and beyond every day to listen, believe, support, and empower women and to help shape a safer society for everyone.

50 Years - Supporting Women Through Generations

2024 marks a landmark milestone for Women's Aid. We have reached 50 years of listening, believing, supporting, and empowering women subjected to domestic abuse. We have been generations of women, many survivors themselves - supporting generations of women and their children. We are privileged to have empowered women to share their experiences, to witness



their incredible resilience and power as ingenious survivors. Over half a century we have proven our resilience and worked hard to help bring domestic violence and abuse to the top of the agenda of Irish society. We have continually pushed and stood for women's rights and equality, and to continually challenge the culture of shame and stigma associated with domestic abuse to reduce stigma and create better conditions for victims-survivors to speak out, to be believed and empowered to get the support they deserve. We proudly continue to be a leading voice in this area and vow to continue to see our vision of zero tolerance of domestic abuse become a reality.

Systems Under Pressure

Aside from the horrific and often long-lasting impacts of abuse itself, there are so many challenges today for those subjected to domestic abuse. Family and criminal law systems that are creaking at the seams, creating lengthy, protracted, and traumatising delays for women navigating both criminal and civil law systems. The housing crisis and dearth of appropriate specialist accommodation provision for survivors of abuse, limits options for a safe home for many. The negative impact of inflation on family incomes, taken especially with deliberate economic abuse, exacerbate acute and frightening situations for many thousands of women and children across the country.

There is still so much work to do, and we are deeply grateful to our statutory, non-statutory and public funders and supporters for their continuing commitment to us, and to our work. We are fully committed to honouring this support and to maintaining and innovating our vital services to deliver positive impact.

We are so grateful to our colleagues in the specialist domestic and sexual violence services and our peers among so many other civil society organisations and our current research partners for their collaboration towards a shared goal of a more fair, safer, and better society for all.

Implementing a Whole of Government and Society Approach

The government is now nearing the midpoint of its five-year Third National Domestic Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) Strategy. The implementation of this work must remain the highest priority for Government as we approach a period of political change. With stewardship and monitoring by Cuan, the newly established dedicated DSGBV Agency, we have cause for optimism. Yet, we cannot take success for granted. The work to end DSGBV is not the work of just five years but many more. This strategy and Cuan can help us ensure that Ireland continues to lay and build on those foundational strategic, structural, and collective steps already taken to do what is required for effective implementation of change across the four pillars of Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Co-Ordinated Policy.

This can only happen with a clear-eyed focus on naming and tackling those structural and systemic barriers that maintain gender inequalities and the additional intersecting factors that can further disadvantage some victims-survivors due to their disability, sexuality, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or age. These barriers can impede access to support, safety, justice, and the means to achieve their full potential for those who most require it.

It will require focus, co-ordination and - crucially - investment from Government to see the ambitions of this excellent Strategy realised. A continued commitment to collaboration and co-creation of solutions with the specialist DSGBV services must be a cornerstone of this vital work.

High Stakes of Violence Against Women

We must succeed because the stakes remain high. In addition to the tens of thousands of women seeking our support during 2023, we also must remember those who did not make it. As curators of the Femicide Watch for Ireland, Women's Aid recorded the names of a further **nine women** who died in violent circumstances during 2023. Statistically, it remains the case that the most dangerous place for women is their own home. The nightmare of violence and abuse most commonly will be at the hands of a current or former intimate male partner.

With a heightened public understanding and increased discourse, now is a rare but vital moment to build on the social and political awareness of the heinous issue of domestic violence. As individuals, and communities, we must all come together and create an equal Ireland, free from violence.

Now is the time to be brave and ambitious. In 50 years, I want Women's Aid to be a memory of what used to be required in Ireland, not the vital service it unfortunately remains today.



Sarah Benson

CEO, June 2024



Read more
about Sarah
and the Senior
Leadership Team
at Women's Aid.





Section 2

Activities and Impact Summary 2023



Three Year Comparative Frontline Services Statistics

	2023	2022	2021
Contacts with Women's Aid	28,638	31,229	26,906
24hr National Freephone Helpline (including calls, instant messages and emails)	20,891	23,566	21,126
Face-to-Face Support Services (including one to one support, court accompaniments, drop-in visits, HRSP, maternity outreach support sessions)	7,747	7,663	5,780
Talk Time Hours (24hr National Freephone Helpline calls and instant messages)	4,112	3,940	3,863
Disclosures of domestic abuse against women and children	40,048	33,990	33,831
Against Women	35,570	28,578	28,096
— Emotional	21,974	20,851	19,902
— Physical	7,851	4,509	4,707
— Economic	4,297	2,290	2,383
— Sexual	1,448	928	1,104
Against Children	4,478	5,412	5,735
— Emotional	4,253	5,006	5,361
— Physical	167	315	282
— Sexual	58	91	92
Referrals, Provision of Information and/ or Advocacy by Helpline and Regional Services	23,329	18,667	21,446

2023 Summary

28,638

Contacts with
Women's Aid

7,747

Contacts with
Face-to-Face Support
Services (including
one-to-one support, court
accompaniments, drop-in
visits, HRSP support
sessions)

20,891

Contacts with the 24hr
National Freephone
Helpline (including
calls, messages and
emails)

4,112

Hours of
Helpline talk
time

23,329

Referrals, provision
of information
and/or advocacy by
support workers

40,048

Disclosures of Domestic Abuse

35,570

Disclosures of abuse against women

4,478

Disclosures of abuse against children

1,448

Sexual abuse

21,974

Emotional abuse

7,851

Physical abuse

4,297

Economic abuse

256,848

Visits to Womensaid.ie*

25,654

followers

25,071

followers

63,138

Visits to toointoyou.ie*

35,789

followers

47,397

followers

4,560

followers

743

followers

907

followers

**These figures for womensaid.ie and toointoyou.ie in 2023 are extrapolated following significant changes to cookies. There have been two big changes that have impacted the sites' reported stats on Google Analytics - the move from GA3 to GA4 (which changed the way things were reported) and the launch of our new site which had a GDPR compliant cookie management system. The previous site had a Cookie pop up that offered two options "Manage Cookies" and "Accept All Cookies". This pushed people to "Accept all" as that is the easy option. However, the DPC requires that the user has to be offered an equally prominent option to "Reject All" which we provide on the new site. This means that a lot of people take that option and therefore their stats are not recorded in Analytics. We do have a report on Cookie acceptance levels and conducted an analysis on this in conjunction with our website provider. Extrapolated figure based on adding 30% to the indicated number of visits to cover those who refused cookies as advised by our provider.*

Domestic Abuse Against Women in 2023

We heard
21,974
disclosures of
emotional abuse
including:

- Name calling and verbal abuse.
- Isolation from family and friends.
- Possessiveness, jealousy, and accusations of cheating.
- Stalking and being monitored both physically and online.
- Living with the threat of physical and/or sexual violence.
- Being forbidden to leave the home without the abuser.
- Having the abuser threaten to hurt or kill her, themselves, their children or her family or her friends.
- Abuser denying or minimising the abuse shortly after it happened (Gaslighting).
- Abusers targeting the mother-child bond by manipulating and encouraging the children to join in on the abuse of their mother.

We heard
7,851
disclosures of
physical abuse
including:

- Assault, including with an object (i.e., hammer, golf club, hurl, gun).
- Strangulation.
- Pushing and shoving.
- Harm with knives including cutting and stabbing.
- Punching and slapping.
- Inflicting physical injuries including: broken bones, having hair pulled out, teeth broken.

We heard
4,297
disclosures of
economic abuse
including:

- Abuser denying access to household income to pay for food, medication and other necessities for themselves and the children.
- Abuser pressurising them into giving them large sums of money or getting them into debt.
- Abuser jeopardising women's access to employment.
- Abuser controlling women's income.
- Abuser refusing to pay maintenance for any children in common or only paying sporadically. Often, abusers use child maintenance payments as a means to control and coerce their ex-partners.

We heard
1,448
disclosures of
sexual abuse
including:

- Rape (307 disclosures) and sexual assault.
- Coerced sexual activity.
- Unwanted sexual advances.
- Being spoken to, or about, in a sexually derogative way.
- Abuser forcing them to watch and re-enact pornography.

Within the above disclosures of abuse, there were

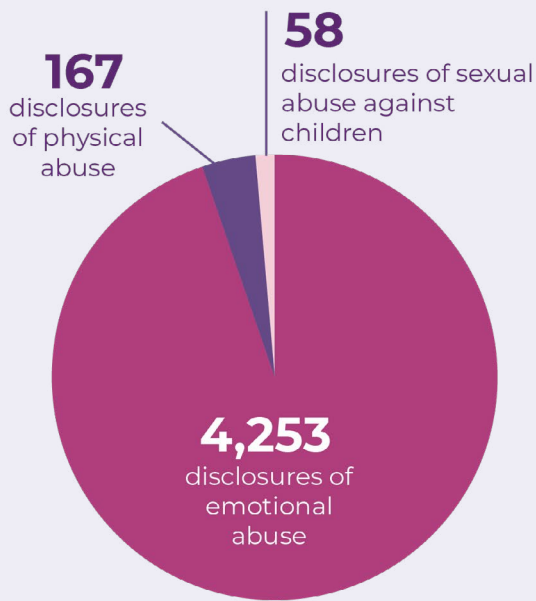
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disclosures of digital abuse and cyber-stalking including:

- Abuse by text, email, phone call and social media.
- Abuser sending explicit and violent images and videos.
- Abuser monitoring their internet use.
- Abuser subjecting them to image-based sexual abuse by:
 - Secretly recording them.
 - Sharing or threatening to share intimate images of them without their consent.
 - Blackmailing them into sending intimate images.



Domestic Abuse Against Children in 2023



- Emotional abuse including verbal abuse, name-calling and being threatened with violence.
- Physical abuse including slapping, hair pulling, assault with weapons.
- Children, including infants, hurt by the abuser as they attacked the mother.
- Sexual assault and molestation.
- Witnessing domestic violence against their mother.
- Children forced to go on access visits with an abusive father.
- Mother-Child bond deliberately damaged by abuser.
- Older children abused by fathers through the use of technology.

Abuse During Access

Women reported that they were subjected to abuse during access visits

845

times and that children were being abused while on access visits numbering

203

disclosures

Where women indicated that they felt their children were at risk of emotional, physical and/ or sexual abuse during access visits, the 24hr National Freephone Helpline recorded

298

calls where there was a social worker involved in the case.



Impact of the Abuse on Women and Children in 2023

The mental and physical impacts of domestic abuse including coercive control on a woman's health and well-being are significant and can be long lasting and wide-ranging. The ultimate cost, in some extreme cases, can be fatal due to homicide and suicide.

Physical impacts include:

- Broken bones and broken teeth.
- Bruising.
- Nausea.
- Nerve damage.
- Damage to throat and neck due to strangulation.
- Loss of consciousness.
- Miscarriage.

Mental and emotional impacts include:

- Depression, anxiety, panic attacks, fear.
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- Feeling alone with nobody to turn to.
- Suicidal ideation and attempted suicide.
- Hyper-vigilance.

Other impacts include:

- Living in, or being at risk of, poverty.
- Fear of homelessness and homelessness.
- Living in fear of deportation or the threat by abuser of spousal visa not being renewed.

Children experience both short-term and long-term effects of domestic abuse. These include:

- Guilt.
- Anger.
- Insecurity and anxiety.
- Difficulty with sleep, including nightmares.
- Flashbacks.
- Lower self-worth.
- Difficulties at school.

However, it is important to remember that some children may not exhibit any negative effects.

The Abuser

In 2023, 86% of those in contact with Women's Aid were abused by a current or former male intimate partner. An additional 9% of women were abused by a man who was not an intimate partner or ex-partner. 5% of women disclosed abuse by a female abuser.

86%

of those in contact with Women's Aid were abused by a current or former male intimate partner

9%

were abused by a man who was not an intimate partner or ex-partner

55%

were abused by a current male partner

31%

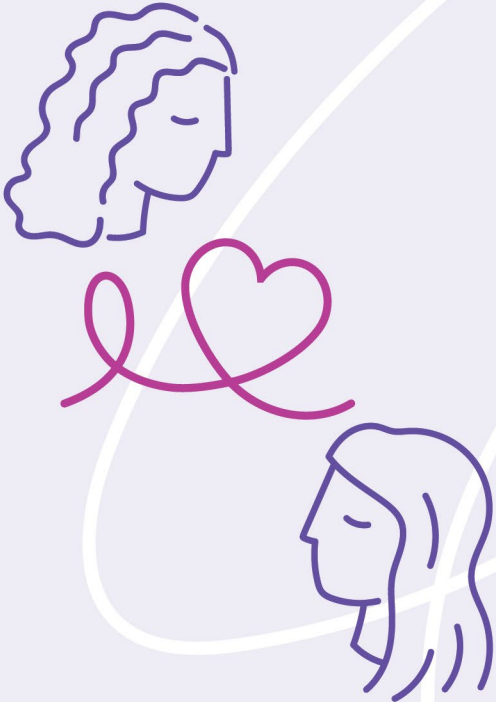
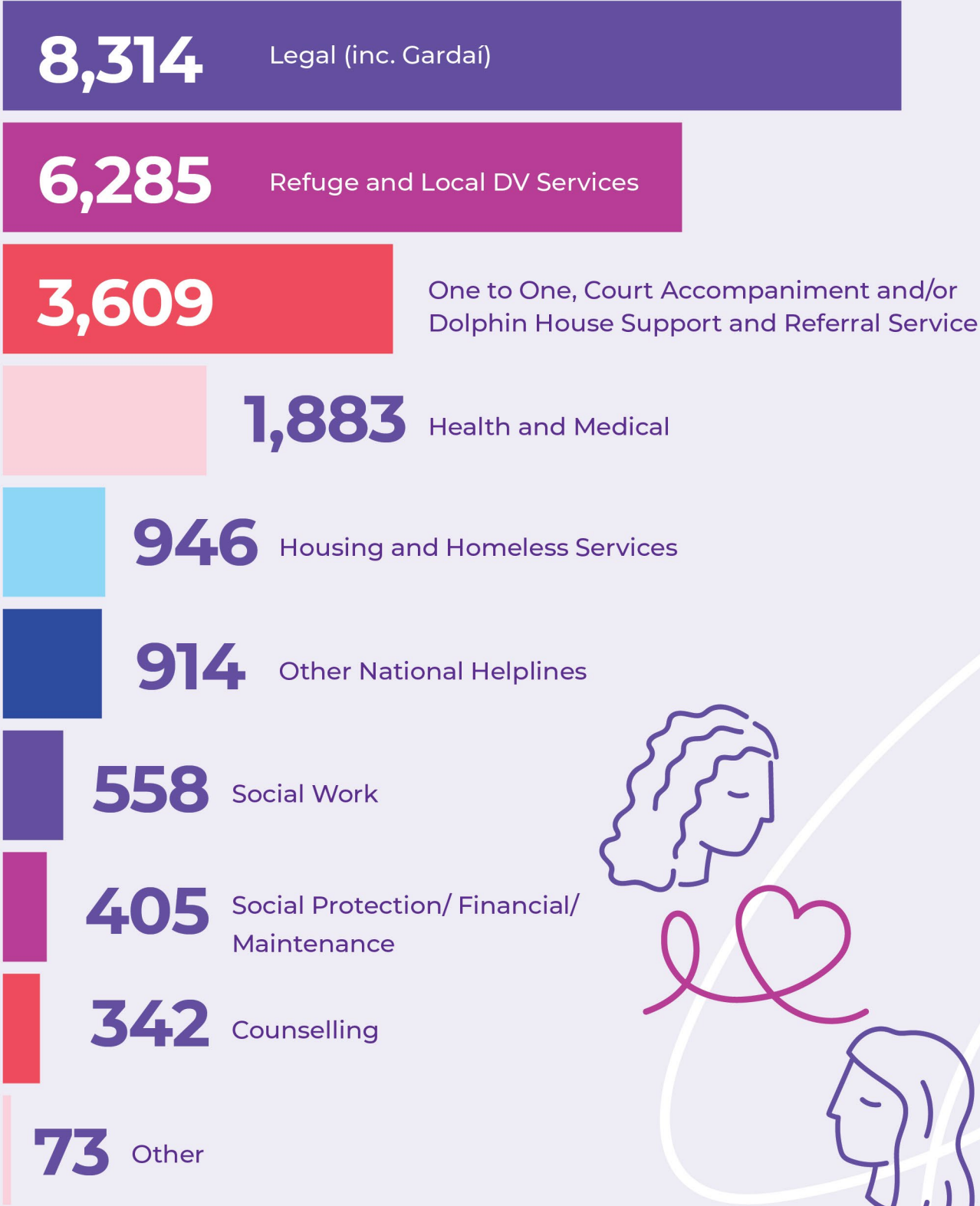
were abused by a former male partner

5%

disclosed abuse by a female abuser

Referrals, Provision of Information and Advocacy

On **23,329** occasions the Women’s Aid National Freephone Helpline and Regional Services made referrals to other agencies, provided information, and advocated on behalf of women.

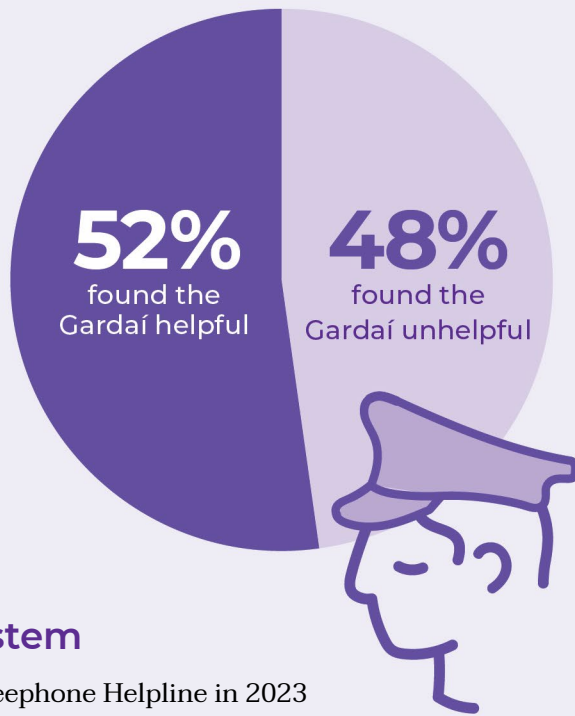


Support through Legal System in 2023

In 2023, Women's Aid provided support to women going through the legal system for protection from domestic abuse. This includes women contacting An Garda Síochána, accessing the Family Law system and also women whose perpetrator is charged with criminal offences.

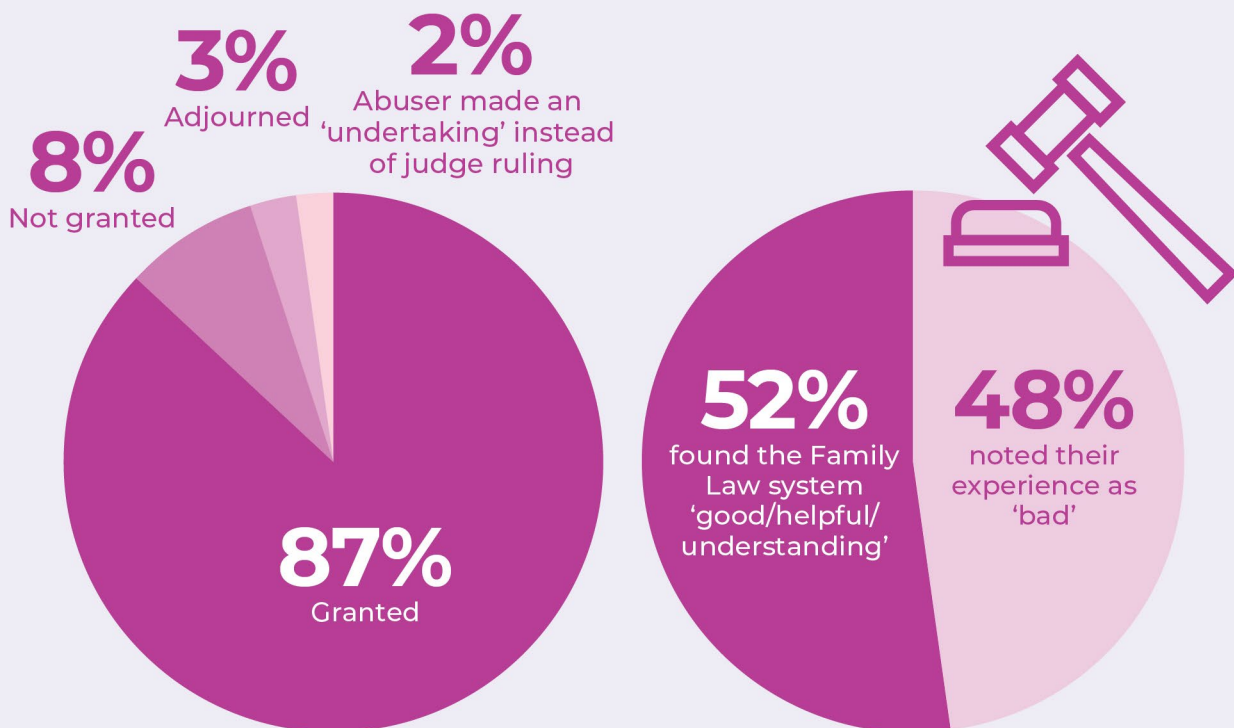
An Garda Síochána

Last year, **2,603** women in contact with the National Freephone Helpline disclosed that they had contacted An Garda Síochána because of domestic abuse.



Accessing the Family Law System

1,068 women in contact with the National Freephone Helpline in 2023 said that they had applied for a Domestic Violence Order through the Family Law System. Most orders were granted (87%).



Outcome of applications for Domestic Violence Orders disclosed to the National Freephone Helpline.



Criminal Proceedings

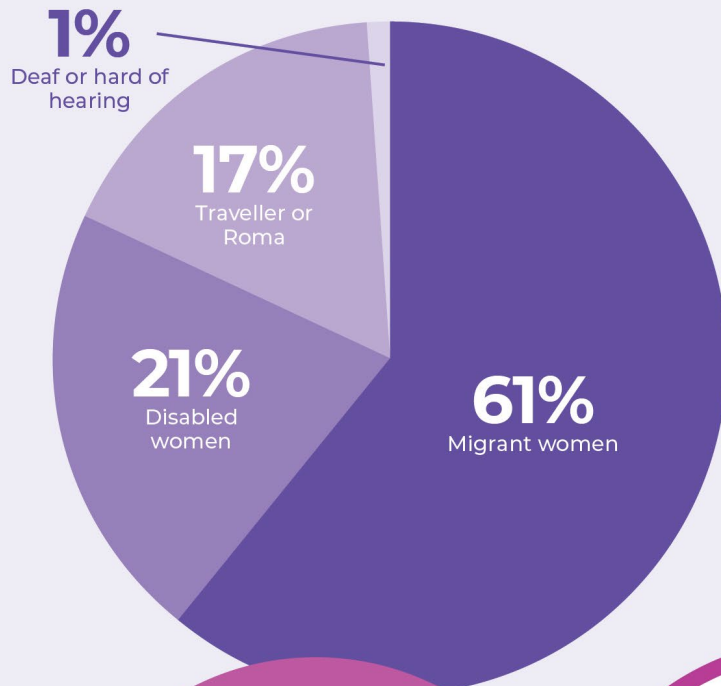
Last year, **399** people in contact with the National Freephone Helpline for support disclosed that the perpetrator of abuse was facing criminal proceedings.

Charges	Disclosures
Breaches of Court Orders	145
Assault Causing Harm	130
Sexual Offences (rape, aggravated sexual assault, Image Based Sexual Abuse)	26
Coercive Control	25
Criminal Damage (inc. arson)	14
Child neglect & cruelty, abandonment	13
Threats to Kill	12
Attempted murder	11
Other*	23

**Charges in the other category include stalking, harassment, non-fatal strangulation, kidnapping and offensive weapons offences.*

Supporting Women Facing Additional Barriers

712 callers to the 24hr National Freephone Helpline identified as being deaf/hard of hearing, Disabled, coming from a Migrant, Traveller or Roma background.



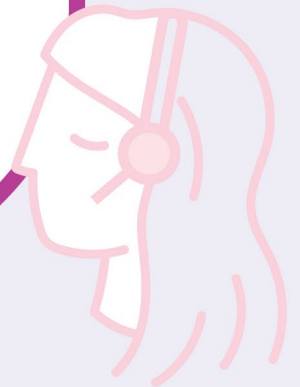
We facilitated
609
calls through
36
different languages
in 2023

51%
of languages used
were EU

The two most
frequent languages
were **Polish** and
Portuguese

49%
were Non-EU

42%
of women who accessed
our Face-to-Faces in
2023 were migrant
women



Specialist Training and Development Activity 2023

The Training and Development team had its busiest year ever in 2023.

	2023	2022	2021
Training events	138	81	60
Participants	1162	835	600
No. of organisations	130	116	169
Inputs & awareness sessions	32	41	15
No. of people	1461	2047	500

In addition, the dedicated **Employer Engagement Project** provided:

- Training Sessions to **211** participants from **21** organisations.
- **6** information sessions to **861** participants from **575** companies.

Strategic Communications Activity 2023

In 2023, Women's Aid continued to advocate for social change and create awareness on the prevalence and harms of domestic abuse against women and children, as well as intimate relationship abuse against young people.

19 Awareness Raising Sessions and Talks for Too Into You

10 Policy Submissions made

8 National awareness campaigns

- World's Strongest Women
- Too Into You campaigns X 2
- Domestic abuse during pregnancy awareness campaigns in maternity settings
- National Freephone Helpline Awareness X 2
- 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence
- International Women's day
- Support for migrant women

5 Too Into You Workshops

3 Research Projects commissioned

2 Public Events



Femicide Watch

STOP KILLI

In 2023, 9 women died violently in the Republic of Ireland

Bruna Fonseca

Maud Coffey

Geila Ibram

Angela Canavan

Catherine Henry

Anna Mooney

Deepa Dinamani

Lorna Woodnutt Kearney

Claire Collins

Each woman violently killed is an outrage. An absolute tragic loss of life resulting in utter heartache and trauma for her loved ones left behind.

The Women's Aid Femicide Watch is dedicated to all women whose voices have been silenced through violence, and whose boundless potential was robbed of them and their loved ones.

Women's Aid stands in solidarity with families, friends and communities of women murdered and with women currently living with abuse.

We also dedicate this report to the families and the loved ones bereaved. Families who are enduring the unimaginable pain of loss and absence while left picking up the pieces.

IMAGE: Stop Killing Women Mural, Dublin 2023, by Emmalene Blake (photo kindly supplied by @emmaleneblake).

NG WOMEN

Women's Aid Femicide Watch (Republic of Ireland)

1996- June 2024

266

women have died violently between 1996-present*

172

women have been killed in their own homes (63%)

1 in every 2

femicide victims is killed by a current or former male intimate partner (55% of resolved cases)

20

children have died in incidents where women have died violently

87%

of women (where the case has been resolved) were killed by a man known to them. 13% of women were killed by a stranger

208

cases have been resolved (80%)

All-Ireland Femicide Watch 2020 – 2024

In 2023, Women's Aid and the Women's Aid Federation of Northern Ireland created the All-Ireland Femicide Watch. Based on information collected, we know that since the beginning of 2020:

53

women have died violently in Ireland (33 women in the Republic while 20 women have been killed in Northern Ireland).

79%

of women have been killed in their own homes.

24

cases have been resolved (46%). In these resolved cases, 79% of women were killed by a man known to them. In 50% of perpetrators were current or former partners of the victims.

4

children have died in incidents where women have been killed.

We will continue to record these killings to illustrate the danger posed to women and to better understand how to increase protection for women and children. Our aim is to continue to try and break the pattern of male violence against women in the hope of preventing any further loss of life.

Section 3

Creating Social Equality

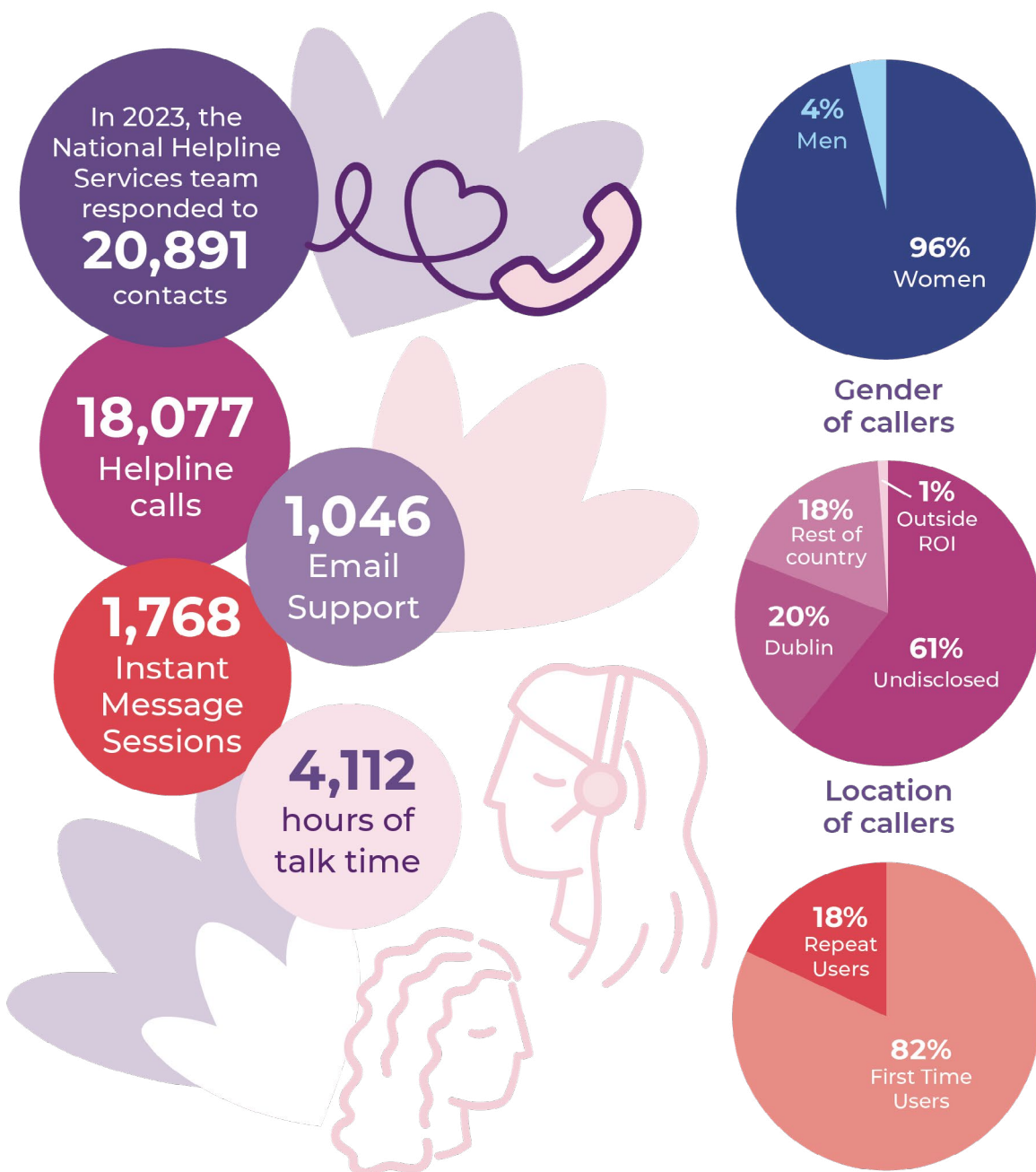


Strategic Priority 1: Creating Social Equality

We drive real social change through a cohesive and coordinated approach.

Over-arching Goal: To deliver a coordinated and coherent programme of work comprising direct services, training, education, advocacy, and awareness raising work that is focused on prevention, support and driving positive social change.

National Freephone Helpline Services



What the National Helpline Services Department Do:

- 24hr National Freephone Helpline 1800 341 900
- Instant Message Support Service
- Language Line Interpretation Service in 240+ languages
- Email Support

24hr National Freephone Helpline 1800 341 900

Women's Aid operates the 24hr National Freephone Domestic Violence Helpline in the Republic of Ireland, providing crucial support to women facing violence and abuse from current or former partners. Trained Support Workers offer a safe and confidential space for women to share their experiences, **believing, supporting, and empowering** them to articulate the reality of their abuse. Despite outward appearances, these relationships often hide a stark contrast of suffering.

The National Helpline team, consisting of both staff and volunteers, is available around the clock to respond to calls, instant messages, and emails, offering practical information and a listening ear. They also facilitate referrals to local specialist services across Ireland and provide support and information to concerned family, friends, and colleagues.

Helpline Service User Feedback

"It is such a relief that your service is always available, even if I wake up after a nightmare and don't want to necessarily call, just knowing I could call if I need to is a huge help."

Mary





"I am so grateful for the service you provide and I feel able to now move on."

Agnieszka

"I feel stronger after the conversation, the Helpline is an amazing service, you have given me more in a short conversation on Christmas Day than you can realize, thank you."

Yumna



Instant Messaging Support Service (IMSS)

The Women's Aid IMSS is a free, confidential, and secure service where women can seek support and advice from fully trained Helpline Support Workers through instant messaging. The service is open daily and can be accessed through www.womensaid.ie or www.toointoyou.ie. The service is accessible to deaf and hard of hearing women, and easier to access than a phone call. It also offers a safer option for women who feel they are at risk of being overheard by their abuser.



There were **1,768** online **Instant Messaging Support** conversations with the National Freephone Helpline team during 2023.



IMSS Service User Feedback

“This chat service has been a lifeline to me as I’ve been coming here to keep some sanity.”

“Thank you from the bottom of my heart for chatting & being patient with me. For allowing me to chat & not judge me or make me feel stupid. I wish I didn’t need to contact your services, but afterwards I do feel calm & clear in mind. So, many many thanks not just for this chat but for being there all the time & caring.”

Email Support

The National Freephone Helpline provided support via email on **1,046** occasions, treating each email with care and consideration. Recognising that email may be the preferred or only communication method for some individuals, the Helpline ensures that each email receives an individual response, acknowledging its significance as the same as a phone call. This approach underscores our commitment to providing accessible and responsive support to those in need.

Email Service User Feedback

“Thank you so much for your email and your guidance. It is very much appreciated. I want to thank you so much again for letting me know my options and possible ways forward.”

Fernanda

“I reached out for support through email and was really happy with the reply, I rang the 1800 number as I need to make an outreach appointment, thank you.”

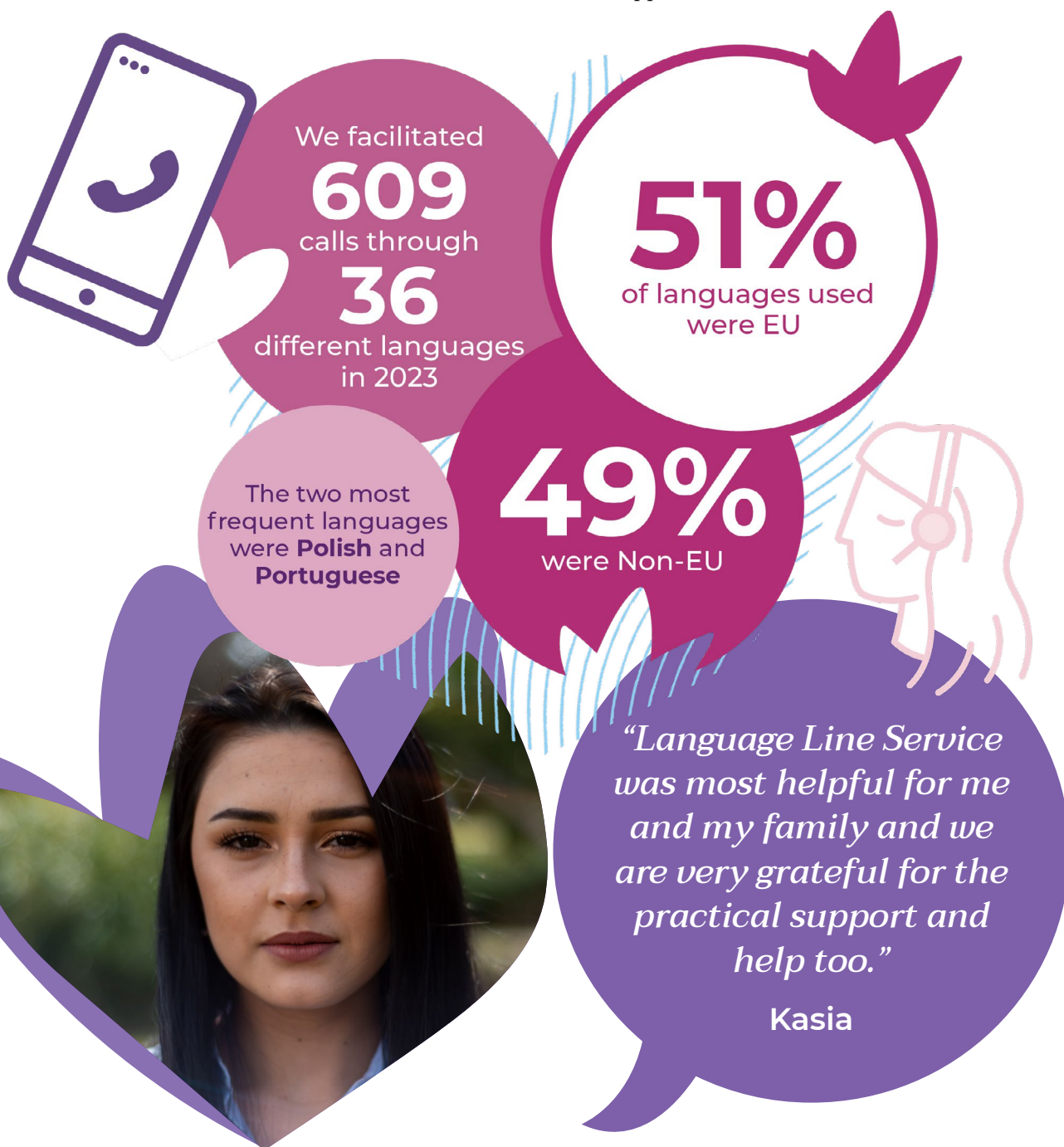
Mihaela

“Thank you so much for your message, I really appreciate all information Thank you once again, amazing and necessary support.”

Celine

Language Line – Women’s Aid Telephone Interpretation Service

The 24hr National Freephone Helpline has a Telephone Interpretation Service Facility which covers over 200 languages for callers needing support in their own languages.



The Helpline’s Association Quality Standard Accreditation

The National Freephone Helpline is now accredited four times to the Helpline’s Association Quality Standard (spanning a period of 10 years to date). This accreditation was granted after a rigorous accreditation process and inspection by the Helpline’s Partnership in 2021 and is valid up to November 22nd 2024. The Helpline is funded by Tusla with additional fundraising and grant support.

Team Spotlight

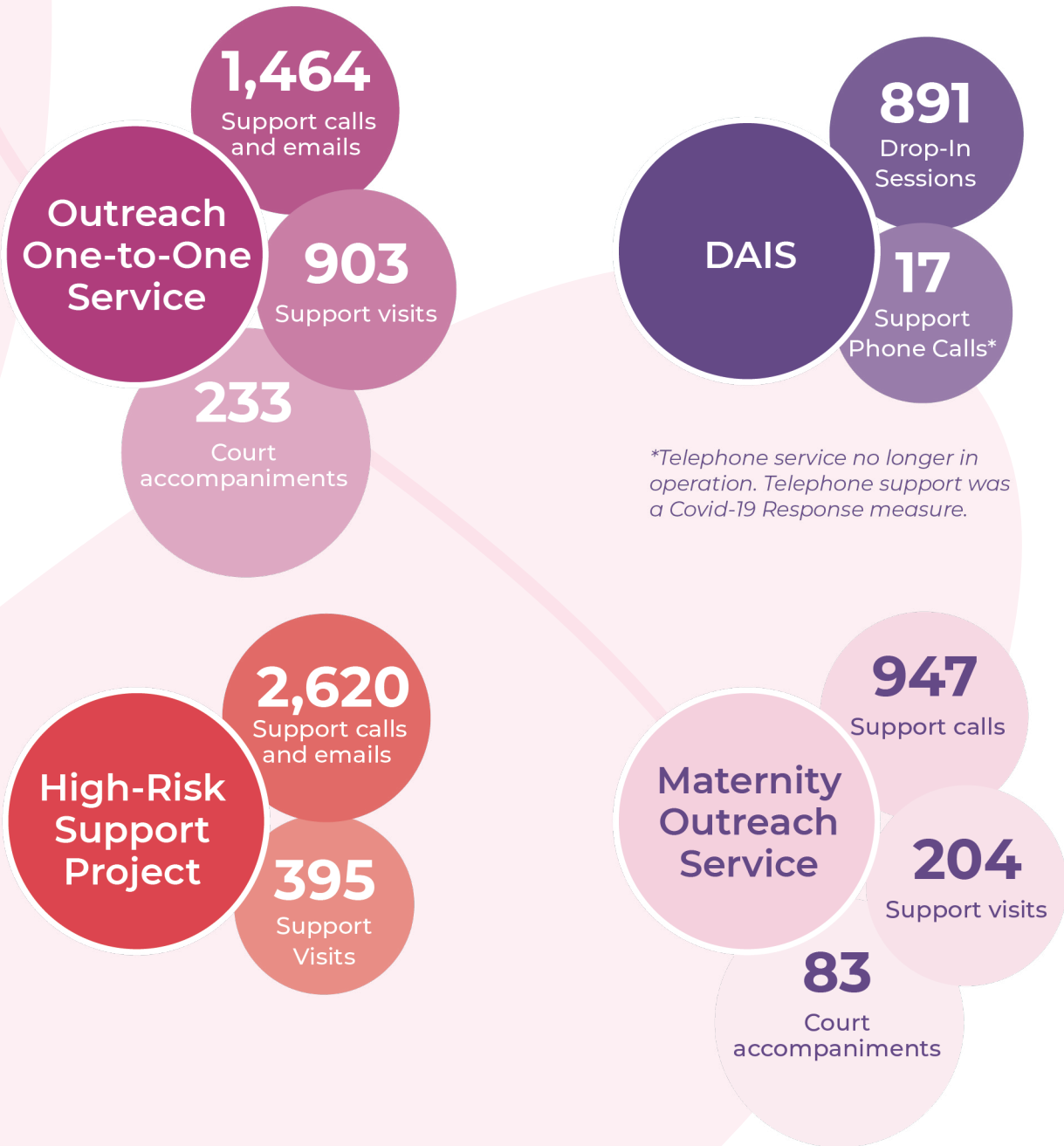
Grace, National Freephone Helpline Support Worker



“I have volunteered and worked on Women’s Aid’s National Freephone Helpline since 2019. What I love about working on the helpline is that on each call you can hear the difference you’re making to the woman you’re speaking to. Sometimes, pretty magical things happen on those calls. It’s almost like the information and knowledge you’re passing on becomes a form of strength and self-awareness for the women. Over time, the empowerment women experience within themselves – bit by bit, step by step – is so amazing. Every day, working on the helpline is definitely different. But what we’ve heard a lot about recently is how the housing crisis is negatively affecting the ability of women to leave the abusive circumstances they’re in. We also hear from women about their difficult experience of the courts systems, which are under pressure. This creates lengthy, protracted, and traumatising delays for women involved in legal proceedings.”

Regional Face-to-Face Services

In 2023, the Regional Services Department provided the following support to women subjected to domestic abuse on **7,757** occasions:



In 2023, out of the **1,705 women supported by Women's Aid**, 1,247 were accessing the services for the first time, while 458 were either receiving continuing support from the previous year or were returning clients seeking support again. This breakdown highlights both the ongoing need for services to assist new individuals facing domestic violence and abuse, as well as the importance of continued support for those who have sought assistance in the past.

What the Regional Services Department Do:

We provide practical and emotional support to women who have been subjected to domestic violence and abuse, through our:

- One to one support service, including court accompaniment.
- Domestic Abuse Information and Support Service (D.A.I.S.)
- High-Risk Support Project
- Maternity Outreach Support Service
- Access to Counselling

One-to-One Support Service

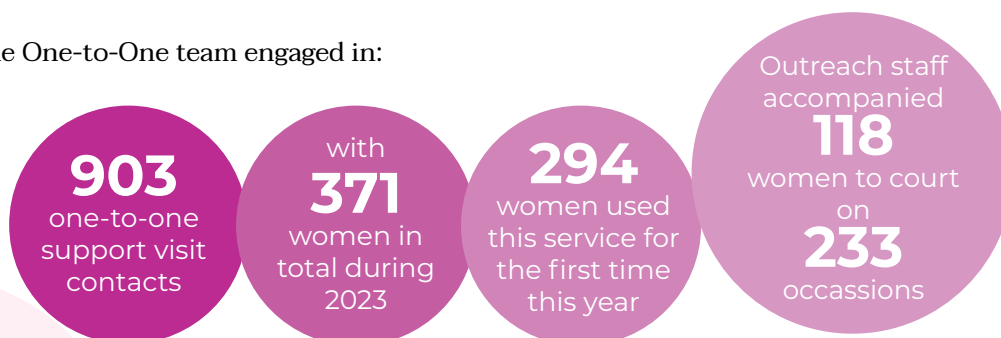
The Women's Aid One-to-One Support Service in Dublin City and County offers comprehensive assistance to women experiencing domestic violence and abuse. Funded by Tusla and the Department of Justice, with additional support from fundraising and grants, this service provides outreach support through face-to-face and telephone interactions. Services include court accompaniment, safety planning, advocacy, and referrals to external organisations.

The support encompasses various aspects such as assisting with legal aid applications, navigating immigration issues related to domestic violence, advocating to Housing Authorities for housing alternatives, and facilitating access to local refuges. The service acknowledges the diverse backgrounds of women seeking support, aiming to provide compassionate and professional assistance tailored to their unique experiences, cultures, languages, and needs.

Court accompaniment is a crucial component, recognising the daunting and stressful nature of engaging with legal proceedings for victim-survivors. Emotional support is provided before, during, and after court proceedings, along with clarification of legal terminology and exploration of available options. Assistance extends to applications and hearings related to domestic violence orders, as well as matters of access, custody, maintenance, divorce, and separation where domestic violence and abuse are factors.

Ensuring that women receive support at every stage of the process is deemed vital, reflecting the commitment to empowering survivors and facilitating their access to legal remedies for the abuse they have endured.

The One-to-One team engaged in:



Domestic Abuse Information and Support Service (D.A.I.S.) - A Drop-In Service for Women in Dolphin House Family Law Court Based in the Dolphin House

In Dublin's Family Law Court, the Domestic Abuse Information and Support Service (D.A.I.S.) offers a free and confidential drop-in service specifically for women experiencing domestic violence and abuse. Open Monday to Friday from 9:30am to 4:30pm, D.A.I.S. provides crucial support and information on legal options and safety planning. Additionally, the service facilitates connections to other domestic violence and abuse services for ongoing support.

Operated in partnership between Women's Aid and the Inchicore Outreach Centre, D.A.I.S. receives funding support from the Department of Justice. This collaborative effort underscores the commitment to providing accessible and comprehensive support to women in need within the family law court setting.



IMAGE: Dolphin House

During 2023:

868 Individual Women were supported through **891 interventions** following drop ins to this dedicated service based in Dolphin House family law courts

The DAIS team made

94

internal referrals to Women's Aid other support services

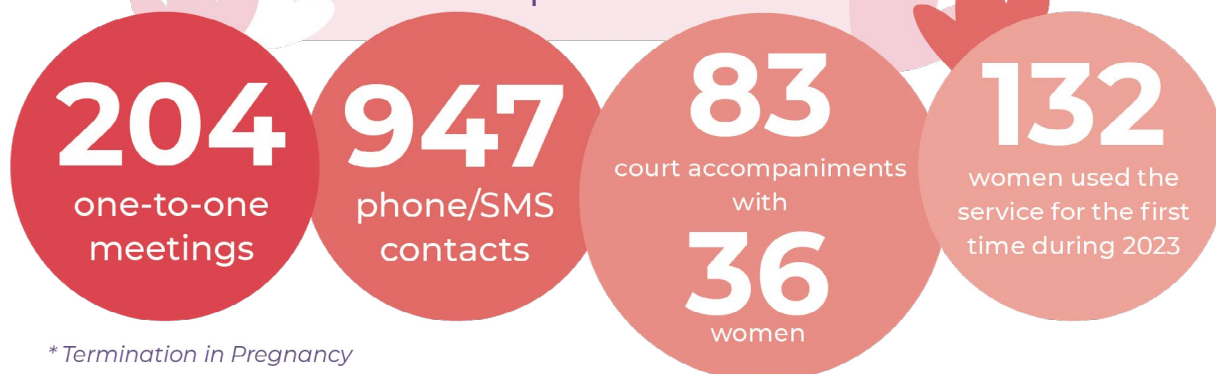
410

external referrals to services for additional ongoing support were also made



Women's Aid Maternity Project

Our dedicated **Maternity Outreach Worker**, who is a part of the Regional Services team, received referrals directly from the staff of the three Dublin Maternity Hospitals during 2023, supported **147 pregnant/post-partum/post TIP* women** who were subjected to Intimate partner abuse



*Termination in Pregnancy

The Maternity Outreach Worker played a crucial role in ensuring that a rapid, supportive response was provided at this particularly vulnerable time.

What should be a joyful time in a woman's life can be marred by serious physical assaults and persistent abusive behaviors, which can negatively impact her physical and mental health.

The direct referral pathway between the three Dublin based maternity hospitals and the Women's Aid Maternity Outreach Worker ensured that a specialised, immediate response was provided, to address risk, safety plan and support the individual, sometimes complex needs of each woman. By providing emotional and practical supports, the Maternity Outreach Worker contributed towards easing the burden for women trying to navigate legal and other systems, as illustrated by the quote from a woman who availed of this support in 2023.

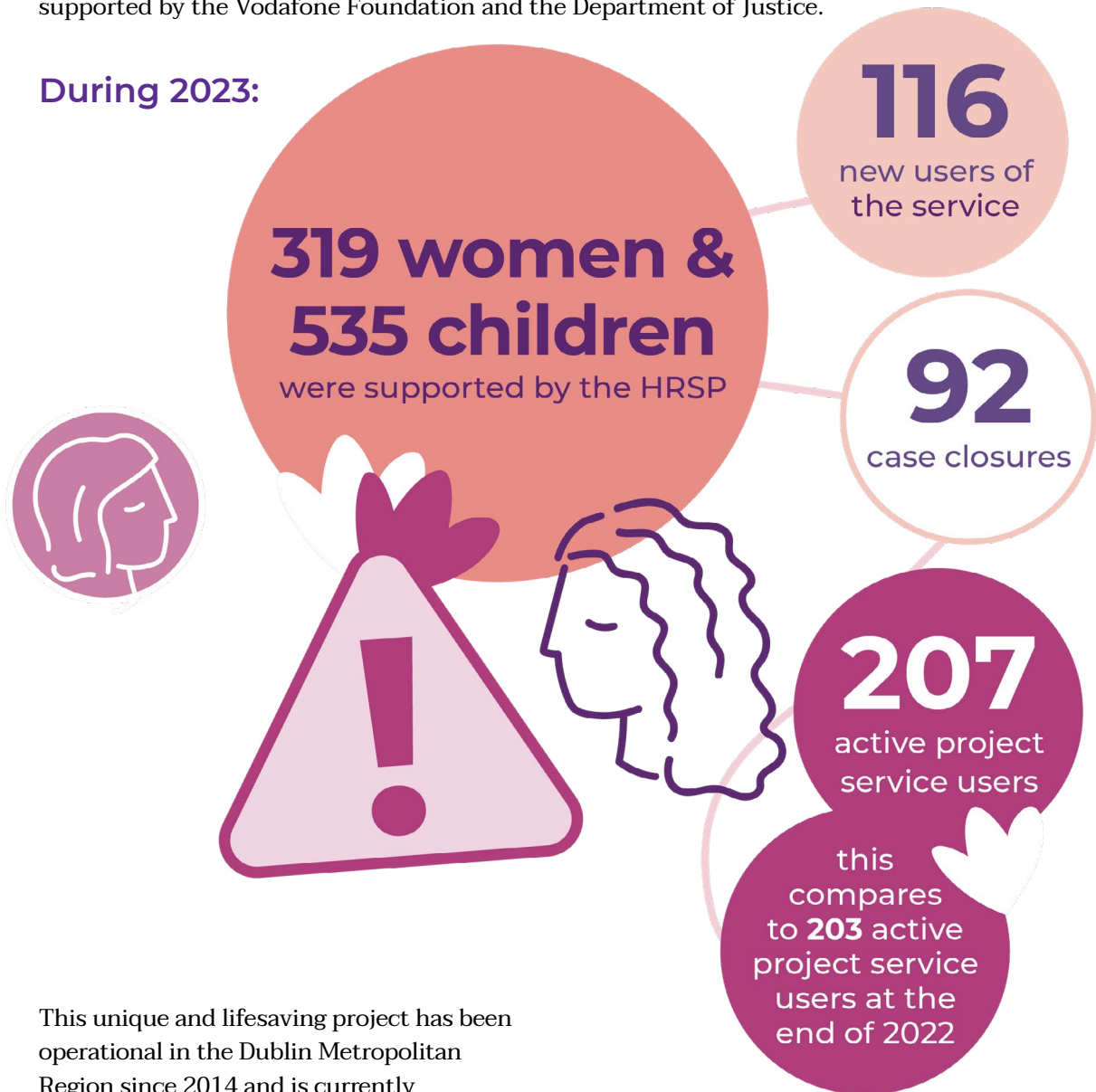
"I wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support since our first contact. I was lost and desperate with a baby only a few months old, feeling trapped in an abusive relationship with no way out. You showed me that there was hope and your assistance with the bureaucratic aspects was priceless. But more than that your emotional support was a lifeline"

Simona

The High-Risk Support Project (HRSP)

The High-Risk Support Project provides a multi-agency response to women at a high-risk of ongoing violence, abuse and homicide from their ex-partners and ex-spouses. Women's Aid work with An Garda Síochána and local domestic violence services to deliver a coordinated rapid response system for women and their families, which is generously supported by the Vodafone Foundation and the Department of Justice.

During 2023:



This unique and lifesaving project has been operational in the Dublin Metropolitan Region since 2014 and is currently embarking on a national roll out through all of the five Garda Regions. During 2023 (Q4) the HRSP extended to the Eastern Region and will complete the full roll-out to cover the Southern and North-Western Regions by the end of 2024.

IMAGE: Laura Shehan, HRSP Co-ordinator visits with Garda colleagues at Kevin Street Garda Station to raise awareness of support for victims/survivors of domestic abuse all over the country on Go Purple Day, April 2023.



Counselling Project

The Women's Aid Counselling Project pays for up to six sessions of therapy for women who have engaged with the Women's Aid Outreach Support Service. Women who have disengaged or are about to disengage from the Outreach Service can be referred to the Counselling Project, by their Outreach Worker.

The Outreach Worker will provide the woman with the various accrediting body websites and if necessary, will support the woman to find a therapist, in her community.

There are specific criteria regarding who can be referred and it is hoped that it will ease the transition for women who no longer need Outreach support. This initiative is funded by Women's Aid exclusively through fundraising .

From June to December 2023, 5 women availed of the Counselling Project.

Woman who received counselling support feedback

"I have to say thanks for all the support you team have been giving to me and my son. It has been helping me so much I wish all the best to all."

Ana

"I had my first session of therapy today and it was amazing. Thanks again for everything."

Fiona

Team Spotlight

Susan, Women's Aid Face-to-Face Support Worker



“When I met Aoife, she was living in fear. You could see it in her face. She was terrified and worn down. Now she’s in a different place. Living in peace, her life completely transformed. After 25 years of unthinkable abuse and violence from her husband, she’s finally safe. The journey was incredibly difficult.

My name is Susan, and I’m an Outreach Support Worker for Women’s Aid. Before that, I worked on our Helpline. Every day, I see women at their very lowest points – and stay with them at every step of the way, until they are safe again. From that first tentative phone call or message, Women’s Aid is like a warm, kind, steady hand on their shoulder as they navigate stressful court appearances, organise safety plans, attend one-to-one meetings, and apply for financial assistance to support themselves and their children.

We know that abuse makes women’s worlds smaller. Abusers may intentionally cut off those they are subjecting to abuse from friends, families, and support networks. They isolate, torment, and blame them. After weeks, months, and sometimes years of coercive control, brutal abuse or psychological terror, women are often deeply traumatised. They don’t know themselves anymore.

There are so many questions to face when it comes to leaving an abuser. Where will I live? Where will my children and I get money for food, rent, school books and heat? How will I make sure my abuser doesn’t find us?

Navigating these questions – safely, expertly, and at their own pace – is exactly the kind of life-changing support Women’s Aid provides. The last time I met Aoife, she was excited to tell me about her new home. She said she felt just as happy as she was on the day she bought her first home, all those years ago, before the abuse. From the worst of the worst times to the best of the best times. Her strength is back. She feels at peace.”



Internal and External Emergency Fund

In 2023, Women's Aid dispensed a total of €376,383 in funds directly and indirectly to support women and children in need across Ireland.

Emergency Funds to Support Women (Internal fund)

In 2023 Women's Aid dispensed **€86,383** in funds to women who were in receipt of direct support from our own frontline services during the year. These vital funds covered a wide range of urgent and practical needs including (but not restricted to) CCTV and home security costs, bills, groceries, as well as offering some small contribution at Christmas, a key time of financial pressure for women suffering economic hardship as a direct and indirect result of the abuse they are subjected to.

114 women received vouchers to a total value of **€21,850**

These vouchers could be used in a wide variety of retail outlets to assist women to meet some everyday needs for themselves, their children, and households.

An additional **€21,750** worth of vouchers were provided to **55** women using our frontline services to support them and their children before Christmas 2023

45 women benefitted from the Legal Fund, a total of

€17,352

This support enabled women to part pay legal fees for representation in court and pre court consultation.

28 women benefitted from support for home security measures, to a total value of

€25,164

Women's Aid provided funding for cameras, new locks, alarm systems and monitoring, sensor lights and video doorbells to help improve the security of their homes. In most cases, these security measures were recommended by Garda Crime Prevention Officers.

“...the vouchers arrived. Thanks so much for organising, I bought santa presents for the kids straight away, Happy Christmas and thanks for everything you’ve done for us this year’

“I honestly don’t know what to say and you have no idea how much this will help. I am extremely grateful both to you and Women’s Aid for the vouchers. I really really am. I spent all weekend worrying whether I would be able to manage this Christmas and genuinely now I can...”



Women's Aid National Emergency Fund for Women and Children 2022/23 (External Fund)

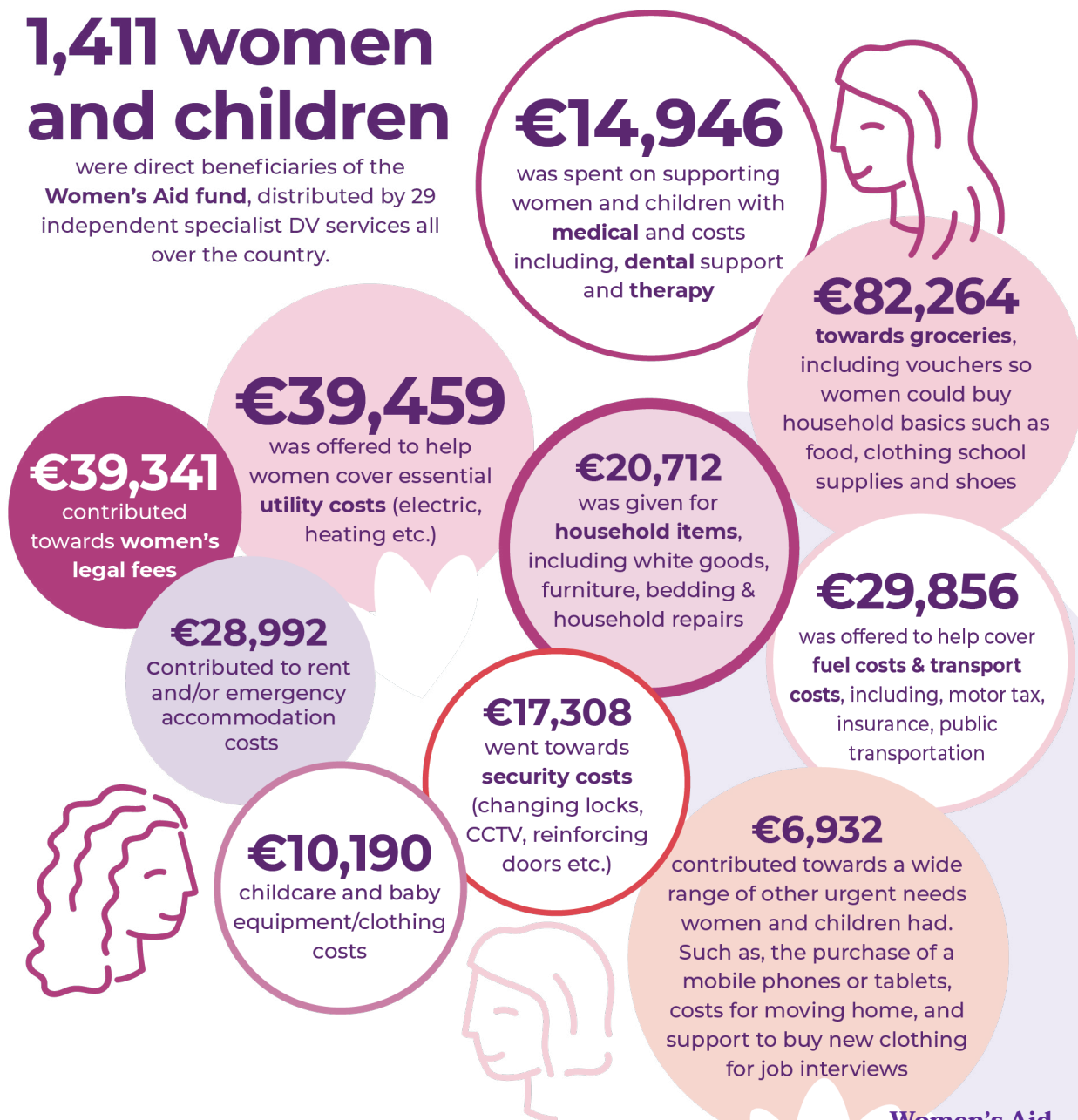
The consequences of economic abuse and the cost of fleeing domestic abuse can cause serious financial challenges, even poverty, for many women and their children. Through public generosity Women's Aid was in a position to further extend our emergency funds to benefit women and children nationally via a scheme offered to our colleagues in local domestic violence services throughout the country. The Women's Aid Board designated funds to support three rounds of this fund between 2021 and 2023 for eligible organisations.

2022-2023 Fund (Round two)

In mid-2022, in addition to Women's Aid internal fund for women using our own direct services, €290,000 was distributed in allocations of €10,000 across 29 different specialist Domestic Violence services for the direct benefit of women and children in need. Funds were expended by mid-2023 and all recipients submitted grant outcome reports. A snapshot summary of the incredible impact of these funds is noted here:

1,411 women and children

were direct beneficiaries of the **Women's Aid fund**, distributed by 29 independent specialist DV services all over the country.



The powerful, and in some cases transformative, impact of even modest funds to women and children who had been terrorised and impoverished by domestic abuse, was made clear to us with the narrative reports from our colleagues grant reports, such as:

Feedback from Support staff (External Fund)

“Having a grant available that can assist women obtain exactly what they identify as a need empowers women to create change and safety in their lives.”

“This fund supports our team as when a client’s basic needs can be met initially, it is easier for to us to do our job in supporting them around safety and other important matters they may not have had the headspace for when stressed.”

“Being able to help support women to get the children the assessments they need, stemming from DV has been a lifeline. Paying towards rental deposits is invaluable for the women to start a new life.”

Feedback from women (External Fund)

“Thank you, this is so helpful for me and my children. I was feeling very anxious, this will help take some of the pressure off.”

“We [mam and her children] had the best day out, laughing together for the first time in a long while.”

“I needed that hotel while the guards found him to serve the barring order.”

“I wouldn’t have been able to pay my legal fees without this help.”

“I was able to return to my home and feel safe, my children returned home also and are sleeping better and appear happier because of the CCTV. The vouchers allowed us to have a full fridge.”

During 2023, a third round of this three-year scheme was issued with €300,000 distributed to 30 specialist domestic violence services nationwide, to be expended and reported on by mid-2024.

Training and Development

What the Training Department do

We enhance organisational and service responses to women and children subjected to domestic violence and abuse by providing bespoke, survivor-informed training solutions for employers and front-line practitioners across the corporate, statutory and voluntary sectors throughout Ireland.

Our Training

In 2023 Women's Aid's Training and Development Department built upon our reputation for designing and delivering high quality specialist domestic violence and abuse training to front line practitioners in local and national organisations. Our training was received by diverse audiences in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors, as well as corporate bodies. We continued to target audiences with specific responsibilities to women and children subjected to abuse such as healthcare professionals, where we delivered training funded by the HSE's National Women and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP) to 452 participants working in 19 maternity hospitals/units.

"I was humbled by the training and in particular learning that ending the relationship is often far from the end. My naïveté here was a major blind spot that I am glad to have learned from."

Finola

"Really worthwhile seminar. Valued from a member of staff working directly with women in an ambulatory gynaecology setting"

Anne

"Thank you for giving me more insight into how strong and resilient victims of domestic violence are and teaching me how I can support women and their children better"

Ade



138 training events to 1162 participants.

130 organisations availed of bespoke training for groups from individual organisations.

Additionally, the Training Department delivered a range of inputs and awareness sessions during 2023, a total of **32 events to 1,461 people.**

Specialist Training and Development Activity 2021 - 2023

	2023	2022	2021
Training events	138	81	60
Participants	1162	835	600
No. of organisations	130	116	169
Inputs & awareness sessions	32	41	15
No. of people	1461	2047	500

Guided by our decades of experience directly supporting women and informed by evidenced models of best practice, our training is designed to equip people with the knowledge and skills to respond safely and effectively to victims-survivors, whilst holding those who use and benefit from violence and abuse accountable for their behaviour.

Our overall training message is that while accountability for violent, abusive and controlling behaviour lies solely with those who use it, it is all our responsibility to create a society where there are zero benefits in its use. Specifically, our training offers people a way to positively contribute to a woman's journey to safety and autonomy by being able to recognise that she may be being subjected to violence and abuse; ask the question 'Are you OK?' then respond with empathy and respect; and offer information on sources of support. In this approach, participants are supported to work with women where they are at: do no harm by being survivor led; and pivot to the perpetrator to avoid victim blaming.

Three Rs

Recognise, Respond and Refer

Recognise

- Domestic abuse as a process of coercive control
- Tactics of coercive control and the intention behind them
- Impacts on victim-survivors and their resilience
- Barriers to women's help seeking

Respond

- Responding to domestic abuse as a form of entrapment
- Survivor informed principles of effective responses
- How to safely support a disclosure

Refer

- Referral options to specialist domestic abuse services and what they offer

Our training is delivered flexibly in a range of formats, tailored to meet the needs of the organisation, including in person, online, e-learning and blended approaches. We use a range training methods to help people to understand domestic violence and coercive control through the lens of women and children's lived experiences. This includes videoed victim-survivor testimony, case studies, interactive exercises and group discussion. We have also designed creative and interactive e-learning modules, which will continue as we expand our training offerings.

"Thank you for a very informative training day. I enjoyed the case studies and the inter-activeness they brought in the breakout rooms. Thank you. I would also just like to extend my gratitude for all the dedication and compassion you show to these women. You make the world a better place by being there."

Amber



Our Specialised Training Programmes

Employer Engagement Programme

This is a specialised training and policy development service for employers with the aim of creating a supportive, understanding, and safe workplace environment for victim/survivors of domestic violence and abuse.

Research shows us
1 in 3
people
who will be subjected
to domestic abuse
during their working
lives.

And while both men and women can be victim-survivors of DVA, we know that it is a form of gender-based violence as women are affected disproportionately. This makes it an issue which drives inequality for women in the workplace and may create wellbeing concerns for all employees. Whether an employer is aware of it or not, domestic abuse is impacting victim-survivors and the workplace.

*“Employers and co-workers can save lives by providing a place of safety and solidarity, serving as a nexus to community services, and also identifying cases of violence.”
International Labour Organisation, 2019*

In November 2023, legal recognition of domestic violence as a workplace issue commenced in Ireland with the statutory provision of domestic violence leave. This legislation requires employers to offer up to five days of paid leave over a period of 12 months to all employees affected by domestic violence.

This provided huge impetus behind Women’s Aid successful bid for the contract with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to develop a range of support materials and services for employers looking to devise their workplace domestic violence policies and embed domestic violence leave within their organisational response to domestic abuse. Women’s Aid also won the bid to provide training to Civil Service employees. As part of this work Women’s Aid delivered training and information sessions and reviewed and provided feedback on workplace domestic violence policies for a diverse range of organisations.

In November 2023 Women’s Aid launched a new online support hub to support employers to implement Statutory Domestic Violence Leave: www.DVatWork.ie. This new online hub hosts support materials and services for employers developing domestic violence and abuse policies, including a policy template and guidance note, how to access information sessions and how to access email support services for employers.

As part of this work the Training Department delivered a number of information webinars for employers. Two took place in 2023, with the remaining sessions being undertaken in early 2024. In total for the first two sessions, we had **594 participants** from **408 different organisations**, primarily senior management or HR professionals.



In addition, in 2023, the Employer Engagement Project provided:



Training sessions to **211 participants**
from **21 organisations**

6 information sessions to **861**
participants from **575 companies**



“This was clear, informative, authoritative and reassuring. Thank you for organising it. I’d recommend it very highly indeed.”

“As an employer I don’t think I realised the important role we play to people who experience domestic violence.”

“Huge shift in my thinking around the end goal when someone tells you their story. Whether in part or whole I always thought the goal was for them to end the relationship. I will now work with them where they are at. Huge learning.”



Maternity Project Training Programme

The Maternity Project Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) Training Programme pilot, is a unique training programme, collaboratively designed, and content tested with multidisciplinary staff from the three Dublin maternity hospitals (The Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital, The Rotunda Hospital, the National Maternity Hospital) and Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate (primarily Cork University Maternity Hospital).

The training programme was developed as one strand of the Maternity Project, which aims to enhance maternity hospitals/units' responses to women subjected to violence during and after pregnancy through a jointly created and delivered training, awareness and referral programme.


We know from global research that women are at higher risk of being subjected to domestic violence whilst pregnant and recovering from birth and that professionals need to be trained to recognise the symptoms or signs of domestic violence and provide women with the opportunity to disclose. The impacts of domestic abuse during the perinatal period can be devastating. Perinatal abuse and in particular targeted assaults aimed at the abdomen increase the risk of maternal and foetal morbidity and mortality. Essentially, both mother and baby are victims of domestic abuse during pregnancy.

The training programme is framed around the 3Rs Recognise, Respond and Refer and has three levels, starting with Bronze and progressing to Silver and Gold. Participants must complete the Bronze level course before they enrol on the Silver level course and must complete the Silver before enrolling on the Gold level course. Bronze level is accessed as an e-learning module and Silver and Gold levels, delivered online and in person respectively. Training delivery started before the end of 2023 and is due to be completed by quarter 3 2024. This innovative pilot project concludes at the end of 2024 and is currently being Independently evaluated.



Team Spotlight

Hannah Wayte, Employer Engagement Programme Training Lead

A portrait of Hannah Wayte, a woman with dark curly hair and glasses, wearing a white top. The portrait is framed by a stylized graphic of a pink flower with a yellow center and a pink outline.

“Domestic violence and abuse is a workplace issue. That might seem like an odd thing to say about something that most consider belonging in the realm of personal relationships, but the reality is that domestic abuse tactics and impacts extend far beyond the home and into all aspects of victim-survivors’ lives. We know that more than 1 in 3 (37%) working people surveyed across multiple industries and at varying levels of seniority have experienced domestic abuse. Issues of coercive control and economic abuse can be linked directly to work, when we think about the consequences of someone being pressured or coerced to give up employment and their economic freedom by an abusive partner. Addressing domestic violence as a workplace issue is not about taking on the role of a counsellor or support worker. Rather, it is about creating a safe, supportive environment for victim-survivors to disclose what they are experiencing by reducing the stigma surrounding the issue and offering targeted support. There are simple ways employers can do this through training, awareness-raising, and policy development and integration.”



Meet the
Training Team

Strategic Communications

What the Strategic Communications Department Do

Women's Aid leads the way in raising awareness and providing information on domestic violence and abuse to victims and survivors, their families and friends, their communities and wider society. Our annual public awareness campaigns and communications activities are a vital way to highlight the prevalence, nature and impact of domestic violence and abuse, intimate relationship abuse and femicide.

We also provide solution-based recommendations on improving preventions, legal responses, policies, and protections to support women and children subjected to domestic violence and abuse, and we bring their concerns to international, national, and local fora. We also carry out strategic research to support evidence-based responses to domestic abuse.

Public Awareness and Campaigns

In 2023, we carried out five national awareness campaigns including on International Women's Day, during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, World's Strongest Women, National Freephone Helpline Language Line Radio Ads and National Helpline awareness in GP surgeries across the country as well as vital information featured on kiosks in public spaces kindly provided by Clear Channel Ireland.

Multi-lingual Radio Ad

The media company Bauer collaborated with Women's Aid to broadcast a multilingual radio ad based on our multilingual information videos to raise awareness among migrant women of the issue of Domestic violence and the accessibility of the National Freephone Helpline in over 200 languages. Bauer ran this ad pro bono across their radio stations for several weeks in June 2023.

World's Strongest Women

In 2023, we continued the World's Strongest Women awareness campaign with our corporate partner, Allianz.

The award winning campaign acknowledges that nothing will ever match the amazing courage and resilience of women living with domestic violence, and the journey they've been on. With the awareness campaign "The World's Strongest Women" Allianz and women's Aid want to pay tribute to these courageous women and inspire others that there is a way out, giving them hope for the future by empowering them to ask for help.

At the heart of this campaign, sits the powerful comparison between the world of physical strength that we are all familiar with, which is often portrayed as the only type of strength, versus the strength of the many women out there who are impacted by and living through domestic abuse.



Watch now

Maternity Awareness Campaign

Also in November 2023, Women's Aid ran a national Maternity Awareness campaign during the 16 days of Activism. The awareness campaign worked with four of Ireland's leading maternity hospitals. We partnered to support women subjected by domestic violence and abuse including coercive control. The partnership is between Women's Aid and the three Dublin Maternity hospitals (The Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital, The Rotunda Hospital, the National Maternity Hospital and Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate (primarily Cork University Maternity Hospital). The awareness campaign utilised social media to disseminate information, and the hospitals highlighted the bespoke posters in key areas. Awareness materials were distributed to all 19 of the maternity units across the country for this campaign.



IMAGE: Social Work Staff at the Coombe Hospital raise awareness of domestic abuse during pregnancy during the 16 Days of Action, November 2023

Preventing Domestic Violence and Abuse Through Targeted Education Initiatives

The Women's Aid Too Into You project collaborated with colleagues in organisations including Dublin Rape Crisis Centre and University College Cork who are engaged in delivery of education to younger people in schools on consent and healthy relationships, and our Too Into You materials focusing on intimate partner abuse were included as resources for these courses. The Project Leader also shared webinar resources during the year with teachers, youth workers and others seeking information about supports for young people subject to abuse.

School Curriculums

Women's Aid also made submissions and participated in consultations on the creation of updated SPHE and RSE curricula for Junior and senior cycle in schools during 2023.

Men as Allies to End Abuse

During 2023 and building on work in 2022 to enhance our connections and potential for collaborations with male allies, Women's Aid continued to develop strategic charity partnerships such as with sporting bodies like the GAA and Employers with significant male workforces. We continue to build up our relationships with other organisations working to promote positive masculinities, to address male violence and a more equal society.

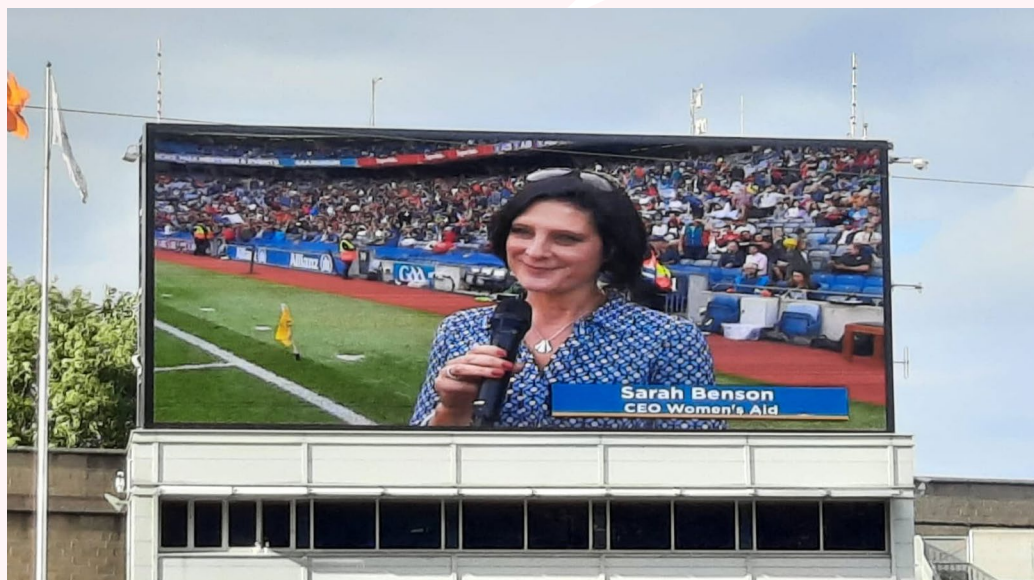


IMAGE: Sarah Benson, CEO of Women's Aid, addresses the crowd at Croke Park, Dublin, July 2023.

Women's Aid Public Events in 2023

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2023

At an online event on 24th November, Women's Aid launched a new online support hub for employers to implement Statutory Domestic Violence Leave. The Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 came into force on Monday, November 27 and included a new requirement for employers to offer paid leave to those subjected to domestic violence. This new Statutory Domestic Violence Leave of up to five days, over a period of 12 months, has been designed to help vulnerable people cope with what can be an extremely stressful situation in their lives.

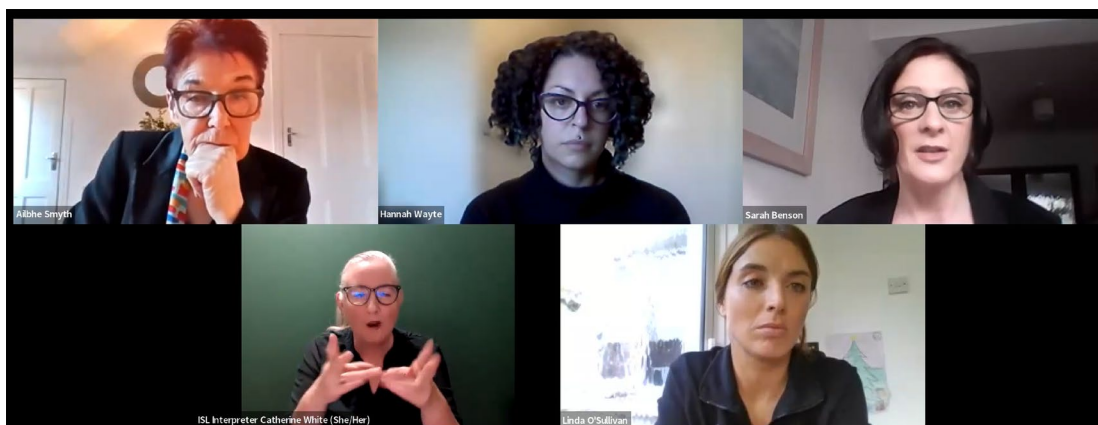


IMAGE: Launch of DVatWork.ie, November 2023.

To support Irish employers to implement this leave, www.DVatWork.ie was created by Women's Aid, as contracted by the Department of Children, Equality, Integration, Disability and Youth (DCEIDY). The new online hub hosts support materials and services for employers developing domestic violence and abuse policies, including a policy template and guidance note, how to access information sessions and how to access email support services for employers.

Speaking at the event were Roderic O'Gorman, T.D., Minister of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Ailbhe Smyth, activists, campaigner, and Chair of Women's Aid, Sarah Benson, CEO of Women's Aid, Hannah Wayte, Employer Engagement Trainer at Women's Aid and Linda O'Sullivan, an advocate and supporter of Women's Aid and survivor of domestic abuse.

Annual Impact Report 2022 Launch

On 20th June, Women's Aid revealed that more women than ever before are reaching out for help from its frontline services. The Women's Aid Annual Impact Report 2022 outlined 31,229 contacts with its National Freephone Helpline and Regional Face-to-Face services, a 16% increase on 2021 and the highest ever recorded. During these contacts 33,990 disclosures of domestic abuse were made, including 5,412 reports of abuse of children.



IMAGE: Jason Poole speaks about the domestic abuse his sister, Jennifer Poole, suffered at the hands of her ex-partner who went on to murder her in her Dublin home in April 2021.

The Women's Aid report stressed that, while it is encouraging and important that more women are speaking up and reaching out for support, every system they are accessing are creaking at the seams. This includes specialist frontline services, specialist accommodation provision and the family and criminal law systems.

Event speakers included Sarah Benson, CEO, Women's Aid, Jason Poole, Advocate and Campaigner on the issue of violence against women and men, Drew Harris, Garda Commissioner Drew Harris of An Garda Síochána, Dr. Stephanie Holt, Head of School, School of Social Work & Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, Hannah Wayte, Employer Engagement Project Lead Trainer, Women's Aid and Helen McEntee, T.D., Minister for Justice. The event was chaired by Martina Quinn, Women's Aid Board of Directors.

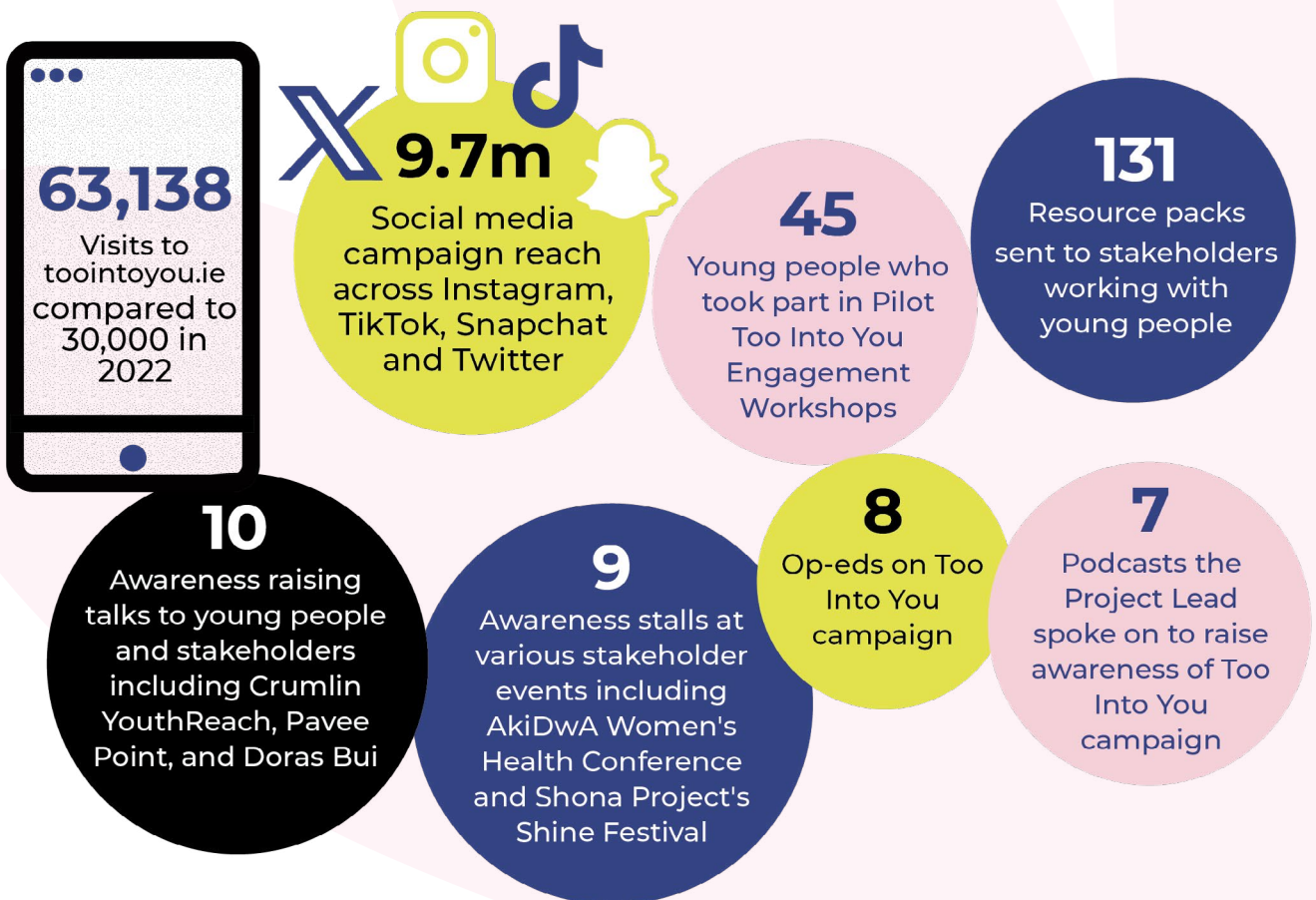
Too Into You Project 2023

Women’s Aid runs the Too Into You project which is focused on young people, in particular young women, aged 18-25. The project aims to teach young people about the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, the red flags of intimate relationship abuse, and provide support at our dedicated website for young people toointoyou.ie.

2023 was the biggest year we’ve had so far for our Too Into You project.



IMAGE: Women’s Aid Staff and Volunteers at the Too Into You Valentine’s Shop, February 2023.



In 2023, we ran two #TooIntoYou social media awareness campaigns. These campaigns play a huge part in reaching young people to teach them about intimate relationship abuse and the specific supports we provide at toointoyou.ie, including an Instant Messaging Support Service and Relationship Quiz.

On Valentine's Day, we launched our first social media campaign with a pop-up Valentine's Shop experience in Dublin city centre to inform young people about red flags of abuse. The experience was designed to disrupt young people's understanding of what romance looks like and start a conversation about the red flags of abuse.

Common Valentine's gifts like teddy's, balloons, and chocolates were transformed to show that abuse can hide in relationships that look romantic on the surface. The space was open to the public on Valentine's Day and received widespread media coverage.



IMAGE: Too Into You Ambassadors Jody Duggan and B launch the October Too Into You campaign 2023.*

The second social media awareness campaign launched on 10th October, World Mental Health Day, to draw attention to the severe impact of intimate relationship abuse on young women's mental health. The Samuel Beckett Bridge and Convention Centre lit up with the Too Into You logo and colours to launch the campaign.



IMAGE: #TooIntoYou at Longitude festival, July 2024.

For the first time, we brought our Too Into You project to Longitude and Electric Picnic music festivals. Electric Picnic is attended by 100,000 people and Longitude is attended by 40,000 so both festivals presented a fantastic opportunity to engage with a range of young people. At both festivals, we ran an awareness tent where Women's Aid staff and volunteers handed out 7,500 #TooIntoYou wristbands and engaged with festival goers about our Too Into You campaign and supports.

Lots of young women came up to the tent to say they had visited toointoyou.ie and taken the Relationship Quiz which helped them leave an abusive relationship. The website and #TooIntoYou social media also saw a surge following both festivals with one Instagram Reel being viewed over 269,000 times.



IMAGE: Too Into You Pilot Engagement Workshop with young migrant women, April 2023.

We also ran five Too Into You pilot engagement workshops. These were delivered to 45 young people aged 18-25 to teach them about intimate relationship abuse and the supports available at toointoyou.ie and the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships. We engaged young people from diverse backgrounds including young Traveller women, LGBTQ+ young people, young and lone mothers and young migrant women. Insights from these workshops have helped inform the work of Too Into You. Workshops were run in collaboration with Doras Bui, Pavee Point, BelongTo, AkiDwA, and Plan International Ireland.

Too Into You is a pilot project and during 2023 we commissioned an independent evaluator to assess its strategic potential. This evaluation will include specific consideration of how the project, its unique messaging and resources can be brought to wider audiences of both young people and those who support young people. This will include consideration of our Training & Development department, developing a dedicated training offer for those supporting young people at risk of or suffering intimate relationship abuse.

We also engage 20 young women who volunteer as Too Into You Ambassadors, many of whom have personal experience of relationship abuse. Our #TooIntoYou Ambassadors play a crucial role in helping us raise awareness of the campaign and supports amongst their peers.



IMAGE: #TooIntoYou Ambassador Sarah at Electric Picnic festival.

Women's Aid Public Coverage and Engagement in 2023

During 2023 Women's Aid significantly extended its public reach in actively engaging with the public to raise awareness about the issue of domestic violence and abuse and communicate ways in which individuals affected could access support and information, as well as direct support if required. We received thousands of national and local print, digital and broadcast media coverage last year.



IMAGE: Launch of www.dvatwork.ie by Sarah Benson, CEO of Women's Aid and Minister Roderic O'Gorman, November 2023

The highly contested concept of 'parental alienation'

CLIP • 10 MINS • 28 MAY 23 • THIS WEEK

Sarah Benson from Women's Aid & Family Law Solicitor, Donagh McGowan.



[This Week, RTE Radio 1, 28th May 2023.](#)

Opinion

Addressing domestic violence as employer is not about taking on role of counsellor

Ireland has become one of the first countries in EU to introduce paid domestic violence leave

Opinion, Sarah Benson, The Irish Times, 27th November 2023.

Nearly half of women subjected to intimate relationship abuse had suicidal thoughts – Women’s Aid

The Irish Independent, 9th October 2023.

Women’s Aid records highest number of domestic abuse contacts in 50-year history

Charity’s annual impact report documents 16 per cent increase in contacts, with organisation attributing some of rise to cost of living crisis

The Irish Times, 20th June 2023.

Record numbers contacted Women’s Aid for help last year – but survivor supports are ‘creaking at the seams’

One woman died violently for every month of last year, figures show

The Irish Independent, 20th June 2023.

Crime & Law

Family violence deaths: Women’s Aid urges focus on data sharing in wake of report

Body’s chief executive warns recommendations of landmark study must not be dispersed within Government

The Irish Times, 31st May 2024.

Providing a Lifeline, Online

In 2023 we launched our new website. The website showcases our support services and meets the needs of those accessing our site.



The site was built to be fully accessible to all users and work equally well on mobile and desktop platforms. Donations can be easily made through a prominent link at the top of every page. The site also works to raise awareness and promote campaigns, recruit volunteers, promote training, house resources and inspire people to the mission of the organisation.

The site includes:

- New design and integration of new branding
- Full review of site structure and content
- New copy and imagery
- Fully mobile compatible
- Accessibility compliance
- Integration with our donation system
- Integration of new chat helpline.

This project is ongoing, and we continue to work with FUSIO on further developments.



* This figure for womensaid.ie and toointoyou.ie in 2023 is extrapolated following significant changes to cookies. here have been two big changes that have impacted the site's reported stats on Analytics - the move from GA3 to GA4 (which changed the way things were reported) and the launch of our new site which had a GDPR compliant cookie management system.

The previous site had a Cookie pop up that offered two options "Manage Cookies" and "Accept all Cookies". This pushed people to "Accept all" as that is the easy option. However, the DPC requires that the user has to be offered an equally prominent option to "Reject All" which we provide on the new site. This means that a lot of people take that option and therefore their stats are not recorded in Analytics.

We do have a report on Cookie acceptance levels and conducted an analysis on this in conjunction with our website provider. Extrapolated figure based on adding 30% to the indicated number of visits to cover those who refused cookies as advised by our provider.

Influencing Government and Policy

Women's Aid provides solution-based recommendations on improving preventions, informing legal responses, enhancing policy and delivering protections to better support women and children subjected to domestic violence and abuse. We bring their concerns to a number of national and local fora. We make submissions and meet with government ministers, policymakers and members of the Oireachtas to discuss a range of issues and collaborate with other agencies and organisations to bring about positive social and political change.

Throughout the year, the organisation continued to advocate in a range of policy forums and with key stakeholders, to highlight issues related to violence against women and advocate for social and policy change.

Policy Submissions

Women's Aid produced the following policy submissions to support and encourage government on issues related to domestic violence and abuse against women and children.



IMAGE: Policy Submissions

10
submissions
in 2023

Women's Aid Submissions 2023

- [Submission to the An Garda Síochána Strategic Plan 2025-2027 \(November 2023\).](#)
- [Submission on Draft Senior Cycle SPHE Specification \(October 2023\).](#)
- [Submission to the Task Force on Safe Participation in Political Life \(August 2023\).](#)
- [Submission to Coimisiún na Meán Call for Inputs, entitled Online Safety – Developing Ireland's First Binding Online Safety Code for Video-Sharing Platform Services \(August 2023\).](#)
- [Submission on Domestic Violence Leave \(May 2023\)](#)
- [Submission to the National Equality Data Strategy 2023-2027 \(May 2023\)](#)
- [Submission to the General Scheme of the Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Agency Bill \(March 2023\)](#)
- [Submission to the Criminal Justice \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Bill 2022 \(March 2023\)](#)
- [Submission to the Review of the Legal Aid Scheme \(February 2023\)](#)
- [Briefing Note: Domestic Violence Leave Rate \(January 2023\)](#)

Research

In 2023 Women's Aid commissioned three Research projects in line with our strategic objectives to improve social responses to achieve an equal Ireland with zero tolerance for domestic abuse, and all forms of violence against women and children:

Disabled Women and Intimate Partner Abuse

This twelve-month project is the result of a collaboration between Women's Aid, Disabled Gender Based Violence Taskforce and Trinity College Dublin, School of Social Work and Social Policy. These project partners bring compelling expertise alongside commitment to the promotion of social equality. Trinity College School of Social Work and Social Policy will undertake the research, with members of the Disabled GBV Taskforce also joining the research team. This research will undertake a small scale, mixed method, targeted research project with the objective to shine a spotlight on the under-reported issue of domestic abuse and intimate partner violence of disabled women, and to make key recommendations for positive changes to prevent and combat this abuse by intimate partners and to inform the development of more effective means for disabled women to safely disclose and access appropriate support. The research is fully funded by Women's Aid through fundraising.



**Read More about
our Advocacy
and Research**

Pornography's Impact on sexuality, intimacy and equality, links to sexual violence Research

Women's Aid commissioned the Sexual Exploitation Research Project (SERP) to undertake this twelve-month research project, supported by funding through Community Foundation Ireland.

In tandem with the Research timelines Women's Aid has been convening meetings of diverse organisations and individuals who are coming together because of a shared interest and concern in relation to the impact and influence of pornography on children and young people's sexuality on gender equality and on the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence in Ireland.

Research study to explore the experiences of victims/survivors of domestic violence and abuse, including children, in custody and access proceedings in the Irish Family Law system.

Women's Aid has commissioned the Trinity College Dublin School of Social Work and Social Policy to conduct this 18-month independent research project. This evidence-based research takes a 360-degree examination of how effectively Custody and Access proceedings in the Irish Family Law system, both exclusively or in intersection with other proceedings, systems and factors, responds to the safety and wellbeing requirements of victims/survivors of domestic abuse, including children.



Team Spotlight

Mary Hayes, Too Into You Project Leader



“Intimate relationship abuse is a serious problem for young people in Ireland, and especially 18–25-year-old women. For many young people, red flags of abuse can be difficult to spot because it may be their first relationship and they have nothing to compare it to, so these behaviours become normalised.

With our #TooIntoYou project, we want young people to know that controlling and abusive behaviours are not normal, and they don't deserve to be treated like this. We want to help raise awareness of what's healthy and what's not in young people's intimate relationships. At toointoyou.ie, our dedicated website for young people, they can take the Relationship Quiz which helps them determine if their relationship is healthy, or whether their partner displays behaviours that are unhealthy or abusive.

There's also information about the red flags of abuse, information on how to help a friend you're worried about, and much more. The website is a real hub of information for young people. We see the Too Into You project as empowerment work. The more informed young people are around what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like, the more equipped and hopefully empowered they are to pursue happy and healthy relationships, free from emotional, sexual, physical, online and economic abuse.”



Section 4

Building and Nurturing Effective Partnerships



Strategic Priority 2:

Building and Nurturing Effective Partnerships

Over-arching Goal: To continue actively developing cross sector partnerships and strategic relationships; enabling Women's Aid to collaborate and to remain visible, active and contributing constructively to political, social and other forums responding to violence against women in all its forms.

Women's Aid values the trust of its funders and other key stakeholders. We recognise the value of mutual respect and collaborative partnerships with our funders and with peer organisations, supporters, donors and volunteers. Ensuring that Women's Aid is a trusted partner is a centrepiece of our strategy, which supports us to work effectively with other key actors in our sector. We continue to undertake key activities that will support us to deepen and strengthen our stakeholder relationships.

During 2023 the following key objectives, under the second Priority of our multi-annual Strategic Plan were our primary focus:

Ensure that Women's Aid is recognised as a trusted partner to funders and agencies and other Community & Voluntary sector stakeholders.

In addition to full compliance and fulfilment of our Service Agreements with our funders during 2023, Women's Aid continued to bring the concerns and issues of women experiencing domestic violence and abuse to a number of national and local fora.

Women's Aid actively develops cross-sector partnerships and strategic relationships; enabling Women's Aid to collaborate and to remain visible, active and contributing constructively to political, social and other fora responding to violence against women in all its forms.

In 2023 Women's Aid was represented at:

- Barnardos Childhood Domestic Violence Project: Advisory Committee
- Barnardos Children Living with Domestic Violence Community of Practice
- Children and Young People's Services Committee (DLR)
- Coalition for Children Living with Domestic & Sexual Violence (CLwDSV)
- Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women
- Family Law Court Development Committee of the Courts Service

- Family Justice Forum
- Legal Aid Board External Consultative Forum
- Legal Aid Board External Consultative Forum - Domestic Violence Subgroup
- LGBTQI+ & IPV Network
- Pavee Point DSGBV Project Advisory Group
- Public Awareness Sub-committee, Department of Justice
- St. Mary's Community Employment Project
- The SAVE Forum
- The Victims' Forum

Women's Aid is a member of:

- Charity Retail Ireland
- Children's Rights Alliance
- Irish Observatory on Violence against Women and Girls
- National Women's Council
- SAFE Ireland
- The Charities Institute Ireland
- The Wheel
- Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE)

Work with authorities, agencies and peer organisations to inform the agenda and to influence change positively, in ways that prioritise the interests of women.

In addition to our notable membership of a range of key groupings, and our formal policy submissions, Women's Aid also foster collaborative relationships with organisations and individuals to mutually inform and strengthen responses to women. During 2023 there were meetings with a wide range of stakeholders supporting women with addiction, using homeless services and migrant women.

Representatives of Women's Aid also addressed a number of events throughout the year.



IMAGE: Sarah Benson, CEO of Women's Aid addressed the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation Annual Conference alongside (l-r) Elizabeth Adams, Rory Hearn, Alison O'Connor, Phil Ni Sheaghdha and Owen Reidy, Killarney, May 2023.

Statutory Domestic Violence Leave

In relation to advocacy for a transformative piece of legislation to bring paid leave for domestic abuse onto a statutory footing, Women's Aid was the lead domestic violence organisation engaging with public representatives, unions, employers' bodies and individual employers. It was a landmark moment when the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Bill 2022 was enacted in 2023. This Act includes provision of up to 5 days paid Domestic Violence Leave for the first time in Ireland. Women's Aid was proud to be at the helm of advocacy on this issue.

Combatting the Harms of Pornography

During 2023 and in parallel with our commissioned research on Pornography, Women's Aid has convened a multidisciplinary group of stakeholders who have shared concerns regarding the harms of pornography on society as an impediment to gender equality, an exploitative industry and its' serious impact on children and young people. This group are collaborating with a view to further activities to address these harms in 2024 when the research is completed and its recommendations available.

Building and Supporting Volunteer Engagement



IMAGE: National Freephone Helpline Staff and Volunteers with the Investing in Volunteer Award, September 2023

In 2023, Women's Aid achieved the Investing in Volunteer award, which is a UK based standard for best practice in volunteer management, this process was led by Laura Brennan (Volunteer Co-ordinator). The hard work and dedication of our volunteers made this a worthwhile and reflective process. It allowed us really to examine the impact that volunteers have made to our organisation and more importantly acknowledge the breath of work and support that we, as an organisation, aspire to bring to our volunteer programme.

With the support of Volunteer Ireland and Volunteer Now, we looked at areas such as how we plan and prepare for volunteers, volunteer inclusion and how we show appreciation to those that give so much. We want to thank all the volunteers from the Board, the National Freephone Helpline Department, and the Dundrum Charity shop, who so graciously gave up their time to take part in the process, we

Our Charity Shop volunteers dedicated **808** hours of support in 2023

"Our Volunteers are the beating heart of the organisation. They bring great richness and immense generosity of their time"

Staff member

"It's a humbling experience knowing that you are there for other women".

Volunteer



IMAGE: Charity Shop Volunteers and Staff at the Volunteer Appreciation event, August 2023

would not have achieved the standards without that vital piece of the jigsaw.

Achieving this standard does bring with it a sense of pride around our volunteer programmes. This pride is also there for all the volunteers who give their time and who grow within the organisation. Each and every volunteer comments about it being a pleasure to give their time, but we know the real commitment it takes, we know the time and reflection that they give to the organisation, and we are incredibly lucky to have them as part of the team.

In August of 2023 we held our annual volunteer appreciation event in the wonderful Community Space of the LinkedIn building in Dublin 2. This was a chance, for board members, volunteers and staff to celebrate the vital and life changing impact that volunteers make on our organisation.

Towards the end of 2023, the National Freephone Helpline began recruitment for the next round of training, and we look forward to next year when we will have a whole new cohort of volunteers joining the team.

“Volunteers boost us so much”

Staff member

“I’m so glad that I was there and hearing from the contacts how relieved they were in having someone there to talk to”

Volunteer

““They could have nobody else to talk to. Knowing someone is at the end of the phone line is comforting”

Volunteer

“Volunteers are part of the history of the organisation”

Staff member

“Volunteers enhance the service with the experience, enthusiasm, commitment and passion that they bring”

Staff member

“It’s empowering that there is a safe space to provide a listening ear and to hear that they are so grateful in having reached out”

Volunteer

Section 5

Strengthening Capability and Expertise



Strategic Priority 3:

Strengthening Capability & Expertise

Over-arching Goal: Support the work of the organisation by ensuring that the information, resources, systems and structures required are in place.

During 2023, the organisation focused in particular on four of the defined areas noted in the multi annual Strategy:

Prioritising the ongoing innovation of the service range, leveraging technologies and reflecting the diverse needs of women in Ireland who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

We invested in new systems to support effective, innovative, and efficient delivery of service. These included:

- The continuing development of products on a new E-Learning platform to support Training & Development to expand our training offer.
- Go live (Q1 2023) (with support from statutory funder Tusla) of a new fully integrated platform to enhance the performance of the National Freephone Helpline.
- Go Live (Q1 2023) of a new database for the National Freephone Helpline to integrate with the new platform.

Accessibility

The National Freephone Helpline and our Regional Services continued to offer the Language Line dial in interpretation service for any migrant women accessing support - available in over 240 languages.

The online IMSS facility allows for access to support through our websites for women who prefer to communicate via 'chat' and deaf and hard of hearing women. During 2023 we began work to make our Instant Messaging Service available with translation services.

Ensuring that services maintain consistently high standards of excellence.

Staff training and development was a priority and supported our commitment to enhance our inclusivity:

- All staff given a personal CDPD training budget based annually.
- Individual staff participated in a wide range of Continuing professional development training including on trauma informed care, communications;

governance, compliance; health & safety and other topics dependent on specific roles and responsibilities.

- Helpline volunteers were recruited to support the Helpline support staff undertake a very intensive training, induction, and ongoing support process to ensure excellent services delivery.
- The organisation commissioned an Independent Staff Engagement survey from Quality Matters for the second year in 2023. It found that Women's Aid once again scored higher than average in terms of staff engagement on all metrics. The organisation plans to repeat this survey annually to monitor staff engagement and has identified some key areas to develop further prior to the next rollout.

Stakeholder feedback

- Women's Aid continually seek feedback from its services users through requests for confidential feedback from Helpline users and feedback at point of case closure from regional services.
- All training deliveries elicit feedback from participants to support continuous review and updating of our specialist training to ensure we remain a centre of excellence in this regard.
- The organisation welcomes feedback from stakeholders through its feedback policy which is available publicly on the company website.
- Pro Bono support from McCann Fitzgerald is generously made available to the organisation to ensure that its policies in areas of Child Protection, Data Protection and other related areas of compliance were reviewed and updated as required depending on the policy review schedule or changes in legislation.
- The organisation continues to proactively engage with its statutory funders and seeks to ensure funder satisfaction through ongoing positive engagement, submission of concise, accurate and informative reports and attendance at formal Service Level Agreement meetings.



Ensuring that the voice of service users is strongly represented in the data and information we collect.

Data: The Direct Services provide rich anonymised data on women's experiences, the trends emerging and the needs they have which Women's Aid incorporate into its impact reports, submissions and through public representation to try and improve supports and responses to victims/survivors and combat abuse.

Survivor collaboration: Women's Aid has a long track record of engaging with survivors to share their experiences and, crucially, their views on how we can improve response to combat domestic abuse. All our public events in 2023 incorporated a survivor's direct contribution in some form. Many additionally offered their anonymised stories in support of awareness and fundraising activities during 2023. Several survivors act as ambassadors for our Too Into You project.

As part of the Too Into You Independent project evaluation there were a range of interviews and focus groups undertaken with young women who have lived experience to help inform recommendations for the strategic development of this project to meet its objectives.

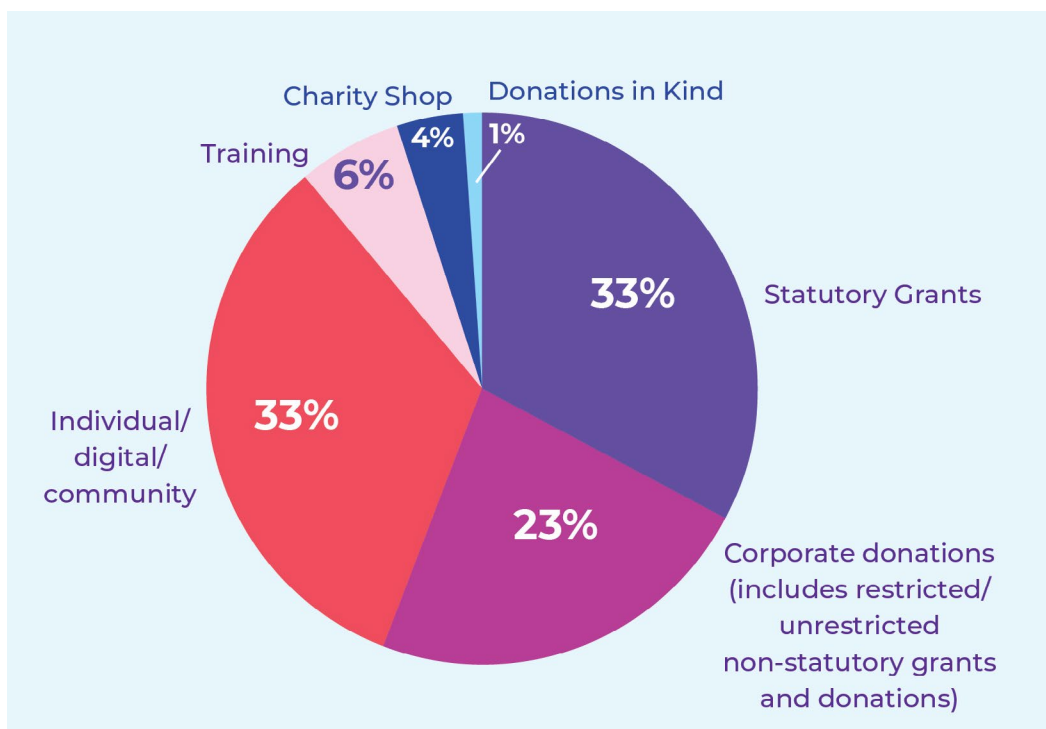
Significant work was also undertaken during 2023 (from Q3) by a dedicated Survivor Empowerment Co-Ordinator to review our historic and current internal processes and procedures for survivor engagement. Consultation with several survivors with whom we collaborate was also incorporated and a model for the organisation to further develop and enhance empowered survivor engagement into the future mapped out. This plan will be incorporated in the strategic planning process the organisation will undertake in 2024.

Developing diverse, sustainable multi annual income streams.

Women's Aid strives to maintain and preserve the trust and confidence shown to it by statutory funders over many years. During 2023 the organisation was in receipt of statutory funding from Tusla, the Department of Justice and Pobal to help deliver and expand our core services. The organisation also gratefully received additional grant funding from Tusla to continue to support our direct services and to invest in supporting infrastructure for the National Freephone Helpline service, which commenced in 2022 and was completed in 2023.

To plan for stability and sustainability into the future, the organisation invested in the development of a detailed and ambitious multi annual (5-year) fundraising strategy during 2022 which commenced in 2023-2027. The strategy has a supporting operational plan to assist Women's Aid navigate a period of exceptional growth and expansion. In addition, during 2023 the organisation developed a targeted 'case for support' to enable us to better engage our potential corporate and philanthropic supporters. The delivery of the fundraising strategy is currently on track and met its targets during 2023. You can read more about our Fundraising efforts in Section 6.

Income Breakdown 2023



To support and enhance our governance, compliance, and strong leadership, the Board:

- Undertook an annual Self-Evaluation, building on the independent evaluation and skills matrix commissioned in 2022. As there was little change to the Board membership during 2023 the cross section of skills and experience desired for Board level was only enhanced by the addition of a new member with specific organisational transformation expertise.
- The Board conducted an annual review of the company Risk Register and updated to reflecting changing levels and kinds of risk with the organisation faced in 2023.
- Updated insurance and risk mitigation measure in relation to cybersecurity in particular during 2023, with investment in Business Premium and other measures for all organisational devices, including phones.
- Initiated a strategic 'away day' for Board and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure connectivity and congruence between the Board and executive in delivery of the strategy.
- Supported quarterly Leadership away days for Senior Leadership to support adaptive leadership during a period of growth.

Aligning our people and our culture

In keeping with our commitment to support women in need and to contribute to an equal society Women's Aid is conscious of maintaining a positive and supportive environment which lives up to our expressed values of Courage, Co-Operation, Inclusivity, Empowerment, Equality and Change.

Already noted in part above, we achieved a range of improvements and delivered activities to build and strengthen our team and to make Women's Aid a positive work environment. A sample are noted below.

- Accreditation of our Volunteer Programme through Investing in Volunteering in 2023
- Implementation of best practice workplace policies, to enhance existing employee benefits. In 2023 we introduced our Breastfeeding Policy and Menopause Policy with paid leave provision.
- New Hybrid Working Policy formalised following a post-Covid pilot period.
- Employee Engagement Survey carried out (year 2).
- Annual gathering of all staff, volunteers, and Board members to promote collegiality and connection.
- Regular team and whole organisational meetings throughout the year for information sharing, celebration of achievements and to promote cohesion.

Section 6

Fundraising



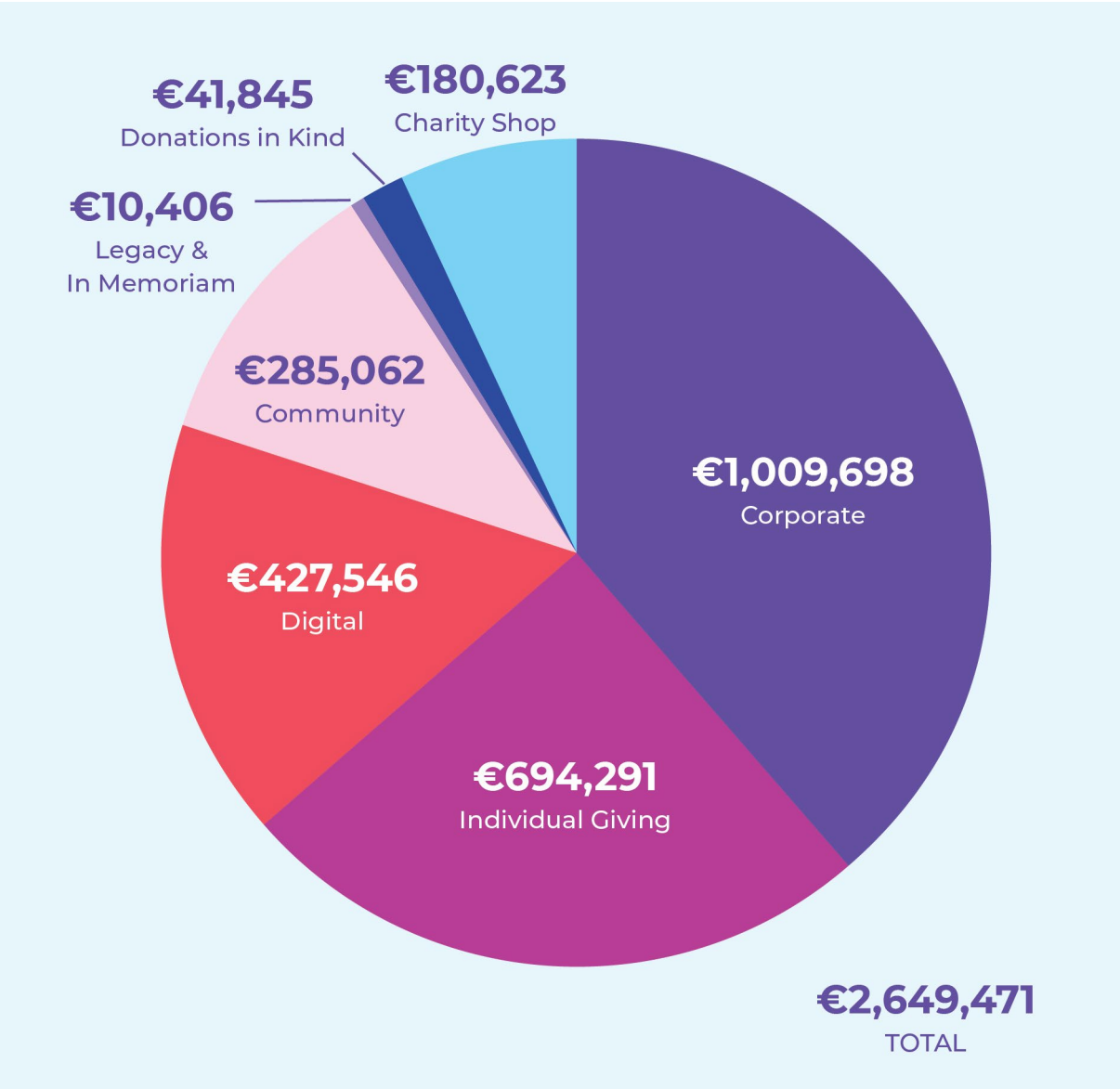
Fundraising in 2023

In 2023, our generous supporters came together to support Women’s Aid delivery of life-changing and life-saving frontline services.

Working toward a vision of an equal Ireland with zero tolerance for domestic abuse, together we have helped more women and children take crucial steps to safety.

As we begin to reflect on the vital progress Women’s Aid has made in the first 50 years of existence, the support of our donors and fundraisers has been key to the innovation, development and delivery of vital services and campaigns like our Emergency Fund, Too Into You Project, and our Maternity Project.

Fundraising Income breakdown 2023



What your support makes possible

Our donors and fundraisers ensure we can be there to listen, believe, support and empower women every hour of every single day of the year. We work to prevent and address the impact of domestic abuse and drive change for a zero tolerance of all forms of violence against women, by:



1.

Supporting and enhancing the delivery of the **24hr National Freephone Helpline** (including the Language Line). Providing emotional and practical support, the helpline is a gateway to refuges and other independent local services across the country.



2.

Grow the capacity of the **Instant Messaging Support Service**. When women can't find the words or are being monitored and can't make a phone call, Women's Aid Instant Messaging Support Service provides a lifeline.



4.

Supporting the delivery of specialised **Employer Engagement Training** with the aim of creating a supportive, understanding and safe workplaces for victims/survivors of domestic violence and abuse.



3.

Reaching young people through our **Too Into You** pilot project to educate young women about healthy relationships and the red flags of intimate relationship abuse.

5.

Deliver Women's Aid **One-To-One Support Service** to provide in-depth information and support to women subject to domestic violence and abuse. Growing our **Face-to-Face support services** including outreach, our High-Risk Support Project and our Court Support service.



6.

Expand our **High-Risk Support Project** for women and children at ongoing risk of violence, abuse and homicide.

7.

Fully funding the **Maternity Project** including training, awareness, policy development and outreach Support.



8.

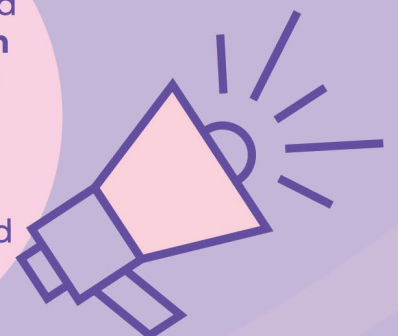
Making available the **Emergency, Security and Legal Funds** to women engaged with our frontline services and continuing the National Women's Emergency Needs Funds distributed through local and independent domestic violence services across the country.

9.

Continuing the **Femicide Watch** and commission wide ranging research on custody and access in the context of domestic abuse, intimate partner violence and disabled women and the harms of pornography and the links with gender-based violence.

10.

Raising awareness and providing information on domestic violence and abuse to victims and survivors, their families and friends, their communities and wider society.



Your Support in Numbers:

Over
5,000
individual
donations

610
people gave
monthly to
Women's Aid

3,154
supporters took on
our Walk 80km in
February
Challenge

75
supporters
organised their
own event or
challenge

2,500
supporters took
part in our Walk
100 Miles in July
Challenge

1,921
took part in
Women's Aid
Cold Swim for
Women

1,016
supporters took part
in our Run 100k in
October Challenge

461
supporters hosted
a coffee morning
for International
Women's Day

15
supporters took
part in the Irish
Life Dublin City
Marathon

Over
90
donations from
our corporate
supporters

5
very special *in
memoriam* and
legacy gifts

560
supporters took
part in the VHI
Women's Mini
Marathon

Corporate and Philanthropic Partnerships and Support

With the support of our corporate partners in 2023, Women's Aid has been able to help more women across Ireland subjected to domestic violence.

Staff in Ardmac Ltd, Musgraves Wholesale Partners, Smurfit Kappa Group plc, Volkswagen Group Ireland and Wolfgang Digital continued to support Women's Aid as its Charity of the Year.

Partnerships with the GAA, Imbibe Coffee, YSL Beauté, Allianz, the Vodafone Foundation Ireland, and Celtic Anglican Water helped us to deliver life changing services to women across Ireland.

We were honoured to receive support from Mitchell McDermott Construction, L'Occitane, Deloitte, Mason Hayes Curran, Goldman Sachs Gives and many other generous corporate partners.



IMAGE: Mitchell McDermott Directors Paul Mitchell and Anthony Mc Dermott and their amazing team presenting Women's Aid with a cheque generated by a 100k cycle challenge in support of Women's Aid, December 2023.

“Arthur Cox has partnered with Women's Aid since January 2023 and are pleased that this partnership allows us to support the work that Women's Aid does to prevent and address the impact of domestic violence and abuse in Ireland. Our staff engage in fundraising activities for Women's Aid, and we also provide legal support and advice as part of our continued partnership.”

Jean Maxwell, Head of Sustainable Business & Internal Communications at Arthur Cox LLP

Stand Strong

In February 2023, Women's Aid launched the Stand Strong movement with the support of our partner Allianz. People across Ireland were invited to come together and show their support for women suffering domestic violence.



IMAGE: Irish Paralympic Swimmer, Ellen Keane, supporting Stand Strong in 2023

Individual Giving and Legacy

In 2023, our community of supporters continued to donate to our important fundraising appeals throughout the year. We are honoured and deeply moved to have received a number of legacy and in memoriam gifts during the year. These powerful gifts will transform the future for women and children. They will move us sooner to an Ireland where women no longer suffer in silence.



IMAGE: Women's Aid Christmas Appeal 2023

"Like a lot of people, I give regularly to a few charities that are close to my heart. I'm delighted to help. I recently made my Will and I included a gift to Women's Aid in it. And you know, it feels like more of a gift to me than to them. It's not a solemn thing to do, it's actually a joyful feeling knowing I can help make life better for women in danger after I'm gone"

Community and Digital Fundraising

It is thanks to the amazing people who fundraise on our behalf, that we have been able to help thousands of women and their children to live safer, happier lives, free from abuse. Over the past year, our community has rallied together to show support and solidarity for women subjected to domestic violence.

It was a year of incredible support, and we are grateful to have had community groups, sports clubs, schools, universities, and individuals come together, to get involved in our fundraising activities.

From long distance walking challenges and marathons to coffee mornings and cold swims, our supporters have blown us away with their fantastic fundraising efforts. This support will help ensure that generations of women and children in Ireland are free from the terror of domestic violence.



IMAGE: Cold Swim for Women at the Clontarf Baths, 6th January 2023 (Photo: Alan Betson, the Irish Times)



IMAGE: Women's Aid supporters celebrating their participation in the VHI Women's Mini Marathon, June 2023.

“Womens Aid came into my life five years ago when I was fleeing a marriage where I was the victim of domestic violence. I always promised myself that when I was free, in a good place and my own situation was better I would help others just like Womens Aid helped me. I have made it my life mission to continue to promote, support and fundraise for Womens Aid because I know the incredible work they do first hand “

Linda O'Sullivan



IMAGE: Linda O'Sullivan taking on the Dublin City Marathon, October 2023.



IMAGE: Marie McArdle, Manager of the Dundrum Village Charity Shop

Charity Shop

In 2023, the customers of the Dundrum Village Charity Shop helped us raise €180,623. A particular highlight last year was the Designer Day in December which raised over €3,000 in just one day. We would like to thank everyone who shops with us, donates stock to us and who volunteers their time. We couldn't continue to have this vital presence in the local community and much needed funds to support our work.

Charities Institute Ireland (CII) Triple Lock Standard

In 2023, Women's Aid achieved the Charities Institute Ireland (CII) Triple Lock Standard. The Triple Lock is pivotal in maintaining a trusted charity sector as it is essentially a quality mark where CII certify that we adhere to best practice standards in:

1. Ethical fundraising – by adopting the Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public.
2. Financial transparency – by producing annual reports to SORP standard.
3. Governance practice – by adopting the Charities Governance Code.



Section 7

Plans for 2024
and Beyond



Women's Aid is extremely proud of our teams' performance during 2023 where the company continued to grow and develop its range of charitable activities in an innovative and strategic way. We have a clear and focused Strategic Plan 2022-2024 to frame and drive our work over the coming period. Some examples of achievements, which we will continue to build on in 2024, with the support of our new strategic framework include:

- During 2024 we will engage in a process of **review of our current Strategy** (2022-2024) and planning beyond its conclusion to ensure that the organisation has a clear framework for targeted operations, growth, and sustainability for coming years.
- The National Freephone Helpline (NFH) continues to be a crucial support to women across Ireland 24hrs a day, 7 days a week. Our Instant Messaging Support Service has been maintained for those who may wish to communicate silently (e.g. if in proximity to their abuser), for deaf and hard of hearing women and also others for whom this just a more comfortable mode of expressing themselves. Review of evolving peak call times and longer, more complex, calls to the service will inform targeted continuing investment to meet continuing demand. During 2024 **the National Helpline will expand the hours of Instant Messaging Support**, available via both www.womensaid.ie and www.toointoyou.ie.
- During 2023 we completed implementation of an integrated operating platform to increase administrative efficiency and data collection for the National Freephone Helpline. Women's Aid is very grateful to Tusla for supporting this important upgrade to the national service. The new platform went live in Q1 of 2023 and will be **further enhanced in 2024 to enable foreign language translation on the Helpline's Instant Messaging Service** which increases accessibility to this vital lifeline for migrant women who do not speak English.
- The work to enhance the National Helpline during 2023 also included a completely **new database system to enhance data collection for the NFH** and this is supported by SupportIT who contributed significant pro bono assistance in design and development of the database. 2024 will give us our full year of enhanced data via this new system.
- In 2024, Women's Aid **will undergo the application process to again achieve The Helplines Partnership Quality Standard**, which defines and accredits best practice in helpline work. The National Freephone Helpline is in its fourth accreditation, which runs to 22nd November 2024.
- Through very welcome grant support from the Department of Justice, the unique High Risk Support Project which Women's Aid delivers in partnership with An Garda Síochána and Vodafone Foundation Ireland, began its **national expansion** in Q4 2023 and **will be on a national basis by the end of 2024**.
- Through support from Tusla **the Services Team will expand the number of dedicated Maternity Outreach Support Workers** to two core staff.
- Women's Aid has commissioned three separate strategic research projects (see above) to give an evidence base for potential policy and structural improvements to combat DSGBV. These **three pieces of research will all be completed**

during 2024 and we will use the findings and recommendations to contribute meaningfully to national work to improve responses to all victims/survivors of domestic abuse, including disabled women, and children and those who may be particularly vulnerable or marginalised. All these activities will involve continuing cooperation with a wide range of stakeholder who share an interest in the outcomes and implication of each different research project.

- Through the wonderful generosity of many donors, Women's Aid offers an Internal Emergency and Security fund to women engaged directly with our services which we have in place to continue for 2024. With Board approval we will now also **extend for an additional fourth year our External National Emergency Fund to eligible Domestic Abuse services nationwide** which targets delivery of direct benefits to women and children in need.
- The organisation will **enhance its long-standing engagement with survivors** who wish to be agents for social change with **creation of a comprehensive survivor engagement policy and planning for delivery of an innovative 12-month Survivor Empowerment Project** to commence in late 2024/early 2025.
- Our court based drop-in service (DAIS), located in Ireland's largest Family Law Court was sustained on a full-time basis in 2023 and saw **significant increased demand will continue full time 2024**.
- We will invest in **enhancing our facilitator team during 2024 to increase capacity to deliver our Power to Change Programme** for survivors of domestic violence.
- We have **significantly increased our online training activities and further developed our training offering** to ensure we meet the needs of those seeking our specialist support. With further investment, design and development work continued in 2023 to **integrate an 'E-Learning' platform into our training offer, and new training materials to support online and blended learning**, we will respond to anticipated strong demand for training by a wide range of key stakeholders in 2024 and beyond.
- Following passage of legislation to put paid domestic violence leave on a statutory footing during 2023, we will **complete of our contract with DCEDIY to generate open-source policies and guidelines to support employers of all sizes to implement the law** in Q2 2024. In parallel we are investing further in the Training and Development's existing project to support Employer Engagement, with bespoke consultation and training to develop and roll out domestic abuse workplace policies across the country.
- Women's Aid will **continue to collaborate** with other partners to be a leading voice in campaigning and influencing key legislative reforms in 2024 with priority focus on new legislation, including the Family Courts Bill and the Human Trafficking Bill. We will also be monitoring the implementation of recent legislation that has been enacted, such as Coercive Control; Non-Fatal Strangulation; Stalking and other key measures which will better support and give access to justice for victims/survivors.

- Women’s Aid will **enter the fourth and final year of its TooIntoYou project pilot** in 2024. Building on two national research reports and with the launch of the new upgraded www.TooIntoYou.ie website in 2022, we have further expanded our awareness and engagement work with this important cohort of 18-25 year olds. In 2024 the project has a full year of planned activities we will also **receive an independent evaluator report**, commissioned in 2023 for this project. We will use this evaluation, along with our broader strategic planning process to identify the most strategic and sustainable way to grow the impact of this unique project for young people into the future.
- Our unique 3-year pilot **Maternity Project in partnership with 4 Maternity Hospitals, to increase support and referrals of pregnant women experiencing abuse, commenced mid-2021 and continues until the end of 2024, was extended with Board approval**. This will have a comprehensive independent evaluation to identify potential mainstreaming to improve and enhance supports available to women subjected to abuse during pregnancy. <https://www.womensaid.ie/get-training/maternity-project/> The evaluation and a range of external factors will be reviewed to decide the strategic and sustainable potential for continuity of the three different components of this important project which combined: specialist training design and delivery; a unique Maternity Outreach model and targeted awareness raising for the maternity healthcare setting.

In addition to the above, during 2024, Women’s Aid must practically invest further in some essential maintenance works to ensure our offices provide a safe and healthy work environment.

In 2024 and beyond, we are fully committed to continuing our ongoing vital support work and expanding this to continue to work incrementally and sustainably towards an Ireland where there is zero tolerance of domestic abuse.



Section 8

Financial Review



Financial Results

The 2023 financial results are set out in detail on pages 130-133. The surplus for the year 2023 amounted to **€488,407**. (2022 surplus: **€1,145,254**).

In 2023, total Income was **€4,316,918**. (2022 income: **€4,649,814**). Fundraising and donations income totalled **€2,649,471**. (2022 income: **€3,336,357**).

Income in the financial statements is categorised as restricted income or unrestricted income. Please refer to note 3 of the financial statements for a more detailed definition of restricted, unrestricted and designated funds.

Total expenditure was **€3,828,511**. (2022: **€3,504,560**).

Note on the 2023 surplus

While the surplus indicated above is €488,407, it is important to note that the Board have designated an additional **€1,066,341** of our unrestricted reserves to designated funds as seen in note 18 of the financial statements. Designated funds at the end of the year 2023 total **€4,397,401** (2022: **€4,133,288**) which are funds designated by the Board for the purposes set out in the table below.

Designated purpose	Description	Amount €
6 months operational costs plus costs of closure	To ensure Women's Aid's core charitable activities could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty. Women's Aid has an operating reserves policy of six months operating costs and includes the cost of making staff redundant in case of an emergency.	2,369,286
New HR system	Subscription costs for this software, implemented in 2023, required to support our growing team with time on/off management and our HR function	8,718
Maintenance Women's Aid Head Office and Charity Shop	To ensure our buildings are fit for purpose to facilitate essential service delivery	45,000
Strategic Planning	The Women's Aid current strategy runs 2021-2024. During 2024 a process to evaluate the current plan and develop the next Women's Aid strategy 2025-30 will be undertaken.	25,000
Women's Legal, Security and Emergency Fund 2024 and 2025	Providing direct, practical assistance to women and their children accessing Women's Aid direct services, for disbursement over two years.	370,000

Designated purpose	Description	Amount €
National Emergency Fund for Women and Children 2024	Emergency funds to directly benefit women and children nationally via a scheme, offered through a formal process, to qualifying local specialist domestic violence services throughout the country. The Women's Aid Board have approved a one year extension to this three year grant scheme which ran successfully from 2021-2023.	300,000
Maternity Project 2024	Designated to this 3.5 year pilot project which commenced in April 2021 and concludes in December 2024. The project collaborates with partner maternity hospitals to develop supports for pregnant women experiencing or at risk of domestic violence. The pilot comprises specialist training, development, and outreach and targeted awareness raising components.	173,448
Too Into You Project costs 2024 & 2025	A Strategic Communications initiative, which focuses on expanding and developing Women's Aid dedicated work to raise awareness and offer support to young women (18-25s) subjected to or at risk of intimate relationship abuse.	229,808
Survivor Engagement Programme 2024 & 2025	A Strategic Communications initiative to create a framework for engagement with survivors, to empower them to collectively identify themes for the social change they wish to express and support the development of a formal 'manifesto' to give expression to their voices.	118,000
Research - 'Custody and access / Irish Family Law System'	An 18-month research project, aiming to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based examination of how effectively the Irish Family Law system proceedings relating to Custody and access: a) responds to the needs of victims and survivors of domestic abuse; b) vindicates the rights of children to have their voice heard during such proceedings. Research commenced in 2023 and concludes in 2024.	66,257

Designated purpose	Description	Amount €
Research - 'Disabled Women and IPA'	This is a collaborative research project between Women's Aid, the Disabled Gender Based Violence Taskforce and Trinity College Dublin, School of Social Work and Social Policy. The research objective to shine a spotlight on the under-reported issue of domestic abuse and intimate partner abuse of disabled women, and to make recommendations to inform the development of more effective means for disabled women to safely disclose and access appropriate support. Research commenced in 2023 and concludes in 2024.	28,196
Zero Tolerance Fund	Funds designated to collaboratively progress prevention activities targeted at positively contributing to zero tolerance for DSGBV. Activities including, but not restricted to engaging men and boys as allies; addressing the harms of pornography.	118,075
Counselling project - Services	This is a pilot initiative which our Services department commenced in 2023. It aims to resource and offer counselling support to services users in need, at the point of case closure with Women's Aid direct services and further support trauma healing. The initiative will be reviewed mid-2024.	46,370
Salaries Employer Engagement Project 2024-2026	A Training and Development initiative to develop a targeted offer to employers to increase workplace supports to victims/survivors of domestic abuse. The designated sum includes funding for a new trainer.	274,745
E Learning - Training & Development	Resources to design and develop a number of new 'E-Learning' training resources for our Training & Development Department	29,816
Strategic Communications consulting and salary costs 2024 and 2025	Ringfencing non funded salary and policy consultancy costs for our Strategic Communications department.	139,682
Homeless Project 2024 Services	Funds ringfenced to explore a new co-operative project to improve supports to women subject to domestic abuse, who are in homeless services.	30,000

Designated purpose	Description	Amount €
Women's Aid 50th Anniversary	Women's Aid will mark its 50th year in existence with a number of activities including a conference, awareness activity and internal events.	25,000
Total Designated Reserves 2023		€4,397,401

Women's Aid continues to face increased demands for our services. There is reason to believe that this demand will continue to rise. Based on the Board's consideration of the current economic situation, and the effects this and other external environmental factors may have on the future funding of Women's Aid, the Board believe that the level of unrestricted reserves after designation is satisfactory. The Board will continue to monitor the reserves on a (minimum) quarterly basis.

Dividends and retention

The company is precluded by its Constitution from paying dividends either as part of normal operations or on distribution of its assets in the event of a winding up.

Political contribution

The company made no political contributions during the year, as defined by the Electoral Act 1997.

Financial events

The Directors report the following financial events during the year.

The financial results for the year ended 31st December 2023 are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities on page 131 and are considered satisfactory by the Board.

Sources of funding

Women's Aid received less than 50% of statutory funding for running costs in 2023. Statutory funding accounted for 37% of expenditure in 2023. The balance of expenditure (63% of costs) was sourced through fundraising donations, training income, charity shop income and non-statutory grants.

Income from statutory sources during 2023, provided vital support to the organisation in the delivery of frontline services, training delivery and strategic public awareness raising. The funds received from all statutory sources are restricted for a fixed period. 33% of income recognised in 2023 was funded by statutory sources.

The statutory sources of income in 2023 were as follows, and as specified in the financial pages of this audit report:

- Tusla, Child and Family Agency

- The Department of Justice (Victims of Crime Scheme)
- The Department of Rural and Community Development (Administered by Pobal)

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries through a preliminary assessment of Going Concern and balance sheet review which was prepared by the Financial Controller and examined by the Chief Executive Officer and the Finance, Audit and HR Sub Committee of the Board, the Directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies in note 3 to the financial statements.

Principal risks and uncertainties

Similar to a great many Community and Voluntary organisations in the Republic of Ireland, Women's Aid continue to face a number of risks and uncertainties which have the potential to impact on our ability to deliver our mission. In 2023 work to address these risks and uncertainties continued to dominate the agendas of the Board and Management Team meetings.

The year 2023 was a year of developmental growth for the organisation which will continue into 2024. Against a backdrop of global uncertainties, continuing wars in Ukraine, African nations and the Middle East, a cost of living crisis and housing crisis, the organisation is cognisant of the impacts on both donors and service users alike. We continue to take a prudent approach to investment and phased development, sustaining key funder relationships and strategic piloting and evaluation of new service initiatives to maximise opportunities for sustainable growth and stability.

At a financial level, Women's Aid manage these risks and uncertainties through enhanced donor engagement, investment in increased fundraising activities including the current delivery of a 5-year fundraising strategy (2023-2027) and regular revision of our budget, based on up-to-date information.

Events since the year end ('subsequent events')

There have been no significant events affecting the company since the year end that would impact the financial statements.

Budget Controls

A detailed annual budget is prepared in line with the organisation's strategic planning priorities and is initially reviewed by the Finance, Audit and HR Committee and subsequently by the Board who approve it. Actual results and outcomes are compared against the budget to ensure alignment with the plan, and to maintain tight budgetary control and value for money.

Section 9

Structure, Governance and Management



Organisational Structure

The company is registered as a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital, under Part 18 of the Companies Act 2014. Its company registration number is 58035. The objectives of the company are charitable in nature with established charitable status under Registered Charity Number 20012045, CHY6491.

The principal object of the company is to provide information, support and services for women who are subjected to domestic violence, and to contribute to the prevention of domestic violence and abuse in Ireland. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company, in the event of the same being wound up while a member or within one year of ceasing to be a member, for the payments of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted for before they ceased to be a member and of the costs, charges, and expenses of winding up, and for the adjustments of the rights of the contributors among themselves, such amount as may be required not exceeding €1.27.

Staffing and Volunteers

Women's Aid is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors. The staff team, to whom the Board delegates operational responsibilities, comprises the CEO, Department Heads, middle management, employees in specific roles and trained volunteers.

Total number of staff 2023: **54**



IMAGE: A gathering of Women's Aid Board, Staff and Volunteers.

The departments, and related staffing levels during 2023 were as follows

Department	Staff count	FTE	Role Summary
CEO/Administration	3	1.98	CEO, Business Support Senior Project Lead PT**, Reception cover PT, 2 Reception staff CE Scheme not on payroll
Finance	3	2.11	1 Financial Controller, 2 PT Finance Assistants
Fundraising	5	4.76	1 Head of Fundraising & Strategic Communications (oversight of 2 depts), 1 part time Administrator (shared between two depts), 1 part time Fundraiser, 3 full time Fundraisers
Strategic Communications	4	3.81	1 Head of Fundraising & Strategic Communications (oversight of 2 depts), 1 part time Administrator (shared between two depts), 3 full time staff
National Freephone Helpline	16	9.82	Head of Helpline, Volunteer Coordinator, 7 Support workers PT, 6 Panel (relief) staff, 1 administrator PT, 23 volunteers* (*not in head count)
High Risk Support Project	4	4	1 Senior Project Leader, 1 Administrator, 2 Support Workers
Maternity Project	2	1.8	Maternity Project Coordinator PT, Maternity outreach worker
Services	8	7	Head of Services, Outreach workers x 4 (3 FT, 1 PT), DAIS Support Worker PT, Floating Support Worker, Administrator PT
Charity Shop	3	1.4	Shop Manager, 2 PT Shop Assistants 6 volunteers* (*not in head count)
Training and Development	6	5.8	Head of T and D; Administrator PT, 3 Trainers, 1 Training Officer
Total	54	42.48	**PT = Part time

Staff Whole Time Equivalent: A number of staff are employed on part-time contracts and the whole time equivalent in 2023 is **42.48**.

The outstanding Volunteer contribution to the work of Women's Aid during 2023 was:

Number of volunteers during 2023: 29 (23 National Helpline and 6 Charity Shop volunteers)

— Total Hours contributed: **2,928**

— Equivalent full days donated: **418**

This represents an increase of 658 hours or 29% compared to last year.

	2023	2022	2021
Volunteer hours	2,928	2,270	2,420.5
National Freephone Helpline	2,120	1,724	1,622.5
Charity Shop	808	546	798

Remuneration of Staff & Remuneration Policy

Numbers of staff in receipt of in excess of €60,000 per annum during 2023

	2023 €
€60,000- €70,000	3
€70,001- €80,000	2
€80,001- €90,000	-
€90,001 - €100,000	-
€100,001 - €110,000	1
Total	6

Due to significant financial constraints and an historic period of extreme financial pressure and precarity, the Board have managed staff remuneration since 2019 on the basis of annual reviews of affordability and sustainability. There have been several percentage increases to salaries to benefit all employees equally in this period.

In December 2022 the Board contracted an independent consultant to comprehensively review organisational remuneration and to create an updated remuneration policy in accordance with this. This was commissioned considering the need to carefully review factors including: sustainable income generation to manage salary costs; reflection on market rates for comparable posts; recognition that Women's Aid cannot match Government pay increases to public servants and therefore cannot 'benchmark' against public health and other public scales for the roles it employs.

The result in 2023 was the completion of a very comprehensive independent process and a report which identified and recommended a bespoke pay structure based on current market analysis, sustainable funding, and additional factors of relevance to the company including recognition of the significant increase in scale of operations and numbers of employees, whereby there was growth from 29 staff in 2019 to 54 employees in 2023 and additional increases to employee numbers projected for 2024. This revised approach to pay was approved in conjunction with a new remuneration policy by the Board in Q2 2023.

The total employee costs increased from €1,934,742 in 2022 to €2,330,561 in 2023. For a breakdown of these costs, please refer to note 9 of the Financial Statements.

Salaries, employer PRSI and pension costs in 2023 are €2,271,585. (2022: €1,850,979). This represents an increase of €420,606 or 22.7% in 2023.

This increase is explained by a combination of factors, primarily, an increase in staff numbers from 44 in 2022 to 54 in 2023. (in FTE this is the equivalent of an increase from 36.75 in 2022 to 42.48 in 2023) Also, further to the abovementioned new remuneration policy being adopted in Q4 2023, a 2% salary increase was granted to employees in 2023. In a small number of cases where actual roles have evolved very considerably in the last 3 years, the board used the opportunity to approve some adjustments, which also involved revised role descriptions for those in this situation.

This increase was communicated in November 2023 and backdated to the start of the financial year.

Pension

The company offers a contributory pension to all employees of up to 7% of salary annually.

Death in Service Benefit

The company offers a Death in Service benefit to all employees to the value of two years' salary.

Structure of the Board of Directors

Directors of the Company

The Directors who served during the financial year 2023 were:

Ailbhe Smyth (Chairperson)	Golda Hession
Rosaleen McDonagh (Vice Chairperson)	Martina Quinn
Suzanne Handley (Treasurer)	Lucy Maguire
Niamh Ní Dhomhnaill	Olwen Dawe
Salome Mbugua Henry	Megan Conway (Appointed May 2023)

The Company Secretary is currently Golda Hession.

The Board met on ten (10) occasions in 2023 for ordinary meetings. The Annual General Meeting was additionally held in May 2023.



Full biographical details for the Board can be found here

Board Meeting Attendance 2023: 10 ordinary meetings and Annual General Meeting

	Total Ordinary Meeting	AGM
Ailbhe Smyth	10/10	Yes
Suzanne Handley	8/10	Yes
Golda Hession	10/10	Yes
Niamh Ni Dhomhnaill	7/10	Yes
Rosaleen McDonagh	3/10	Apologies
Salome Mbugua	5/10	Yes
Martina Quinn	8/10	Yes
Olwen Dawe	8/10	Yes
Lucy Maguire	9/10	Yes
Megan Conway (Joined May 2023)	5/6	Yes

Board Committees

There are three Committees which support the Board in exercising its duties.



**Download Terms
of Reference for all
Board Committees.**

Finance Audit and HR Committee of the Board

Purpose: The purpose of the Finance, Audit and HR Committee (FAHRC) is to oversee, on behalf of the Board, the integrity of the financial reporting controls and procedures implemented by management, in order to protect the interests of its stakeholders. This committee is also responsible to the Board for ensuring that an effective Human Resource Management System is in place (which includes compliance with legislation).

Membership: This committee shall be appointed by the Board and will normally consist of two Directors: the Treasurer and one other board member. Alternates are not permitted. At least one member of the Committee should have recent and relevant experience in financial matters. In line with best practice the Board Chairperson can attend but is not a member of this committee.

FAHRC members and its Chairperson shall be appointed by the Board Chairperson for a period of two years.

The FAHRC reports to the Board. It also provides the communication link between the company and the external auditor.

The Committee met five times during 2023 (with one additional review of policy documents carried out remotely in March) and engaged in regular updates and work progress between

meetings in conjunction with the CEO. On four occasions the Financial Controller attended the Committee meetings by invitation, the Head of Strategic Communications and Fundraising was invited to attend one meeting, and in April the Committee met with the Independent Auditors.

The members of the FAHRC in 2023 were: Martina Quinn (Chairperson), Suzanne Handley (Treasurer), Lucy Maguire (Joined November 2023), Ailbhe Smyth (ex Officio), Sarah Benson (ex Officio).

Finance Audit and HR subcommittee meetings 2023: Member attendance

	Total Meetings
Suzanne Handley	5/5
Martina Quinn	5/5
Ailbhe Smyth (Ex Officio)	2/5
Lucy Maguire (joined Nov 2023)	1/1
Sarah Benson (Ex Officio)	5/5

Governance & Risk Committee of the Board

Purpose: The principle objective of the Governance and Risk Sub-Committee is to ensure good corporate governance and, in particular, to adopt the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charity Organisations in Ireland.

In addition, the purpose of the Committee is to ensure that there is a robust and effective process for evaluating and mitigating Risk, and; to oversee the performance of the Board, Board Committees and individual Directors; to ensure a process for Board succession planning and, to ensure that the Board fulfils its functional responsibilities.

Membership: The Members of the Governance and Risk Sub-Committee shall be appointed by the Directors of the Board and shall consist of not less than two Board Members. A quorum shall be composed of two Members. The Chairperson of the Governance Committee shall be appointed by the Committee. The Chairperson of the Women’s Aid Board is eligible for Membership but shall not act as Chairperson of the Governance Committee.

The CEO will be an ex-officio member of the Committee.

Only members of the committee have the right to attend committee meetings, with the exception of Any trustee, including the Chair, who may attend any sub-committee meeting and may be invited by the sub-committee to do so.

Other individuals such a governance or HR consultant or other external advisers may be invited to attend for all or part of any meeting, as and when appropriate. Attendance at meetings Members of Senior Management may be requested to attend meetings periodically.

The Committee met twice during 2023 and engaged in regular updates and work progress between meetings in conjunction with the CEO.

The Governance and Risk Sub Committee members in 2023 were: Golda Hession (Chairperson), Niamh Ní Dhomhnaill, Rosaleen McDonagh, Megan Conway (joined November 2023), and Sarah Benson (ex Officio)

	Total Meetings
Golda Hession	2/2
Niamh Ni Dhomhnaill	2/2
Rosaleen McDonagh	1/2
Megan Conway (Joined Nov 2023)	N/A
Sarah Benson (Ex Officio)	2/2
Ailbhe Smyth (non-member in attendance at one meeting)	1/1

Strategic Planning Committee of the Board

Purpose:

- To oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of 3–5-year strategic plans for Women’s Aid and the development, implementation and evaluation of annual business/operations plans. The responsibility for drafting of the strategic and annual plans are with the Women’s Aid CEO and the Management Team.
- To oversee the development, implementation, and evaluation of an organisational development plan to ensure that Women’s Aid has the appropriate structures, systems, staffing and skills to enable it to deliver on its mission, meet its strategic goals and comply with statutory requirements and obligations.
- To oversee the development of any new services that the Board has agreed that Women’s Aid will provide.

Membership: This committee shall be appointed by the Board, and will normally consist of two Directors and the CEO. Alternates are not permitted. At least one member of the Committee should have recent and relevant experience in strategy and strategic planning matters. Other members of the Board, Executive or individuals with relevant experience may be co-opted to the Committee at the discretion of the Board.

The Committee met once during 2023 (with additional remote communications).

Strategic Planning Sub-Committee Members in 2023 were: Salome Mbugua (Chairperson), Ailbhe Smyth, Olwen Dawe (Joined February 2023), and Sarah Benson.

	Attendance
Ailbhe Smyth	Yes
Salome Mbugua Henry	Yes
Sarah Benson	Yes
Olwen Dawe (Joined Feb 2023)	Yes

Method of appointment or election of Directors

The management of the company is the responsibility of the Directors who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Constitution and the Board Governance Handbook. The Governance and Risk Committee is delegated responsibility, in conjunction with the Chairperson, to select and recruit new Board members, in accordance with the Committee Terms of Reference which are available on our [website](#).

Once appointed a comprehensive induction is in place to support new Directors in relation to clarity and understanding of their governance obligations and also to meet with all department Managers, to attain a detailed overview of the organisation's operations.

Terms of office for Board Members.

In addition to the rotation of Board membership, procedures for which are set out in the Women's Aid Constitution, the terms of office for Board members are as follows in the approved Board Governance Document:

- A Board member, when elected, is appointed for a fixed term of three years.
- Board members may seek additional terms, to a maximum of three consecutive terms.
- Reappointment is not automatic and will be by election at the AGM in accordance with the Constitution.
- A Board Member may be removed by a majority decision of the Board of Directors where the Board is of the view that either;
 - they are in breach of Women's Aid 'Code of Conduct' outlined in the Governance Handbook or
 - that their actions are inconsistent with the legal and regulatory duties and obligations required of the role.

Integrity, Conflicts of Interest and Loyalty

The Board Members have a legal duty to act in the best interests of Women's Aid, to safeguard its assets and reputation, and to act honestly and responsibly in

discharging their role as Directors. Every member of the Board has an obligation to avoid conflicts of interest. Our policy on 'Conflicts of Interest and Loyalty' along with the policy on 'Gifts for Board Members' clearly outline the standard of behaviour expected of our trustees.

Decisions taken where a Board Member has an interest

A Board Member who has any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest relating to a matter upon which a decision is being taken by the Board may not be counted in the quorum for the meeting at which the matter is considered, should absent themselves from that particular vote and should not lobby any Board Members in respect of proposal.

In the event of the Board having to decide upon a question in which a Board Member has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, with a simple majority required. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision; interested parties will not be counted when deciding whether the meeting is quorate. Interested Board Members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests.

All decisions under a conflict of interest will be recorded by the minute taker and reported in the minutes of the meeting. The report will record:

- the nature and extent of the conflict.
- an outline of the discussion.
- the actions taken to manage the conflict.

The relevant extract from the Board minutes will also be recorded in the Register of Directors' Interests.

All members of the Board should declare any matter that could affect their impartiality or that could be reasonably perceived as affecting their impartiality. Where a Board Member benefits from the decision, this will be reported in the Annual Report and accounts. All payments or benefits in kind to Board Members will be reported in the charity's accounts and annual report, with amounts for each Board Member listed for the year in question.

These policies are all contained in the Board Governance Document which was most recently reviewed by the Board in November 2023.

Delegated Authority

The responsibilities of the Board and delegated authority by the Board to the CEO are clearly set out in the Board governance Document, and in the Financial Procedures of the Organisation.

Governance

The company conducts an annual appraisal of its own performance, that of its Board and other Committees, and that of individual Board members. Emphasis is given to delegation of responsibilities, communication channels and methods, skill sets and skill gaps, training needs and relevant external factors (such as changes in legislation and regulatory frameworks).

A comprehensive Governance Handbook is in place to support the operations of the Board, in conjunction with the Women's Aid Constitution. This handbook was updated in November 2023.

During 2023, in accordance with its policy, the Board conducted a self-evaluation. The findings were reviewed by the Governance and Risk Committee in conjunction with the Chairperson, and then brought to the Board for substantive discussion and agreement of actions arising from the review. In 2022 a detailed independent report was commissioned by the Board, its recommendations reviewed by the Board and implemented. In 2024, the Board will again commission an external evaluation of the Board during the planned strategic planning process for this year.

During 2023 Women's Aid completed a compliance report in accordance with the **Charities Regulator Governance Code**, with which the company is compliant. The company also publicly commits to and adheres to the **Guiding Principles of Fundraising for Charities**. During 2023 Women's Aid was also awarded the **Triple Lock Standard** by the Charities Institute Ireland. The Triple Lock Standard is awarded to charities that uphold the highest standards in transparent reporting, ethical fundraising and strong governance structures. This recognition is the gold standard for Irish charities to offer assurances to donors, members and the general public.

Risk Management

The Directors have assessed the significant risks to which the company is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the company and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate its exposure to these significant risks.

A comprehensive risk register is in place detailing primary risks and mitigations. This is a 'living document'. Risks are scored based on potential impact, likelihood and extent of mitigation measures in place, and categorised under the following 9 headings:

1. Strategic Direction and Leadership
2. Governance oversight
3. Financial
4. Human Resources
5. Service operations and service users
6. Technological
7. Physical
8. Reputational
9. External

The Risk Register is supported by a Risk Register Policy. Both the Register and the Policy were reviewed in detail during the year and updates approved by the Board in November 2023.

Designated Reserves

To mitigate against the effects of closure of the organisation's service activities caused by an unplanned cessation or delay in public funding, the company maintains a level of financial reserves in order to ensure that these activities can continue on an immediate to short term basis.

The reserves also provide the organisation scope and time to secure replacement funding and to support service users in moving on to other local services, should this be deemed necessary.

The organisation accrues and maintains its restricted reserves at a level which is equivalent to 6 months operating costs, statutory grant funding obligations and statutory closure costs.

During 2023 the organisation maintained this level of designated reserves and there was no perceived threat to maintaining these for the period. It is anticipated that the organisation can maintain its required level of designated reserves for the coming period of 2024.

Statement of Disclosure to the Auditor

Each of the directors in office at the date of approval of this annual report confirms that:

- so far as the directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditor is unaware, and
- the directors have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of section 330 of the Companies Act 2014.

Approved by the board of directors and signed on its behalf by:

Ailbhe Smyth

Director

Suzanne Handley

Director

Date: 22 May 2024

Section 10

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 Companies Act 2014 and accounting standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council including FRS 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Ireland (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland). Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as 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;
- observe the methods and principles in the charities SORP;
- 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; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for ensuring that the company keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the company, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and surplus or deficit of the 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the company's website. Legislation in Ireland governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the board of directors and signed on its behalf by

Ailbhe Smyth

Director

Suzanne Handley

Director

Date: 22 May 2024

Section 11

**Independent Auditor's
Report to the
Members Of Women's
Aid Company Limited
By Guarantee**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Women's Aid Company Limited by Guarantee for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes. The relevant financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is the Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 December 2023 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 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 Auditor's 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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue. Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

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 auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other 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 audit or 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 that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions 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 Director's Report is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Director's Report has been prepared in accordance with 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 the 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 any material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of our obligation under the Companies Act 2014 to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of director's remuneration and transactions specified by sections 305 to 312 of the Act are not made.

Responsibilities of director for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Director's Responsibilities Statement, the director is 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 director is responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the director either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's 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: [http://www.iaasa.ie/Publications/Auditing-standards/International-Standards-on-Auditing-for-use-in-Ire/International-Standards-on-Auditing-\(Ireland\)/ISA-700-\(Ireland\)](http://www.iaasa.ie/Publications/Auditing-standards/International-Standards-on-Auditing-for-use-in-Ire/International-Standards-on-Auditing-(Ireland)/ISA-700-(Ireland)). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities

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 we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Ian Lawlor
for and on behalf of
JPA Brenson Lawlor

**Chartered Accountants
Statutory Audit Firm**

Date: 22 May 2024

Argyle Square
Morehampton Road
Donnybrook
Dublin 4
D04 W9W7

Section 12

Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

For year ended 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted funds €	Restricted funds €	Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
Income				
Earned from Charitable Activities (Note 4)	466,734	1,691,184	2,157,918	1,726,086
Earned from Other Activities (Note 4)	437,961	38,028	475,989	371,284
Donations (Note 4)	1,683,011	-	1,683,011	2,552,444
Total income and endowments	2,587,706	1,729,212	4,316,918	4,649,814
Expenditure on:				
Charitable Activities (Note 6)	1,569,861	1,593,789	3,163,650	2,883,157
Costs of Raising Funds (Note 6)	641,296	23,565	664,861	621,403
Total Expenditure	2,211,157	1,617,354	3,828,511	3,504,560
Transfers	41,000	(41,000)	-	-
Net Movements In Funds For The Year	417,549	70,858	488,407	1,145,254
Reconciliation of Funds Total Funds Brought Forward	4,935,179	41,000	4,976,179	3,830,925
Total Funds Carried Forward	5,352,728	111,858	5,464,586	4,976,179

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the Financial Year

For year ended 31 December 2023

	2023 €	2022 €
Surplus for the financial year	488,407	1,145,254
Total comprehensive income	488,407	1,145,254

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2023

	Notes	2023 €	2022 €
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	11	576,681	583,143
		576,681	583,143
Current Assets			
Debtors	12	442,965	320,226
Cash at bank and in hand	13	5,018,664	4,555,717
		5,461,629	4,875,943
Creditors: amounts falling due within One year		(573,724)	(482,907)
Net current assets	14	4,887,905	4,393,036
Total assets less current liabilities		5,464,586	4,976,179
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted funds	18	111,858	41,000
Unrestricted funds – designated	17	4,397,401	4,133,288
Unrestricted funds – general	19	955,327	801,891
Total charity funds		5,464,586	4,976,179

Approved by the board of directors and signed on its behalf by:

Ailbhe Smyth

Director

Date: 22 May 2024

Suzanne Handley

Director

Statement of Cash Flows

For year ended 31 December 2023

	Notes	2023 €	2022 €
Net cash flows from operating activities	15	487,921	1,098,067
Investing activities			
Purchase of fixed tangible assets		(24,974)	(9,618)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents		462,947	1,088,449
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year		4,555,717	3,467,268
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year		5,018,664	4,555,717

An Analysis of changes in Net Cash can be found in Note 22 to the Financial Statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For year ended 31 December 2023

1. General Information

These financial statements comprising the Statement of Financial Activities, the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes constitute the individual financial statements of Womens Aid CLG for the financial year ended 31 December 2023.

Womens Aid CLG is a charity limited by guarantee, incorporated in the Republic of Ireland. The Registered Office is 5 Wilton Place, Dublin 2 which is also the principal place of business of the charity. The nature of the charity's operations and its principal activities are set out in the Directors' Report and Audited Financial Statements 2023 on pages 1 to 46.

Statement of Compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Charity SORP (FRS 102) "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (FRS 102). The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Currency

The financial statements have been presented in Euro (€) which is also the functional currency of the company.

2. Going Concern

The Directors are satisfied, given the strong cash position of the company, well controlled overheads and support of core funding from the current funders, that it is appropriate for the financial statements to be prepared on a going concern basis, which assumes that Womens Aid CLG will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

3. Accounting Policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the company's financial statements.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice-Charities SORP (FRS 102) "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2014 except for the entity invoking the true and fair view override with regard to the profit and loss and balance sheet formats in Schedule 3 of the Companies Act 2014 as permitted in Section 3.4 of FRS102 and Section 291(5) of the Companies Act 2014.

Fund Accounting

The following funds are operated by the charity:

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds are to be used for the specified purposes as laid down by the donor/grantor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is allocated to the fund.

Unrestricted Funds

General funds represent amounts which are expendable at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of the objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes. Such funds may be held in order to finance working capital or capital expenditure.

Designated funds

Designated funds are earmarked funds set aside by the directors to be used for a particular future project or commitment. Designated funds remain part of the unrestricted funds of the charity.

Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received.

Income is analysed as Restricted or Unrestricted. Restricted income represents income recognised in the financial statements that is subject to specific conditions imposed by the donors or grantors. Unrestricted income represents income recognised in the financial statements that is expendable at the discretion of the organisation, in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Donations and fundraising income

Donations and fundraising income are credited to income in the period in which they are receivable. Donations received in advance for specified periods are carried forward as deferred income.

Grants and Donations

The charity receives government grants in respect of certain projects. Income from government and other grants are recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement after any performance conditions have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. If entitlement is not met then these amounts are deferred income.

Donated Services and facilities

Where practicable, donations of goods and services are included in donations in the financial statements at their fair value. If it is impracticable to assess the fair value at receipt or if the costs to undertake such a valuation outweigh the benefits, then the income and associated expenditure is not recognised.

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met. The receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market, a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

No amount is included in the financial statements for volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102).

The total amount of donated services and facilities during the year ended 31 December 2023 was €41,845 (2022: €84,117) disclosed in note 5.

Expenditure Recognition

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

It is categorised under the following headings:

1. Charitable activities
2. Costs of raising funds; and
3. Other expenditure.

Expenditure on charitable activities

Expenditure on charitable activities comprise those costs incurred by the charity in the pursuit of the charities objectives and in the delivery of its activities and services. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly such as wages and salaries and costs of an indirect nature necessary to support the delivery of its activities and services.

Costs of raising funds

Costs of raising funds are costs associated with the fundraising activities of charity. Typical costs would be direct salaries, costs relating to fundraising campaigns such as direct mail and digital fundraising and other general fundraising costs.

Other expenditure

Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above.

Allocation of support costs

Support costs are the cost of those functions that assist the work of the Company but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the Company's programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The bases on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 6.

Retirement benefit costs

The company operates a defined contribution scheme. Retirement benefit contributions in respect of the scheme for employees are charged to the income and expenditure account as they become payable in accordance with the rules of the scheme. The assets are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund. Differences between the amounts charged in the income and expenditure account and payments made to the retirement benefit scheme are treated as assets or liabilities.

Tangible fixed assets

All tangible fixed assets are initially recorded at historic cost. This includes legal fees, stamp duty and other non-refundable purchase taxes, and also any costs directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management, which can include the costs of site preparation, initial delivery and handling, installation and assembly, and testing of functionality.

A review for impairment of tangible fixed asset will be carried out if events or changed in circumstances indicate that the carrying value of any tangible fixed asset may not be recoverable. Shortfalls between the carrying value of tangible fixed assets and their recoverable amounts will be recognised as impairments. Impairment losses will be recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, other than freehold land, at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value, of each asset systematically over its expected useful life, on a straight line basis, as follows:

Fixtures, Fittings & equipment	25% Straight line
Computer equipment	33% Straight Line
Freehold Property	2% Straight line

An amount equal to the excess of the annual depreciation charge on revalued assets over the notional historical cost depreciation charge on those assets is transferred annually from the revaluation reserve to the income and expenditure reserve.

The residual value and useful lives of tangible assets are considered annually for indicators that these may have changed. Where such indicators are present, a review will be carried out of the residual value, depreciation method and useful lives, and these will be amended if necessary. Changes in depreciation rates arising from this review are accounted for prospectively over the remaining useful lives of the assets.

Trade and other debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised initially at transaction price (including transaction costs) unless a financing arrangement exists, in which case they are measured at present value of future receipts discounted at a market value. Subsequently these are measured at amortised costs less any provision for impairment.

A provision for impairment of trade receivables is established when there is objective evidence that the company will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the agreement.

Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Impairment

Assets not measured at fair value are reviewed for any indication that the asset may be impaired at each balance sheet date. If such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, or the asset's cash generating unit, is estimated and compared to the carrying amount. Where the carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount, an impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount where the impairment loss is a revaluation decrease.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash consists of cash on hand and demand deposits.

Trade and other creditors

Trade creditors are measured at invoice price, unless payment is deferred beyond normal business terms or is financed at a rate of interest that is not a market rate. In this case the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, and the financial liability is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Provisions are recognised when the company has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events; it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and the amount of the obligation can be estimated reliably.

Deferred Income

The charity recognised deferred income, where the terms and conditions have not been met or uncertainty exists as to whether the charity can meet the terms or conditions otherwise within its control, income is then deferred as a liability until it is probable that the terms and conditions imposed can be met.

Some of the grants received are subject to performance related conditions or time periods, when these performance related or other conditions are met the deferred income is released to income in the statement of financial activities.

Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The directors consider the accounting estimates and assumptions below to be its critical accounting estimates and judgements:

Going Concern

The directors have prepared budgets and cash flows for a period of at least twelve months from the date of the approval of the financial statements which demonstrate that there is no material uncertainty regarding the company's ability to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and to continue as a going concern. On this basis the directors consider it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. Accordingly, these financial statements do not include any adjustments to the carrying amounts and classification of assets and liabilities that may arise if the company was unable to continue as a going concern.

Comparative Figures

Where necessary comparative figures have been regrouped on a basis consistent with the current year.

Employee benefits

When employees have rendered service to the charity, short-term employee benefits to which the employees are entitled are recognised at the undiscounted amount expected to be paid in exchange for that service. The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received. The charity operates a defined contribution pension plan for the benefit of its employees. Contributions are expensed as they become payable.

Taxation

No charge to current or deferred taxation arises as the charity has been granted charitable status under section 207 and 208 of the Tax Consolidation Act 1997, Charity No CHY 5594.

Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases, including any lease incentives received, are charged to profit or loss on a straight-line basis over the term of the relevant lease except where another more systematic basis is more representative of the time pattern in which economic benefits from the lease's asset are consumed.

4. Income

Income for 2023 analysed as follows:	Unrestricted funds €	Restricted funds €	Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
Earned from Charitable Activities				
Statutory Funders				
Tusla Child and Family Agency	-	1,002,256	1,002,256	881,302
Department of Rural & Community Development	-	90,999	90,999	90,488
Department of Justice	-	320,671	320,671	231,722
Non Statutory Funders				
Goldman Sachs Gives	-	54,226	54,226	57,024
SMBC Aviation	-	554	554	903
YSL Beauté	-	12,000	12,000	10,200
CITI Fund	-	2,712	2,712	3,475
Horizon Therapeutics (now part of Amgen)	-	30,000	30,000	30,000
Celtic FC Foundation	-	13,753	13,753	13,587
Community Foundation for Ireland	-	33,000	33,000	24,644
Fyffes	-	-	-	9,926
An Post	-	-	-	5,216
KKR Grant	-	-	-	30,463
Central Bank of Ireland	-	25,000	25,000	25,000
Irish Life	245,000	-	245,000	11,998
Allianz Ireland	32,940	-	32,940	42,771
ESB	-	-	-	15,000
Lug Mhá	-	-	-	42,346
Mitchell McDermott Construction Consultants Ltd	13,793	-	13,793	25,157
Permanent TSB	-	-	-	35,000
GAA	-	34,213	34,213	-
Amgen Technology Ireland	5,476	-	5,476	-
Apple	-	20,136	20,136	9,864
Ardmac Limited	20,000	-	20,000	-
Deloitte Ireland LLP	12,000	-	12,000	-
Imbibe Coffee Roasters	14,446	-	14,446	-
Smurfit Kappa Group Plc	10,000	-	10,000	-
Musgrave Wholesale Partners	69,168	-	69,168	-
Volkswagen Group Ireland	16,985	-	16,985	-
Wolfgang Digital	26,926	-	26,926	-
Other Funders	-	51,664	51,664	130,000
Total earned from charitable activities	466,734	1,691,184	2,157,918	1,726,086

4. Income (continued)

Income for 2023 analysed as follows:	Unrestricted funds €	Restricted funds €	Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
Earned from Other Activities				
Training and Development				
Training Income	215,493	-	215,493	84,864
HSE - National Women & Infants Health Programme	-	38,028	38,028	7,606
YSL Beauté	-	-	-	1,800
Allianz Ireland	-	-	-	15,675
Total earned from training and development	215,493	38,028	253,521	109,945
Other activities				
Charity Shop	180,623	-	180,623	177,222
Donated goods, facilities and services	41,845	-	41,845	84,117
Total earned from other activities	437,961	38,028	475,989	371,284
Fundraising and Donations				
Corporate donations	311,706	-	311,706	479,966
Individual giving	658,697	-	658,697	980,665
Digital fundraising	427,546	-	427,546	719,861
Community fundraising	285,062	-	285,062	371,952
Total fundraising and donations income	1,683,011	-	1,683,011	2,552,444

5. Donated goods, facilities and services

For the financial year 2023, in-kind donations have been recognised and classified to comply with Charity SORP FRS 102. In-kind donations measured at fair value to the amount of €41,845 (2022: €84,117) were received in the year and recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities under SORP classification are as follows:

		Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
Charitable Activities	IT Support for development of new Helpline Database	1,845	21,033
Charitable Activities	Radio Ads for Multilingual Service Promotion	25,000	48,000
Charitable Activities	Inbound (1800 number) / Outbound calls	15,000	-
Support Activities	Legal and professional advice	-	15,084
		41,845	84,117

6. Expenditure

Expenditure has been classified to comply with Charity SORP FRS 102. Such costs include cost of raising funds and charitable activities. The costs of raising funds include the costs of inducing others to make gifts that are voluntary income. Charitable activities relate to costs associated with the charitable activities of the charity.

Direct costs (staff costs, overheads, administrative costs, etc.) are allocated to each activity based on actual costs incurred for each activity. Support and governance costs are apportioned based on an average percentage of staff time allocated to each activity and/or on specific expenditure plus pro-rata of costs.

Cost of Raising Funds

	Total Unrestricted 2023 €	Total Restricted 2023 €	Total 2023 €
Staff costs	237,145	-	237,415
Overhead costs	4,520	-	4,520
Administration costs	6,280	-	6,280
Individual Giving (Including Direct Mail Programme)	101,218	-	101,218
Corporate fundraising costs	4,659	-	4,659
Digital fundraising costs	170,005	-	170,005
Community fundraising costs	21,078	-	21,078
Legacy programme	4,090	-	4,090
General fundraising costs	33,081	-	33,081
Fundraising strategy development	8,801	-	8,801
Case for support and brand positioning	12,729	-	12,729
Support cost allocation (see breakdown overleaf)	37,690	23,565	61,255
	641,296	23,565	664,861

Cost of Raising Funds (continued)

	Total Unrestricted 2022 €	Total Restricted 2022 €	Total 2022 €
Staff costs	102,930	-	102,930
Overhead costs	2,609	-	2,609
Administration costs	3,935	-	3,935
Individual Giving (Including Direct Mail Programme)	115,640	-	115,640
Corporate fundraising costs	48,966	-	48,966
Digital fundraising costs	199,629	-	199,629
Community fundraising costs	5,140	-	5,140
Legacy programme	11,226	-	11,226
General fundraising costs	46,257	-	46,257
Fundraising strategy development (2023 - 2027)	27,380	-	27,380
Case for support and brand positioning	22,903	-	22,903
Support cost allocation (see breakdown overleaf)	22,948	11,840	34,788
	609,563	11,840	621,403

Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	Total Unrestricted 2023 €	Total Restricted 2023 €	Total 2023 €
Strategic Communications	322,509	118,362	440,871
National Freephone Helpline	47,266	601,409	648,675
High-Risk Support Project	5,216	197,678	202,894
Maternity Project	156,294	793	157,087
Services	34,337	389,799	424,136
Women's Legal, Security and Emergency Fund 2023	74,485	13,753	88,238
Charity Shop	111,851	-	111,851
Training and Development	249,361	104,854	354,215
National Emergency Fund for Women and Children 2023	301,218	-	301,218
Support costs (see breakdown overleaf)	267,324	167,141	434,465
	1,569,861	1,593,789	3,163,650

Expenditure on Charitable Activities (continued)

	Total Unrestricted 2022 €	Total Restricted 2022 €	Total 2022 €
Strategic Communications	252,865	123,317	376,182
National Freephone Helpline	42,593	571,832	614,425
High-Risk Support Project	6,394	61,902	68,296
Maternity Project	95,447	30,463	125,910
Services	61,630	395,321	456,951
Women's Legal, Security and Emergency Fund 2022	109,279	20,956	130,235
Charity Shop	107,934	-	107,934
Training and Development	209,311	71,814	281,125
National Emergency Fund for Women and Children 2022	291,399	-	291,399
Support costs (see breakdown overleaf)	284,117	146,583	430,700
	1,460,969	1,422,188	2,883,157

Support costs

	Raising Funds 2023 €	Charitable Activities 2023 €	Total 2023 €
Governance	19,184	136,064	155,248
Office, premises and facilities	12,739	90,353	103,092
HR/ Safeguarding and Development	2,909	20,632	23,541
I.T.	3,979	28,221	32,200
Finance	15,903	112,799	128,702
Administration	6,541	46,396	52,937
	61,255	434,465	495,720

Support costs (continued)

	Raising Funds 2022 €	Charitable Activities 2022 €	Total 2022 €
Governance	11,542	142,897	154,438
Office, premises and facilities	8,654	107,142	115,796
HR/ Safeguarding and Development	2,202	27,271	29,473
I.T.	1,459	18,063	19,522
Finance	7,729	95,688	103,417
Administration	3,202	39,639	42,841
	34,788	430,700	465,488

7. Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation

Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation is stated after charging / (crediting):

	Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
Depreciation of tangible assets	31,436	30,549
Audit Remuneration (including VAT)	8,000	7,995

8. Directors' remuneration and transactions

All directors who served during the year received no remuneration from the charity.

Expenses reimbursed to directors during the year amounted to €31 (2022: €Nil).

Related party transactions are disclosed in note 17 to the financial statements.

Key Management Personnel

The CEO's salary inclusive of employer's PRSI for the year was €112,161 (2022: €93,677) in addition to 7% of gross salary paid as employer contribution into a pension on behalf of the CEO totalling €7,070 (2022: €5,905).

9. Staff costs

The average monthly number of persons employed by the company during the financial year analysed by category, was as follows

	2023 number	2022 number
National Freephone Helpline	16	14
High-Risk Support Project	4	2
Services	8	7
Maternity Project	2	2
Training and Development	6	6
Strategic Communications	4	3.5
Fundraising	5	3.5
Charity Shop	3	2
CEO / Finance / Administration	6	4
Total	54	44

Their aggregate remuneration comprised:

	2023 €	2022 €
Salaries and wages	1,997,311	1,626,568
Social security costs	206,791	171,920
Pension costs	67,483	52,491
Other employee related costs	58,976	83,763
Total	2,330,561	1,934,742

The number of higher paid employees including the CEO was:

	2023 €	2022 €
€60,000- €70,000	3	5
€70,001- €80,000	2	-
€80,001- €90,000	-	1
€90,001 - €100,000	-	-
€100,001 - €110,000	1	-
Total	6	6

10. Retirement benefit information

	2023 €	2022 €
Retirement benefit charge	67,483	52,491

Defined contribution scheme

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for its employees. The scheme is externally financed in that the assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings €	Fixtures and fittings €	Total €
Cost			
At 1 January 2023	715,001	265,711	980,712
Additions	-	24,974	24,974
At 31 December 2023	715,001	290,685	1,005,686
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 January 2023	152,555	245,014	397,569
Depreciation charged in the year	14,304	17,132	31,436
At 31 December 2023	166,859	262,146	429,005
Carrying amount			
At 31 December 2023	548,142	28,539	576,681
At 31 December 2022	562,446	20,697	583,143

12. Debtors

	2023 €	2022 €
Stock	39,144	40,146
Other debtors	68,124	63,508
Accrued income	217,405	156,968
Prepayments	118,292	59,604
Total	442,965	320,226

13. Components of cash and cash equivalents

	2023 €	2022 €
Cash at bank and in hand	5,018,664	4,555,717
Total	5,018,664	4,555,717

14. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 €	2022 €
Trade creditors	191,804	146,343
PAYE control account	60,512	48,490
Other creditors	1,365	870
Deferred income (see note below)	249,067	197,683
Accruals	70,976	89,521
Total	573,724	482,907

Deferred income

	Deferred Income 31 Dec 2022 €	Amount taken to income in 2023 €	Cash received in 2023 €	Deferred Income 31 Dec 2023 €
Tusla	44,709	1,002,256	995,809	38,262
Department of Justice	78,446	320,671	370,000	127,775
HSE – National Women & Infants Health Programme	38,028	38,028	-	-
CFI – CITI Fund	2,712	2,712	-	-
Goldman Sachs Gives	11,796	54,226	46,265	3,835
SMBC Aviation	554	554	-	-
Digital Swim	1,302	1,302	3,120	3,120
Standstrong Event	-	-	50,000	50,000
Training Income 2024	-	-	26,075	26,075
Apple	20,136	20,136	-	-
Total	197,683	1,439,885	1,491,269	249,067

15. Net cash flows from operating activities

	2023 €	2022 €
Surplus for the financial year	488,407	1,145,254
Depreciation on tangible assets	31,436	30,549
(Increase)/ Decrease in debtors	(122,739)	(162,590)
Increase in creditors due within one year	90,817	84,854
Net cash inflow from operating activities	487,921	1,098,067

16. Events after the end of the financial year

There were no post reporting date events which require disclosure.

17. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in 2023 that require disclosure.

18. Unrestricted Funds – Designated

2023	1 Jan 2023 €	Income €	Expenditure €	Transfers in/out €	31 Dec 2023 €
6 months Operational Costs plus Costs of Closure	2,155,286	-	-	214,000	2,369,286
HR System	10,500	-	(1,782)	-	8,718
Maintenance Women's Aid Head Office and Charity Shop	45,000	-	(9,134)	9,134	45,000
Strategic Planning	10,000	-	(6,818)	21,818	25,000
National Emergency Fund for Women and Children 2024	310,000	-	(300,000)	290,000	300,000
Website	8,897	-	(8,897)	-	-
Womens Legal, Security and Emergency Fund 2024 & 2025	330,000	-	(86,166)	126,166	370,000
Maternity Project 2024	328,407	-	(154,959)	-	173,448
Too Into You Project Costs 2024 and 2025	190,809	-	(21,888)	60,887	229,808
Survivor Engagement Programme 2024 and 2025	124,724	-	(28,706)	21,982	118,000
Research – “Custody and Access / Irish Family Law System”	100,000	-	(33,743)	-	66,257
Research – “Disabled Women And IPV”	42,000	-	(13,804)	-	28,196
Zero Tolerance Fund	121,000	-	(2,925)	-	118,075
Counselling Project – Services	50,000	-	(3,630)	-	46,370
Salaries – Employer Engagement Project 2024 - 2026	133,000	-	(64,957)	206,702	274,745
E-Learning – Training & Development	30,200	-	(384)	-	29,816
Strategic Communications Consulting & Salary Costs 2024 and 2025	143,465	-	(64,435)	60,652	139,682
Homeless Project 2024 - Services	-	-	-	30,000	30,000
Women's Aid 50th Anniversary	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
Total	4,133,288	-	(802,228)	1,066,341	4,397,401

18. Unrestricted Funds – Designated previous year

2022	1 Jan 2022 €	Income €	Expenditure €	Transfers in/out €	31 Dec 2022€
6 months Operational Costs plus Costs of Closure	1,772,388	-	-	382,898	2,155,286
New HR System	10,500	-	-	-	10,500
Maintenance Women's Aid Head Office and Charity Shop	40,000	-	(18,359)	23,359	45,000
Strategic Planning	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
National Emergency Fund for Women and Children 2023	-	-	-	310,000	310,000
Website	8,897	-	-	-	8,897
Womens Legal, Security and Emergency Fund 2023 & 2024	107,000	-	(107,000)	330,000	330,000
Maternity Outreach Project 2023 and 2024	318,500	-	(91,287)	101,194	328,407
Too Into You Project Costs 2023 and 2024	173,077	-	(86,272)	104,004	190,809
Survivor Empowerment Project (1 Year Project)	124,724	-	-	-	124,724
Research – “Custody and Access / Irish Family Law System”	125,000	-	-	(25,000)	100,000
Research – “Disabled Women And IPV”	-	-	-	42,000	42,000
Zero Tolerance Fund	-	-	-	121,000	121,000
Counselling Project – Services	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
Employer Engagement Project 2023 and 2024	148,000	-	(66,500)	51,500	133,000
E-Learning – Training & Development	-	-	-	30,200	30,200
Strategic Communications Consulting & Salary Costs 2023 and 2024	-	-	-	143,465	143,465
Total	2,828,086	-	(369,418)	1,674,620	4,133,288

19. Restricted Funds

2023	1 Jan 2023 €	Income €	Expenditure €	Transfers in/out €	31 Dec 2023 €
Restricted Funds	41,000	1,729,212	(1,617,354)	(41,000)	111,858

Restricted Funds previous year

2022	1 Jan 2022 €	Income €	Expenditure €	Transfers in/out €	31 Dec 2022 €
Restricted Funds	-	1,478,220	(1,434,028)	(3,192)	41,000

20. Unrestricted Funds - General

2023	1 Jan 2023 €	Income €	Expenditure /Transfer €	31 Dec 2023 €
Unrestricted Funds	801,891	2,587,706	(2,434,270)	955,327

Unrestricted Funds – General previous year

2022	1 Jan 2022 €	Income €	Expenditure /Transfer €	31 Dec 2022 €
Unrestricted Funds	1,002,839	3,171,594	(3,372,542)	801,891

21. Reconciliation of capital and reserves

	2023 €	2022 €
At the beginning of the year	4,976,179	3,830,925
Surplus for the year	488,407	1,145,254
Closing reserves	5,464,586	4,976,179

22. Analysis of changes in Net Cash

	At 01/01/2023 €	Cashflows €	At 31/12/2023 €
Cash	4,555,717	462,947	5,018,664

23. Leases

Future minimum lease payments due on Dundrum Charity Shop:

	2023 €	2022 €
Within one year	25,000	25,000
In two to five years	18,750	43,750
	43,750	68,750

24. Grant disclosures

The charity receives the following grants and are disclosed in line with the circular 13/2014:

	Name of Grantor	Actual Name of Each Individual Grant	Purpose for Which Funds Are Applied and Restrictions	Amount and Term of the Total Grant Awarded	The Amount of the Grant taken to final Income in Financial Statements	Amount of Grant deferred to 2024
1.	Tusla	DSGBV Grant	Restricted for use for supporting women who have been affected by Domestic Violence	€995,809 Term: 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023	€1,002,256 Capital grant? Restricted grant received for the purchase of two PCs for the National Helpline.	€38,262
2.	Department of Justice	Victims of Crime Scheme	Restricted for use to provide information and support for victims of crime and court accompaniment for victims of crime. Also restricted for use to support the national roll out of the High Risk Support Project.	€370,000 Term: 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023	€320,671 Capital grant? Restricted grant received for the purchase of two laptops for the High-Risk Support Project.	€127,775
3.	Department of Rural & Community Development; Administered by Pobal	Scheme to Support National Organisations	Restricted for use to support training and education for professionals who deal with women experiencing domestic violence. Also restricted to support the Strategic Communications Department in running public awareness campaigns.	€273,000 Term: 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2025	€90,999 Capital grant? No	€Nil

25. Approval of financial statements

The board of directors approved these financial statements and authorised them for issue on 22nd May 2024.

WOMENS AID COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

Management Information

Year ended 31 December 2023

(These pages do not form part of the statutory financial statements)

APPENDIX ONE- detailed financial information

Tusla Income and Expenditure Analysis

	Tusla DSGBV Grant 1 €	Tusla DSGBV Grant 2 €	2023 Total €
Income			
Tusla DSGBV Grant 1	-	-	-
Tusla DSGBV Grant 2	-	995,809	995,809
Total Tusla income		995,809	995,809
Expenditure			
Staff Costs	-	927,970	927,970
Supervision	-	6,000	6,000
New National Domestic Violence Helpline integrated platform	34,466	-	34,466
Repairs and Maintenance	-	5,000	5,000
Depreciation	735	-	735
Insurance	-	12,952	12,952
Light and Heat	-	9,868	9,868
Audit	-	3,796	3,796
Total Tusla expenditure	35,201	965,586	1,000,787
Tusla Current Year End Surplus/(Deficit)	(35,201)	30,223	(4,978)
Opening Tusla balance	38,250	6,459	44,709
Total Closing Tusla balances	3,049	36,682	39,731

Grant 1 carried forward amount of €3,049 comprises of two figures:

- €1,580 is the agreed closing balance with Tusla.
- €1,469 is two years' depreciation to be charged on two PCs, purchased for the Helpline Department as part of the implementation of the National Helpline Integrated Platform.

Therefore, the total closing balance of €39,731 comprises of two figures:

- €38,262 is the agreed closing balance with Tusla.
- €1,469 is two years' depreciation. This balance forms part of our restricted funds.

Department of Rural & Community Development Adminis-
tered by Pobal Income and Expenditure Analysis

	Scheme to Support National Organisations €	2023 Total €
Income		
Scheme to Support National Organisations	90,999	90,999
Total Pobal income	90,999	90,999
Expenditure		
Staff Costs	85,849	85,849
General Office / IT	1,250	1,250
Insurance	1,000	1,000
Light and Heat	1,000	1,000
Audit and Payroll Costs	1,000	1,000
Printing and Stationery	900	900
Total Pobal expenditure	90,999	90,999
Pobal Current Year End Surplus/(Deficit)	-	-
Opening Pobal balance	-	-
Total Closing Pobal balances	-	-

Department of Justice Income and Expenditure Analysis

	DOJ Victims of Crime Scheme 1 €	DOJ Victims of Crime Scheme 2 €	2023 Total €
Income			
Victims of Crime Scheme – Core Funding	-	370,000	370,000
Total Department of Justice income	-	370,000	370,000
Expenditure			
Staff Costs	78,066	225,396	303,462
General Office / IT	-	1,103	1,103
Telephone and Communications	380	3,152	3,532
Travel and Subsistence	-	5,521	5,521
Payments to Other Service Providers	-	5,000	5,000
Depreciation	-	541	541
Total Department of Justice expenditure	78,446	240,713	319,159
Department of Justice Current Year End Surplus/ (Deficit)	(78,446)	129,287	50,841
Opening Department of Justice balance	78,446	-	78,446
Total Closing Department of Justice balances	-	129,287	129,287

The total closing balance of €129,287 comprises of two figures:

- €127,775 is the agreed closing balance with the Department of Justice.
- €1,512 is two years' depreciation to be charged on two laptops, purchased for the High Risk Support Project. This balance forms part of our restricted funds.

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through generations

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