



# Turning the Tide on Homelessness

Focus Ireland & Focus Housing  
**Joint Strategic Plan 2026–2030**

Challenging  
homelessness.  
Changing lives.

**FOCUS**  
Ireland



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**Joint Strategic Plan 2026–2030**

# Contents

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5	<b>Introduction</b>
6	<b>The Focus Ireland Plan</b>
8	<b>Purpose, vision and values</b>
10	<b>Focus Ireland's five-strand customer-centred strategic framework</b>
12	<b>1 Family homelessness strand</b>
13	<b>2 Single homeless persons strand</b>
14	<b>3 Youth homelessness strand</b>
15	<b>4 Prevention and economic homelessness strand</b>
16	<b>5 Sustainability strand</b>
17	<b>Cross cutting strategic priorities which are common to all the demographic strands</b>
21	<b>Sr Stan's legacy</b>
22	<b>Cross organisational foundations</b>
25	<b>The outcome of the previous strategy and the context at the start of the new strategy</b>
28	<b>Where we want to be in five years</b>
30	<b>How we will measure our success</b>
31	<b>Preventing homelessness</b>
32	<b>Housing delivery</b>
33	<b>Our partners</b>

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**Every one of us has a right to a place we can call home.**

# Introduction

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Since it was founded 40 years ago, Focus Ireland has carried out its work with the certainty that homelessness in Ireland is not inevitable, and that it can be brought to an end. Every one of us has a right to a place we can call home. Not just a roof over our head, but somewhere we feel settled, safe and secure, and can build our life and future.

During the period of our last organisational strategy, *Restating our Vision*, the number of people entering emergency accommodation soared, in particular for families. Every day Focus Ireland was able to end homelessness for three households, but the failure of successive Governments to stem the flow of people entering homelessness and to provide sufficient affordable homes, eroded that success.

As a result, Focus Ireland embarks on this Strategic Plan for the period 2026–30 with the country still in the midst of an entrenched housing and homelessness crisis.

This organisational strategy is drafted in the context of the Government strategy, *Delivering Homes, Building Communities* published in November 2025, which sets out plans to deliver 300,000 new homes by 2030 alongside a range of measures aimed at reducing the number of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Focus Ireland recognises and welcomes the fact that a number of key measures which we have long sought are included in the new plan, but it is only through determined and consistent **implementation** that these ideas will have an effect. A key element in this strategy is a commitment to remain vigilant on the pace of implementation of the Government strategy and to seek the further actions which will be required to ensure that Focus Ireland's own contribution has the greatest effect and that overall homelessness starts to fall in the years running up to 2030.

# The Focus Ireland Plan

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This Strategic Plan sets out the key objectives and strategic actions which Focus Ireland will pursue over the five years from 2026 to the end of 2030.

It covers the work of two legal entities: Focus Ireland CLG, which provides services and advocacy to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and Focus Housing Association CLG, an Approved Housing Body which constructs and acquires housing to rent to people moving out of homelessness.

While the two bodies have a distinct legal existence, with separate Boards and Chairpersons, they share the same mission in working to bring an end to homelessness. One of the deep causes of homelessness is fragmentation in the provision of homes and services which people require, particularly when facing a crisis. To minimise such fragmentation, for operational purposes Focus Ireland CLG and Focus Housing CLG collaborate to provide an integrated, person-centred response. This joint Strategic Plan follows this approach, with the entirety of the activities of both legal entities described as “Focus Ireland.”

# FOCUS Ireland



**One of the deep causes of homelessness is fragmentation in the provision of homes and services which people require, particularly when facing a crisis.**

# Purpose, vision and values

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This Strategic Plan emerges from reflection and discussion throughout the organisation over the last 12 months, assessing the achievements and shortfalls of the previous five years, examining the environment as it has changed, listening to the challenges faced by staff and customers today, and discussing how these may evolve over the coming years.

After this reflection throughout the organisation, it was agreed that the existing purpose, vision and mission continue to articulate the role of the organisation and continue to shape this strategy. This was articulated by our late founder Sister Stanislaus Kennedy on the founding of the organisation in 1985 as:

**“To prevent homelessness, alleviate its stress and burden, and work towards eliminating long-term homelessness.”**

This strategy draws on Focus Ireland’s understanding of the human consequences of homelessness: the loss of stability, privacy, dignity, community, and hope. The damage it does to mental and physical health and disruption it causes in children’s lives.

It links these consequences to an analysis of the root causes of homelessness, including decades of insufficient investment in social and affordable housing, aggravated by cuts to youth, mental health, and housing supports which have not been fully restored. These historic challenges are added to each day by cost-of-living pressures and rising rents.

In 2022, Focus Ireland undertook an extensive process of refreshing our values. This process resulted in a new characterisation of the values that have always underpinned our work, setting out the four values in the following way:





## Dignity

Dignity is about treating people equally, with respect, kindness, compassion and empathy. It involves valuing people's diversity, engaging in relationships of care, and having regard for people's capacities, values, feelings, and beliefs.

## Quality

Quality is about professionalism, effectiveness, accountability, and integrity. It involves setting, achieving, and maintaining high standards; collaborative approaches, and continuous learning; and ensuring environmental sustainability.



## Social justice

Social Justice is about the achievement of positive outcomes to address social exclusion and inequality, and, enabling people to lead independent and fulfilling lives. It involves responding to specific needs that flow from people's diversity, securing a fulfilment of rights, and challenging structural inequalities.



## Empowerment

Empowerment is about independence and autonomy. It involves people understanding issues of power and powerlessness in their lives, having power to make informed decisions and choices, and being able to realise their full potential.



**This strategy draws on Focus Ireland's understanding of the human consequences of homelessness: the loss of stability, privacy, dignity, community, and hope. The damage it does to mental and physical health and disruption it causes in children's lives.**

# Focus Ireland's five-strand customer-centred strategic framework

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Focus Ireland frames all its work around the people we work with. While the traumatic absence or loss of a home is common to all people who experience homelessness, people in different household circumstances tend to experience different paths into homelessness, different experiences while homeless and different routes back into a secure home. The experiences of young adults are distinct from those of families which are different to those of older adults without children.

The majority of people who experience homelessness require little more than an affordable home and some signposting. For good reason most of our work centres on people who do have support needs of some nature or face specific barriers in accessing or sustaining a home and much of our work strategy reflects that reality. Nevertheless, it is fundamental to our work that we engage with the person, and not see people through the filter of the support needs they may have.

For this reason, Focus Ireland organises its services and public policy work around three demographic strands: **families, singles or couples without accompanying children, and young people**. Focus Ireland recognises the important sub-groups within these broad strands (e.g. the predominance of lone parent families within the family strand or people leaving State care within the youth strand) and also the overlap between the groups (e.g. the experiences of young parents in homeless families). Furthermore we recognise that homelessness is constantly shifting: with 'single people' becoming 'families', young adults growing older and people's support needs often intensifying where they are homeless for long periods.

By their nature, homeless services direct more of their resources to people who have higher support needs, sometimes referred to as people who are more 'vulnerable'. Reflecting this, the core strategic attention under each demographic strand is on people who have support needs and primarily on those who have complex and prolonged support needs.

But Focus Ireland's work is not confined to those who have support needs, and to reflect our substantial work with the majority of people who experience homelessness primarily because they cannot access affordable secure housing, we have put in place a fourth strategic strand. This strand encompasses all the work we do to **prevent homelessness or dealing with the structural issues** which cause and prolong it.

Finally, reflecting our position in the wider world, this strategy, for the first time, includes a fifth strategic strand concerned with **sustainability**.

Each of these strands is discussed further below, along with the key strategic priorities which relate to it.





# 1

## Family homelessness strand

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### **This strand of work comprises:**

- › All residential and support services, and all advocacy related to vulnerable households with accompanying children (families) who are homeless or need support moving out of homelessness or to prevent a return to homelessness.
- › All services and supports directed at children who are homeless with their families.
- › Focus Ireland provides services to families that are homeless irrespective of other support needs they may have, but aims to deploy most of its resources under this strand towards families that have high or complex support needs (vulnerable families).

### **Strategic priorities:**

- › Continue to develop our position as the lead provider of services to families experiencing homelessness through the Dublin Family Homeless Action Team (FHAT), and Limerick Childers Road Service, tendering for additional services on a competitive full-cost recovery basis where appropriate.
- › Consolidate the role of the Family Centre as a hub for Multi-Disciplinary supports, and adapting services to reflect the changing needs of homeless parents and their children.
- › Explore the potential for replicating the Aylward Green, Family Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) model for high support-needs families in crisis in other areas, as required.
- › Evaluate and seek to obtain mainstream funding for Child Support Workers for every child who needs them in our family housing support model.
- › Further develop a child centred approach including obtaining greater access to needs assessments for children.
- › Support the Government initiative to acquire homes for larger, very long-term homeless families.
- › Play a leading role in supporting the implementation of the National Child and Family Homeless Action Plan.
- › Continue our commitment to working with partners in particular the National One Parent Family Alliance (NOPFA) and Children's Rights Alliance (CRA) and by seeking membership of Tusla National Parenting Strategy Advisory group.
- › Continue to support programmes to acquire or construct housing, particularly housing which meets the needs of larger and vulnerable families. (See Housing section for more detail).



## 2

# Single homeless persons strand

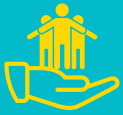
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### **This strand of work comprises:**

- › All services and advocacy for single adults or adult couples who have no accompanying dependent children (adult-only households) who are homeless or need support moving out of homelessness or to prevent a return to homelessness.
- › All Housing First services contracted by local or regional authorities.
- › Services that run out of the Focus Ireland “Coffee Shop”.
- › Supports provided to adult-only households who are tenants of Focus Housing (e.g. on-site supported housing projects, floating ‘off-site’ supports, tenancy sustainment).

### **Strategic priorities:**

- › Continue to develop our position as a leading provider of Housing First programmes in Ireland, tendering for available contracts on a competitive full-cost recovery basis where they fit our organisational plan.
- › Consolidate and seek appropriate opportunities to expand successful interventions, such as TSS and PACT, on a competitive full-cost recovery basis where they fit our organisational plan.
- › Explore ways of intervening with housing and support for people who have significant and growing support needs, prior to them requiring a Housing First intervention.
- › Develop, along with the National Housing First Office, new clustered approaches to providing homes for appropriate Housing First tenants.
- › Continue our commitment to working with partners, in particular the Irish Housing First Platform, and through continuing our lead role as a founding member of the European Housing First Hub.
- › Continue to support programmes to acquire or construct housing which is dedicated to providing homes which meet the needs of singles and couples without accompanying children (see Housing section for more detail).



# 3

## Youth homelessness strand

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### This strand of work comprises:

- › All residential services, outreach and advocacy work for unattached minors who are out of home and in the care system.
- › Residential services, outreach, advocacy and other services for young adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including those who were in the care system.
- › This Youth Homeless Strand includes all young people irrespective of support need as, while some young people have higher and complex support needs, all young people who are homeless or at risk of homeless are considered ‘vulnerable’.
- › Children who are homeless with their families are considered under the Family Homelessness strand.

### Strategic priorities:

- › Establish and develop a Youth Hub in central Dublin to provide a range of integrated services for young people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- › Continue to develop our role as one of the leading organisations providing support for young people who are at risk of homelessness, scaling up where possible and tendering for additional services particularly in the areas of youth/family mediation, Youth Housing and Aftercare, on a competitive full-cost recovery basis where appropriate.
- › Work with state and NGO partners to establish and evaluate a Pilot Project which aims to eliminate youth homelessness on one specific area or region.
- › Consolidate Focus Ireland’s existing range of Child Residential Centres, developing a consistent model of care and approach to service provision.
- › Develop responses for young people leaving Direct Provision after having their claim for International Protection upheld, which should include a targeted piece of research to understand the presenting issues and gaps in service provision.
- › Seek, in collaboration with Tusla, to create internal service pathways through Focus Ireland services for young people who engage with our services.
- › Continue our commitment to working with national and international partners, in particular by continuing our lead role, with the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) in the Irish Coalition to End Youth Homelessness.
- › Continue to support programmes to acquire or construct housing which is dedicated to providing homes for young people (see Housing section for more detail).



## 4

# Prevention and economic homelessness strand

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### **This strand of work comprises:**

- › All services and advocacy related to households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness primarily because of economic causes, and do not have significant support needs beyond access to secure, affordable housing.
- › Focus Ireland's national Advice and Information (A&I) services.
- › The Preparation for Education, Training and Employment (PETE) services in Dublin, Waterford and Limerick.
- › All public policy advocacy work related to ensuring a dedicated, appropriate, affordable housing supply; work related to tackling poverty and related to the 'Homeless Prevention Framework'.

### **Strategic priorities:**

- › Continue to develop and expand Focus Ireland's role as a leading provider of reliable advice and information (A&I) for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homelessness.
- › Build awareness of the prevention A&I service among people who are at an early stage of risk of homelessness.
- › Document and evaluate the national A&I service, consolidating the model of service delivery and improving impact.
- › Develop and pilot a programme for upstream prevention, working with relevant state actors, community organisations, schools and the youth sector.
- › Continue to deliver the Preparation for Education and Employment (PETE) services in Dublin, Waterford and Limerick, seek to establish a sustainable funding basis for the programme and expand to other areas if need and funding is established.
- › Explore ways in which existing services and interventions can be applied at earlier stages in the Government's Homeless Prevention Framework.
- › Work with partners to establish a consistent and transparent process for the assessment of people presenting as homeless across all local authorities.
- › Work closely with other homeless prevention agencies to minimise duplication and maximise impact.



# 5

## Sustainability strand

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### **This strand of work comprises:**

- › All work to achieve organisational sustainability in relation to the environment, social objectives and governance.

### **Strategic priorities:**

- › Support Affordability and Security, by maximising the extent to which Focus Housing homes are genuinely affordable to households on low incomes.
- › Ensure building safety and quality, meeting responsibilities to residents and staff.
- › To contribute to “Placemaking” in the neighbourhoods where our homes and offices are situated through awareness of the wider set of activities required to create places that meet local needs.
- › To assess and mitigate the contribution of all our organisational activities to climate change and environmental degradation.
- › To take a sustainable approach to resource management particularly in the construction and management of properties.

# Cross cutting strategic priorities which are common to all the demographic strands

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There are a number of strategic priorities which are common to all demographic strands. These comprise core practices such as customer voice or Trauma Informed Care, along with innovative projects such as Multi-Disciplinary Teams which are important to each strand but will evolve differently to meet the needs of each demographic group. Rather than repeat them in each case, they are brought together here.

## Housing development

Focus Housing is one of the ten largest Approved Housing Bodies in Ireland and, in 2025 owns or manages approximately 1,750 dwellings, providing an affordable and secure rented home to a single person or family.

Under the previous strategy we added around 650 homes to the organisation's stock of housing, and we are committed to increasing our contribution to providing homes at an even faster rate during the new strategy.

### Strategic priorities:

- › Deliver 1,000 additional units (approximately 200 per year), with a projected distribution of 50% singles (including Housing First), 20% for young adults, 30% for families, including larger families.
- › The delivery strategy will concentrate on three main streams.
- › The one-off purchase of apartments to achieve the 'scatter site' objectives of programmes such as Housing First and Tusla CAS.
- › Commissioning of 'turn-key' developments with stage payments in partnership with developers.
- › In-fill conversions of derelict niche sites in city and town centres.
- › Develop partnerships with smaller developers and contractors.
- › Target main cities and other larger towns with FI Services presence.
- › Work with Local Government and Department of Housing to align approval for house construction/acquisition with approval for appropriate level of tenancy sustainment.
- › Work with the Department of Housing and the ICSH to agree a financially sustainable model of CAS, and deliver homes using an appropriate mix of this, CALF funding and any other appropriate sustainable funding approach.
- › Continue to deliver housing projects using the Meascán model of intentional social mix.

## Customer and tenant engagement and voice

In line with our value of Empowerment, Focus Ireland will continue to ensure that people who have lived experience of homelessness play a key role in the design, delivery and Governance of our services and advocacy. Key elements of this approach will be:

- › Continue our commitment to the Lived Experience Ambassador Programme (LEAP), rolling out the third and fourth wave of this programme over the lifetime of this strategy.
- › Continue to develop our Peer Worker programme for people with lived experience of homelessness working in Services.
- › The Peer Researcher programme will also be continued and further developed, with Peer Researchers undertaking a rotating cycle of Tenant and Customer Satisfaction Reviews.
- › Build on the participation of people with lived experience on our Board Services Sub-Committee to expand such participation to other Sub-Committees, with a view to creating a well-supported role for participation at Board level.
- › Further develop tenant engagement processes and consultations fulfilling both our own values and objectives set by the AHB Regulator.
- › The Child Engagement Panels established for children in all our residential child and family services will be continued over the lifetime of this strategy, with periodic recruitment to reflect new entrants and exits from homelessness.

## Multi-Disciplinary Teams

Focus Ireland has been committed for several years to creating or co-creating Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) to support households with complex support needs. Under the previous strategy we published a Multi-Disciplinary Team for Homeless Families Feasibility Study (2023) and invested in promoting the importance of this approach. Under the current strategy we will continue to seek resources and the support of clinical partners to establish MDTs to support relevant services.

The first priority in this area is to establish such a team to support vulnerable families in Dublin, but the longer-term objective is to roll-out this approach across services working with singles and youth as appropriate over the term of this plan.

## Trauma Informed Care

Under our previous strategy plan, Focus Ireland designed and delivered a programme to embed Trauma Informed Care at the heart all our work, including applying the insights from PIE (Psychologically Informed Environments) into service design and the roll-out of training to all staff. Over the next five years we will build on this foundation, providing TIC training for all new staff and developing practice for existing staff. The principles of PIE and TIC will be applied to the construction of new premises, in particular the Youth Hub, as well as to the design of services to be delivered from them.

## Standardised assessment, progression metrics and continuous improvement of services

Focus Ireland is committed to establishing a set of standardised assessment and progression metrics across all services in collaboration with relevant state agencies and the wider sector. Internally, Focus Ireland will adopt standardised assessment and progression tools as part of our commitment to continuous improvement of services for our customers and demonstration of impact. Externally, we are committed to agreeing common frameworks for assessing the support needs of customers and tenants with Local Authorities, the HSE and Tusla. This objective will support Actions 5.1 in the Government’s “Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025–2030” strategy. Such a common framework for needs assessment will improve a shared understanding of the resources required to sustain tenancies and prevent a return to homelessness.

Focus Ireland is committed to continuous improvement of its services across all demographic strands. To further this commitment, Focus Ireland will commission independent evaluations of services over the lifetime of this strategy, with early priorities being evaluations of the national A&I Service and the Child Support Worker model.



**In line with our value of Empowerment, Focus Ireland will continue to ensure that people who have lived experience of homelessness play a key role in the design, delivery and governance of our services and advocacy.**



**The Boards of Focus Ireland and Focus Housing are committed to commemorating Sr Stan's life's work of standing up for social justice, working with and for people experiencing social exclusion and tackling homelessness.**

Photo courtesy of Steve Humphreys/Mediahuis Ireland.

# Sr Stan's legacy

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The founder and Life President of Focus Ireland, Sr Stanislaus Kennedy, passed away at the age of 86 in 2025. The Boards of Focus Ireland and Focus Housing are committed to commemorating Sr Stan's life's work of standing up for social justice, working with and for people experiencing social exclusion and tackling homelessness. The foundation of Focus Ireland's commitment to Sr Stan's legacy will be to continue the work she started, ensuring that the values she embedded in the organisation are sustained and that her firm belief that homelessness can be ended is vindicated.

Over the course of the strategy, the Focus Ireland and Focus Housing Boards will agree a number of initiatives, in collaboration with the other organisations founded by Sr Stan, to commemorate Sr Stan's memory and implement her values.

# Cross organisational foundations

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In addition to the strategic work strands, there are a number of organisational foundations which are essential for the effective delivery of all activities within the organisation. This section sets out the strategic priorities for ensuring that these foundations have the capacity to support the ambitions set out for supporting people experiencing homelessness.

## Fundraising

Over the period of the last strategy, the fundraising team raised €82m to support the organisation's work to end homelessness, against an exceptionally challenging external backdrop. Annual fundraising grew from €11.5m in 2019 to €14.9m in 2025, representing an increase of 30% and enhancing the resilience of the organisation's funding base.

### Strategic priorities:

- › Empower the Team & Culture – by investing in staff development, strengthening ways of working, and supporting resilience.
- › Power Up with Data & Insight – by improving our use of data and technology to better understand supporters and demonstrate impact.
- › Inspire & Retain Donors – by putting donors at the heart of what we do, building consistent journeys, and strengthening longterm relationships.
- › Create Campaigns that Move People – by aligning campaigns with bold organisational goals and powerful storytelling.
- › Go Boldly Digital – by enhancing digital fundraising and improving the supporter experience.
- › Grow Bigger Together – by investing in longterm fundraising growth to cultivate transformational partnerships, lasting relationships, and community fundraising.



## IT transformation

The preparatory work for this Strategy highlighted a number of challenges in updating and integrating the range of information management systems in use across the organisation. These challenges have the effect of limiting the capacity of the organisation to easily draw on its own data sources for management, reporting or advocacy purposes.

### Strategic priorities:

- › Roll out the strategy for IT transformation was adopted by the Board in 2025 to achieve an integrated and accessible approach to data management within the organisation.
- › Invest in the further development of Orion so that it becomes a reliable data collection tool for all service interactions with customers.
- › Continue to push for upgrades in the state data system PASS to permit integration and data transfer between Orion and PASS.

## Human resources

Over the course of the last strategy, the staff employed grew to just under 575 employees, excluding our relief panel. While further growth is not a strategic goal of this new strategy, the projected increased level of homelessness and the new initiatives proposed to respond to it are likely to result in further staff increases over the next few years.

### Strategic priorities:

- › Consolidate and strengthen existing HR systems to reflect the needs and challenges of the growing organisation, support by the IT transformation processes.
- › Ensure recruitment and retention of staff meets the needs the staffing needs set out in this organisational strategy by positioning ourselves as the employer of choice in an increasingly challenging environment though highlighting our values, impact, culture, employee benefits and career paths.
- › Continue and enhance our employee wellbeing and resilience supports, in partnership with Practice Development.
- › Continue to develop and improve successful programmes including the Graduate Programme, the Peer Worker programme, the Education Assistance Programme and Chartered Institute of Housing apprenticeship placements.
- › Support new areas of work and increasingly complex customer needs through introducing new staff skill sets such as mediators, occupational therapists etc.
- › Continue to support staff development and career progress though leadership development, facilitating appropriate transfers, mentoring and enhancing our induction and supervision processes.
- › Continue to meet all compliance and audit requirements set by legislation, regulation, Service Level Agreements etc, in particular CORU Registration, the protected title of Social Care Workers, Pension Autoenrollment and the Pay Transparency Directive.

## Governance

### Strategic priorities:

- › Maintain the current breadth and depth of experience of Board members through effective recruitment and induction as existing Board members complete their terms.
- › Continue progress in delivering reporting requirements to fully comply with all regulatory standards, including those set by the Approved Housing Body Regulatory Authority (AHBRA).
- › Continue to engage out-going Board members in the life of the organisation through the membership structure and Friends of Focus Ireland.
- › Maintain the highest standards of financial management and transparency.
- › Continue to adhere to the Boards policy on financial reserves, maintaining a minimum of 13 weeks reserves throughout the year.
- › Continue our commitment to Diversity Equality and Inclusion (DEI), invest in our DEI networks and continue to improve our Gender Pay Gap.

### Meascán

As Focus Housing Association continues to add to its housing stock it will continue to pursue our value of 'integration' through acquiring scatter site housing. To achieve the same objectives in our building programme, we will continue to develop our Meascán housing model of 'intentional social mix'. Under this innovative model, Focus Housing Association will be tenanted by a mix of households with support needs and households without such needs, while maximising the number of tenants who are exiting homelessness. All tenants would be aware of the nature of the development, the potential that some of their neighbours might, occasionally, have challenging behaviours. They would also be aware of supports available to them and be expected to participate in the governance and community organisation required. This exciting new approach can offer people with complex needs and an experience of homelessness the opportunity of integration into a mainstream and welcoming community.

**As Focus Housing Association continues to add to its housing stock it will continue to pursue our value of 'integration' through acquiring scatter site housing.**



# The outcome of the previous strategy and the context at the start of the new strategy

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## Outcomes

The 2021–25 organisational strategy, *Restating our Vision*, contained the warning that “*the objective of ending homelessness cannot be met by Focus Ireland alone. A number of the objectives in this strategy require Government to create a coherent and ambitious context in which our work can be most effective.*” While the Government’s subsequent strategy, ‘Housing For All’, included a welcome reference to ending homelessness by 2030, it failed to provide solutions which made that a realisable goal.

In the event, homelessness rose by 86% from the launch of Housing for All in September 2021 to the day the Government which had published it left office in January 2025 (from 8,212 to 15,286).

In stark contrast to the national picture, Focus Ireland broadly delivered on its own promised contribution. Of course, this failure of Government policy and the resultant surge in homelessness, diminished the impact of our contribution.

**Our primary performance indicator is the number of people who were supported out homelessness**, where Focus Ireland support was a crucial or one of the crucial contributions. We set out to support 1,000 households each year out of homelessness, and while we did not achieve this target in the first two years we supported over 1,200 of the households we worked with to move out of homelessness in both 2024 and 2025, resulting in an total of 4,850 households supported into new homes over the five years of the strategy.

Over the period of the strategy the number of households exiting homelessness to the private rental sector with HAP support fell significantly, due to smaller landlords leaving the market and rents rising while HAP supports remained frozen. As a consequence, exits from homelessness became increasingly reliant on social housing allocations, with some local authorities allocating a fairer proportion of social housing to households that are homeless, a change Focus Ireland has long advocated. While social housing supply remains insufficient, this policy shift allowed more households that are homeless to benefit from available housing.

**The second performance indicator was the number of households we aimed to prevent becoming homeless**, with a target of 600 per year. As discussed in Annual Reports over the period, this outcome proved too difficult to record reliably – for instance, counting an intervention which helps a family overturn a notice of termination cannot meaningfully be counted as a success if a new Notice is issued three months later. Equally, hundreds of people lived in our short-term residential services over the last four years, accommodation that likely prevented them from entering emergency homelessness. We do not count these as ‘preventions’ because they are part of ongoing support. As a consequence we narrowed what we counted as ‘successful preventions’ over the course of the strategy so that only engagements that resulted in the successful closure of a customer support file are included. With those provisos, our data shows that we were involved in preventing 1,936 households from becoming homeless over the duration of the strategy

Of course, all these successes are often shared. Complex cases require collaboration with local authorities, the HSE, Tusla and other NGOs. Cooperation, not competition, is at the heart of ending homelessness, and this principle guides our approach. Still, what we aim to track is each case where a Focus Ireland intervention, whether through skilled casework or providing housing, makes a crucial difference for a family or an individual.

**Our third performance indicator was the number of new homes we delivered** and here there challenges faced by the entire housing sector were clear.

Our target had been to deliver 1,152 homes but, in the event, 842 were delivered by the end of 2025.

This represents a 60% increase in housing stock since 2021 but remains short of the initial target.

In response, Focus Housing Association has diversified its development strategy, with increased focus on in-fill construction and converting non-residential buildings into homes. The targets for the new strategy reflect an appraisal of what can be delivered, under current support programmes, by an AHB of our size.

**Our target had been to deliver 1,152 homes but, in the event, 842 were delivered by the end of 2025.**

## Context for the new strategy

The development of this Strategy has been informed by an assessment of *Delivering Homes, Building Communities*. The Government's new housing and homelessness plan was published in November 2025 and Focus Ireland welcomed the fact that a number of measures that we believe can both prevent people from entering homelessness and improve the numbers of people and families exiting are included in the plan. It is encouraging that Government is listening to the evidence-based proposals we bring forward – solutions to homelessness can only be achieved by working collaboratively across government and non-governmental sectors. However, it will only be through determined and consistent implementation that these ideas will have an effect. Most fundamentally, the Government commitment to deliver 300,000 new homes by 2030, falls far short of the projections of housing need set out in the Housing Commission, the ESRI or Central Bank. Even if the Government achieves its targets, if population projections prove accurate, 2030 will find us with the same mismatch between housing needs and available housing as we experience today.

Given that reality, and while we work for and hope for a different outcome, this strategy aims to prepare Focus Ireland for a context in which homelessness will continue to rise in the immediate future, and, if the right decisions are made at Government level, begins to fall as we approach 2030. Even within this very difficult environment, important progress remains possible and crucial: a substantial reduction in the length of time that people remain homeless, earlier and more effective prevention of homelessness, and reduction in the harm that homelessness can cause, particularly to children. It is a core element of this strategy that we will continue to make the case for Government policy changes which will result in an earlier shift towards falling homelessness and a meaningful commitment to a timeframe for ending it.

With the important exception of our commitment to growing the number of Focus Ireland homes, Focus Ireland has no strategic objective to grow over this strategy. However, we recognise that in the context of rising homelessness we are required to make our maximum contribution and so have made provision for growth in services, where this can be achieved in accordance to our values.



# Where we want to be in five years

## Where will Focus Ireland be?

Focus Ireland will continue to be a financially stable organisation, adhering to the highest standards of Governance. Focus Ireland has no strategic commitment to growth over this duration of this Strategy, but recognises that it may be necessary to grow if the level of homelessness continues at the present level or higher. Focus Ireland will have a housing stock of around 2,700 well-maintained and insulated homes. All services will be provided on the basis of an SLA where all obligations required by the state are funded on a ‘full cost recovery’ basis, with fundraising directed to activities that are either innovative, additional to statutory requirements or are beyond the scope of state funding, such as independent advocacy.

Focus Ireland will continue to concentrate its work on our well established priorities of preventing homelessness, supporting people out of homelessness and providing homes, primarily for those with on-going support needs.

Focus Ireland believes that homelessness can only be tackled with a collaborative, strategically driven approach. To that end we will pursue a collaborative relationship with Minister, officials, local government and state agencies, while retaining the capacity to provide evidence-based criticism on behalf of those who experience homelessness.



## Wider context in five years

The landscape for housing and homelessness is evolving at pace, our next strategic period will be very different to the last. We must remain flexible, responsive and adaptive but always acting from a place firmly rooted in our Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values. While the work set out in this strategy will help transform the lives of many men, women and children who moved out of homelessness into a new home or avoid homelessness all together, it cannot on its own transform the appalling level of homelessness across Ireland. The overall level of homelessness does not depend on the work of one homeless organisation or state agency, it is dependent on the nature and success of overall Government policies and local authority delivery. While we will work to influence and inform such policies and to deliver good policies in partnership with state bodies, if we and our colleagues across the sector are successful in this we would see substantially lower homelessness by 2030. In contrast, if current policies continue and homelessness keeps growing at 13.24%, the average growth rate for the last 3 years, we would see an appalling 28,000 people in homeless accommodation by 2030, crossing the 20,000 threshold in late 2027.

This is not a prediction, it is a warning and a call to action. With the right policies and priorities, 2030 could be quite different.

Against this catastrophic projection, Focus Ireland looks forward to a situation in which, by 2030, the impact of current policies and the contribution of new policies, will result a fewer people being homeless than today, homelessness falling each month and with a significant decline in long-term homelessness, particularly among children.

The local pilot on ending youth homelessness will be complete, the evaluation available and discussions will be on-going on how the lessons can be applied to a new national plan to end youth homelessness.

There will be a better understanding and consensus at a policy level about the relationship between the level of housing supply and homelessness, with policy instruments designed to maximise the impact of any increased supply.

There will be less dependence on 'for profit' providers of services to vulnerable young people and of emergency accommodation, and a greater priority to providing high-quality public services and hence a move from the funding of emergency measures to provision of prevention and long-term support services.

There will be a shared framework of assessing the nature and likely duration of support needs of households moving out of homelessness, driving a shift of public resources from provision of emergency shelter towards measures which prevent the occurrence or reoccurrence of homelessness.

The social housing supply being delivered will better reflect the housing needs of those requiring social housing or experiencing homelessness – 'the right housing in the right place' – including a better supply of homes for single-person households and larger families.

**Focus Ireland will continue to concentrate its work on our well establish priorities of preventing homelessness, supporting people out of homelessness and providing homes, primarily for those with on-going support needs.**

# How we will measure our success

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The ultimate measure of homelessness is the total number of men, women and children who become homeless and how long they have to remain without a home. The work of Focus Ireland is just one contribution to this overall picture, but it is nevertheless crucial to maximise this contribution. Even where our contribution is relatively small, it can serve as proof of the effectiveness of new approaches, and be taken up by other agencies on a greater scale.

To achieve our maximum impact and to better understand our own contribution in a complex environment, we are setting out a number of projections or goal for our own work over the coming years.

Each person or household we engage with is important to us, and we aim to make ensure that each interaction has the most positive impact on people's lives as possible. But for the purposes of this aspect of our planning we do not want to concentrate on the number of people we work with but the **outcomes** of our work. In other words, this section does not look at how hard we work but the measurable difference that that work makes.

There are significant limitations to this approach, with the complexities of homelessness making it hard to measure the impact of many things that we know are important at a human level. In addition, ending homelessness is not something that can be done alone, and all these successes will involve collaborations with partners, including other homeless NGOs, AHBs and, in particular, local authorities. Under this measurement we will include cases Focus Ireland's role, either through case management or provision of the actual home, played a decisive role, or one of the decisive roles, in the household's success.

## Supporting people out of homelessness

During the five years covered by this strategy Focus Ireland aims to support a total of 1,930 households out of homelessness into secure new tenancies.

On an annual basis this overall target will involve supporting:

- › **300 families.**
- › **48 single people (or couples without accompanying children) through Housing First.**
- › **38 young adults.**

All these projections are on the basis of existing services, progress will be reported in our Annual Report and projections will be updated as Service Level Agreements change or services are added or closed.

# Preventing homelessness

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In our previous strategy we set a target of preventing 1,000 households who had been at risk of homelessness and who as an outcome of our work, did not become homeless. In the event, recording this with any accuracy proved impossible: while it is possible to identify households 'at risk', we cannot be certain all of them would have actually entered homeless services without our intervention; equally, while an intervention may avert homelessness at a particular crisis, a further crisis may occur a few months later. For these reasons we have decided for this strategy to record the output indicator of the number of at risk households we support, and also report our success rates where they can be reliably assessed.

We project that we will support 1,750 households each year through our Tenancy Sustainment Services (TSS) and SLI, achieving a 90% success rate.



# Housing delivery

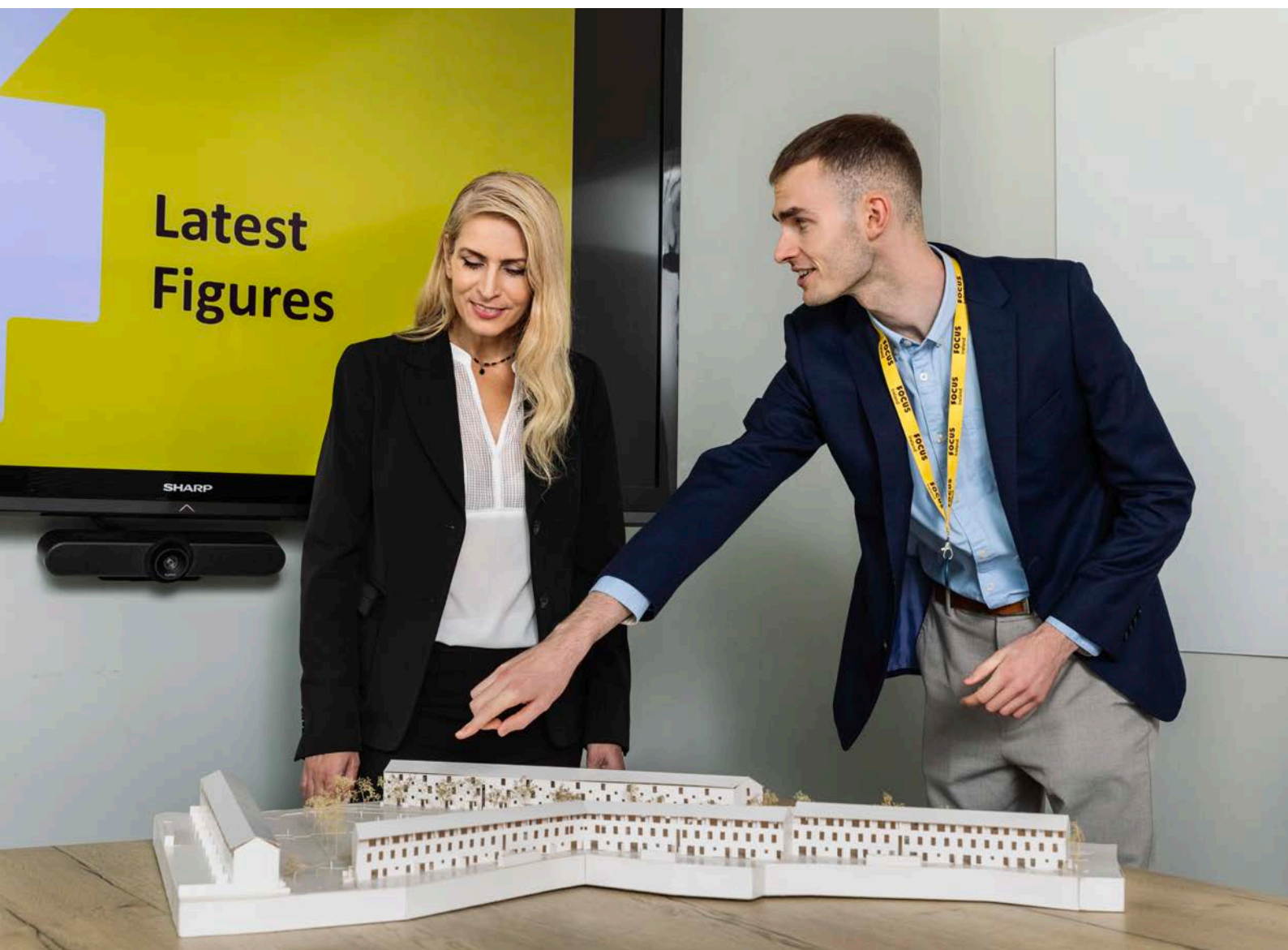
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Over the five years of this strategy, we will acquire or construct 1,000 additional units (on average 200 per year).

These will include:

- › 300 family homes (including as many large homes as possible).
- › 500 homes for singles and couples without accompanying children.
- › 200 homes designated for young adults.

We will increase the number of tenants from 18,000 in 2025 to 20,000 tenants by 2030. The tenancy failure rate for long-tenancies rate will not rise above 1%.



# Our partners

## State agencies and Government departments



## Local authorities and agencies



## Donors and corporate partners

A few Focus Ireland services are fully funded by state agencies, most are co-funded by the state and donors. Some – often the most innovative – are fully funded by donations. Overall, half our work is funded by voluntary donations.

Our full reports and consolidated financial statements for the financial year end 31 December 2024 can be found at: <https://www.focusireland.ie/who-we-are/annual-reports/>





focusireland.ie

**FOCUS**  
Ireland

Head Office  
9-12 High Street  
Christchurch, Dublin 8  
D08 E1W0

T 01 881 5900  
LoCall 1850 204 205  
F 01 881 5950  
E [info@focusireland.ie](mailto:info@focusireland.ie)

Registered Charity CHY 7220