

## Our Strategic Objectives are:



**Preventing  
Homelessness**



**Working towards a rights-  
based approach to housing**



**Facilitating access to homes  
for people in housing need**

## Who we are

Threshold is a charity whose aim is to secure a right to housing, particularly for households experiencing the problems of poverty and exclusion.

**Our vision** is an Ireland where everyone has access to affordable, secure, suitable and good quality housing.

**Our mission** is to prevent homelessness and to campaign for housing as a right by:

- i. Providing independent advice and advocacy to vulnerable people
- ii. Delivering housing and supports for those in housing need
- iii. Influencing housing policy and practice for the benefit of those in housing need

**Our values** shape how we work. Key among these are:

Independence	We are an independent organisation and will pursue our agenda with courage and fairness.
Accountability	We are fully committed to the values of openness, transparency and accountability.
Dignity and respect	We will always treat our clients, stakeholders and our staff with empathy, dignity and respect in all of our work and interactions.
Right to housing	We believe that everyone has a right to housing.
The holistic nature of housing	Housing - and lack of access to it - has consequences for other areas of people's lives and access to other services such as health and education.

## Our core goals for 2019-2021 are to:

- 1: Support people to resolve their private rental tenancy issues
- 2: Prevent homelessness through advice, advocacy and other supports
- 3: Provide tenants with access to quality support and accommodation

## Our Strategic Objectives (2019-2021)

1. Prevent homelessness – through the provision of independent advice, support and advocacy
2. Work towards a rights-based approach to housing through policy, research and legal work.
3. Facilitate access to homes for people in housing need.



### Objective 1. Prevent homelessness – through the provision of best independent advice, support and advocacy in the country

## Levels of support we provide to our clients



We are committed to four priority actions as follows:

- 1) The creation of a new specialist state of the art Advocacy Unit that will provide the intensive one to one support and accompaniment service to meet the increasingly complex needs of the rising number of vulnerable tenants in the private rented sector.
- 2) Increased awareness raising and training with a) organisations who are supporting individuals at risk of homelessness and b) organisations who are interested in supporting the work of Threshold, through donor and other relationships.
- 3) Expansion of our staff team in this area.
- 4) The establishment of a new cross organisational advocacy committee that will ensure the learning from the new Advocacy Unit is fed into the other areas of the organisation; in particular policy and advice.

We will also continue to:

- 5) Implement a programme of continuous training and upskilling of our advisors.
- 6) Conduct regular customer surveys and using the results to improve operations and ensure that our clients get an excellent service.
- 7) Maximise the use of technology and continuously improve our website in order to ensure our clients can easily access the advice they need, when where and how they need it, freeing up our advisors to work on more complex cases.

### Expected outcomes for Objective 1:

Our clients will know and understand their rights. Where our client's rights have not been respected, we will work to empower them to take appropriate action. Where our clients are not in a position to take appropriate action, we will work with them, and advocate for them in order to prevent homelessness.

## Objective 2. Work towards a rights-based approach to housing through policy, research and legal work.

We seek to influence Government and key policy and decision makers through our policy, research and legal work. There are three elements to our work in this area:

- 1) Gathering the evidence and ensuring accuracy
- 2) Communicating the evidence and identifying key audiences
- 3) Influencing key policy makers and policy influencers

Our policy priorities include:

- A rights-based approach to housing
- Rent certainty/affordability
- Security of tenure
- Supply of quality housing in sustainable communities

In relation to 'Gathering the Evidence', our priorities include:

1. Developing robust, accurate case studies.
2. Researching/documenting our clients' experiences, including regular tenant sentiment surveys and the use of the client database, in order to generate the evidence necessary to feed into policy.

We will also continue to:

3. Undertake regular monitoring of the implementation of Rebuilding Ireland and other relevant policy and budgetary commitments.
4. Continue to explore and investigate alternative housing and accommodation models and feed the findings of these investigations back to policy makers.

5. Participate in pilot projects in order to provide evidence for policy change.
6. Conduct or commission research where appropriate.

In relation to 'Communicating the Evidence' and 'Influencing Key Policy Makers and Influencers' our priorities include:

1. Working to deepen and enhance our relationships with key decision makers involved in activities that influence or determine housing policy.
2. Participating in/organise seminars, workshops & conferences to raise awareness of the issues we and our clients are dealing with on a day to day basis.
3. Engaging with key policy fora including Oireachtas Committees, and similar policy bodies as well as local Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs).
4. Create opportunities for our clients to 'tell their stories' and 'speak up' for their housing rights.

We will also continue to:

5. Prepare policy submissions & briefings for dissemination to key audiences.
6. Regularly reviewing who our key audiences are and what the relevant calls to action should be.

### Expected outcomes

We will enhance and strengthen our standing as a respected and trusted independent voice at national policy making level impacting on housing and other policy areas for the benefit of the people we advise and support. Our client data and research will provide the evidence we need to inform our policy work. Through our policy work, we will be the lead advocacy organisation for renters in Ireland.

## Objective 3. Facilitate access to homes for vulnerable people in housing need

Our priorities include:

1. The identification and purchase of additional properties in the Cork area that we will make available for rent. Our plan is to steadily grow our housing numbers to 2021 and double the number of properties we own (2018 figure: 12) by the end of 2023 (24 units).

We will also continue to:

2. Maintain our properties to the highest standard.
3. Assess the viability of all of our services (on an ongoing basis) in the face of changing needs and demands.
4. Support our tenants and assist them sustain their tenancies

#### Expected outcomes

We will steadily acquire new properties, support tenants in our housing, and place homeless households in rented housing in Cork and will feed our experience of managing these and engaging with our tenants into our policy work.

## Making it happen: organisational supports required

Our organisational priorities include:

1. Valuing and supporting our people (Board and Staff members) through training and development and the establishment of a dedicated internal HR function.
2. Developing and implementing our externally focused Communications Strategy, including further developments to our website and ICT channels to ensure that we are reaching and responding to people on the platforms that they are using – both existing and emerging.
3. Developing and investing in our Fundraising Strategy in order to maintain existing and develop new sources of sustainable income that will enable Threshold deliver on its strategic priorities in a very competitive fundraising environment.
4. Growing and diversifying our statutory funding base including the funding of outreach services, the development of enhanced links with statutory funding providers and resourcing responses to emerging needs.

5. Maximising internal communications ensuring that all staff are well informed about developments across the organisation.

We will also continue to:

6. Lead our organisation through good governance and the application of the governance code.
7. Implement key health and safety practices and safeguarding protocols.
8. Effectively managing the facilities (premises) we own/manage.
9. Ensure we have an effective ICT system management and development.
10. Implement sound financial management practices.
11. Manage our resources effectively.

## Implementation and Monitoring

Responsibility for overseeing the implementation of this Strategic Plan rests with our Board.

Annual and staff work plans will be developed based on the plan and will link directly to the achievement of the headline indicators.

Our Board will review overall plan implementation and progress twice yearly. Depending on progress and the emergence of new issues, the plan may be amended and updated as required.

The plan will be subject to an independent evaluation at the end of year three (Q3 and Q4 2021) and updated as required for Q1 2022 following the completion of the evaluation.

Progress in relation to the implementation of the plan will be assessed using a series of headline indicators, related to each objective. These indicators will be selected by the organisation and reviewed regularly to ensure that Threshold is delivering this Plan.