

2023- 2024

Annual Report



ingamohomes.com



Ingamo
HOMES CELEBRATING 35 YEARS

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Letter from the Board Chair



Marion Dieleman

As I begin this annual report a thought continues to reverberate in my mind. An annual report sums up a year in the life of Ingamo Homes. But how does one sum up a year when we also celebrate the 35th Anniversary of Ingamo Homes? I sum it up with the word HOPE. Hope for change, hope for empowerment and hope for the future. As we continue to hear, Intimate Partner Violence is a very real epidemic and Ingamo Homes is at the forefront in Oxford County to support its commitment concerning this epidemic.

At the heart of our organization is our executive director, Diane Harris who has dedicated 34 of the 35 years to serving Ingamo Homes. Diane's unique background and unwavering dedication have been instrumental in shaping our organization's journey. Her leadership brings constancy amidst the ever-evolving landscape of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), ensuring that the empowerment of women and children remains at the forefront of our mission. Diane's dedication is not only evident in her years of service but also in her tireless efforts to navigate the complexities of our field with grace and resilience.

The team at Ingamo is a formidable force, having revamped and revitalized the programs to continue to bring the empowerment of women and children to life, fostering a culture of compassion, resilience, and hope within our organization. Each year, Ingamo must fundraise over \$100,000 to ensure that the programs are available for the families at second stage. This past year we were able to have a successful Curling Bonspiel under the direction of past board member, Tina Leon. We were able to raise \$10,000 with the community's generous support. Ingamo partnered with Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO) in hiring a Fundraising/Communications Coordinator as they too are celebrating a milestone of 50 years of service in Oxford County. This past Christmas, Oxford County residents brought in much needed food, clothing and gifts which were all gratefully accepted.

The Board of Directors are abundantly grateful to those who support us annually. Whether you contribute financially, attend or host an event, or help fulfil our wish list, each and every gift represents support, kindness and hope.

Respectfully submitted,
Marion Dieleman, Chair.

Letter from the Executive Director

Thirty-five years ago, a significant collaboration between the Women's Emergency Centre (now Domestic Abuse Services Oxford, or DASO) and a dedicated team of volunteers led to the creation of a second-stage transitional housing complex for women leaving abusive situations in Oxford County. Initially known as Ingamo Family Homes, this 21-townhouse community was envisioned as an "open door" to a new life.

Diane Harris



starting out as Executive Assistant – circa – January, 1990

Over the past 34 years working with Ingamo Homes, I have had the distinct pleasure of meeting many courageous women, with and without children, seeking to rebuild their lives free from intimate partner violence. Ingamo Homes provides rent-geared-to-income (RGI) affordable housing along with a range of supports tailored to meet the unique needs of each woman and her family.

Much has changed since 1989, yet the unfortunate necessity for such a program remains. The demand for safe housing continues to rise, exacerbated by a housing crisis that affects countless individuals and families across Ontario, including Oxford County. Women escaping violence face even greater challenges amidst this crisis, making our mission more critical than ever. Violence is a cause and consequence of homelessness.

In response to this growing need, we are exploring innovative approaches and collaborating with both new and longstanding partners to expand our services. Our goal is to acquire additional housing units within the County to better support these women and their families.

One exciting development is our collaboration with the Woodstock Non-Profit Association. This partnership aims to provide 10-12 affordable housing units specifically for women who have completed the Ingamo program but face long wait times for permanent housing within our community. This project is slated to begin in Spring 2025. We look forward to collaborating with other potential partners in the county to assist families finding a suitable place to call home.

As we reflect on 35 years of service, we remain committed to our mission and inspired by the resilience of the women we serve. We look forward to continuing our work and expanding our impact in Oxford County, ensuring that every woman can live a life free of violence.

Respectfully yours,

Diane Harris,

Organizational Overview

Celebrating 35 years



Dixie Bullen (centre) Chair of the Board of Directors, Opening Ceremony with staff (r-l) Allie, Ann, Cheryl, circa June 1989

Vision

Ingamo Homes is a non-profit organization that has been providing safe housing, counselling and support for women and their children who have left violence since 1989. Our vision remains unwavering, focusing on empowering women and children in an equitable and safe community.

Mission

Provide support, advocacy and housing to women and children as they transition from feeling broken to brave.

Values

- Integrity is acting with transparency, honesty and in an ethical manner.
- Equity is responding to the individualistic needs of clients, in a fair and impartial manner, ensuring they are provided the appropriate resources to succeed.
- Inclusion embraces the diversity of all clients, such as their race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or ability.
- Freedom endorses services that promote empowerment and choice.
- Respect is acting in a way that acknowledges each person's worth.
- Safety is promoting the condition of being protected from danger, risk or injury.

Programs Overview



Halloween Resident/Staff Party – circa 1991

1641

counselling & outreach supports

74

women & children supported through transitional housing supports

This past year has brought incredible accomplishments for the Ingamo Homes team and the gender-based violence sector. With intimate partner violence declared an epidemic and gender-based violence included in the community safe and wellbeing plan for Oxford County, we are excited for the year ahead.

We successfully obtained two significant grants to enhance community and security at Ingamo Homes. With support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, we created a covered outdoor space in the courtyard, transforming an underutilized area into a central hub for residents and staff. This change sparked communal gatherings, fostering a strong sense of community, increased participation, and positive role modeling for children.

We also upgraded our security system with a grant from the City of Woodstock. We now have 14 cameras around the perimeter, enhancing safety and security. The upgrade addressed previous blind spots and enabled remote access to footage, ensuring continuous safety for all residents.

Additionally, we introduced a new Mental Health and Addictions program led by Melissa Reynen. This program has been instrumental in providing clients with tools and resources to manage their health both at Ingamo Homes and in the community. We are also developing an Anti-Human Trafficking protocol with community partners to mitigate risks for our community members. Our hope is that this protocol will support us in reducing risk and providing crucial resources and protection for those vulnerable to trafficking.

Our team has grown to meet the increasing demands of our clients, bringing extensive knowledge, experience, and wisdom. We remain dedicated to supporting and advocating for survivors. We look forward to another year of progress and support for our clients and community.

In solidarity,

Joanna Piatkowski

Manager, Programs & Outreach

Transitional Housing Support Program



Mary Anne DaCosta

Transitional Support Worker

The Transitional Housing Support Program provides comprehensive assistance to clients in finding and maintaining secure housing, including help with applications, advocacy, and transportation to viewings and related appointments. It offers income support by assisting with applications for ODSP, OW, and setting up bank and utility accounts, along with budget planning and education. The program also includes transitional support through the creation of safety plans, ongoing risk assessments, and assistance with accessing food banks and moving services. Additionally, it offers family court support by helping with documentation, advocacy, and navigating various legal and support systems, including accompaniment to court and coordination with police and victim services. Regular safety planning and risk assessments are also integral components of the program.

We had a productive year with key improvements in application processes, partnerships, and community engagement. Clients now apply online, followed by a phone assessment, easing their transition into various support services like housing, mental health counseling, and system navigation. The program aids clients in goal planning and offers life skills development in budgeting, home maintenance, and cooking. Collaboration with the Oxford County Community Health Centre provided health talks, and the "Ox on the Run" mobile library visits monthly, offering books and resources to our clients and their children.

We also offered family activities, such as cleanups, water park trips, and communal meals, promoting bonding and engagement among staff and residents. Overall, we had an incredible year with those utilizing our program!

Mary Anne DaCosta

Mental Health & Addictions Program



The Mental Health & Addiction program supports clients in navigating healthcare systems, accessing food banks, harm reduction, addiction support, and community services. It offers psycho-educational groups and individual supports on a variety of topics, provides short-term support, group counseling, crisis management, and life skills programming. The program conducts mental health and addiction assessments, develops individualized case plans, and offers ongoing case management and safety planning. It builds trusting relationships with residents, promoting healthy coping strategies, and collaborates with community partners for comprehensive support. The program also addresses mental health and addiction crises, reducing the need for emergency interventions.

Ingamo Homes is a proud site for providing safe harm reduction supplies.

Melissa Reynen

Mental Health & Addictions Worker

As the newest member of the team, I have had the privilege of creating and shaping this program based on the needs of our clients. The program focuses on regular workshops and groups to encourage healing and community among residents. During workshops, many women expressed how Ingamo staff served as role models. Additionally, offering individual sessions has allowed me to build relationships and support clients in their healing journeys. One client, after seven meetings, described feeling like they had emerged from a dark tunnel. Another client regained their voice and confidence in co-parenting after working through emotional abuse.

Several women also reduced substance use and noted improvements in self-esteem and well-being. Clients accessed mental health support, regained control over trauma symptoms, and collaboratively created suicide safety plans. Overall, it has been an incredible year seeing clients regain autonomy and confidence. I look forward to the year ahead!

Melissa Reynen

Child & Youth Program



The Child and Youth Program at Ingamo Homes is responsible for engaging children and youth (0-18) and their caretakers through various interventions, including play, educational programs, individual supports, assessments, crisis support, referrals, and advocacy. They identify individual needs, provide childcare, and facilitate youth groups promoting healthy coping and conflict resolution. They evaluate programs based on feedback and research, supervise student placements, and coordinate services with internal staff. They also handle social media content, collaborate with community partners, and maintain knowledge of resources.



youthtalk_oxfordcounty



youthtalk_tok

Brooke McCoy

Child & Youth Worker

This past year, the Children's Program at Ingamo Homes has been very active, engaging children and youth, from newborns to 16-year-olds. Programs like Kidz Klub for ages 5-9 and Terrific Tots for children under 4 provided social interaction and play. PA Play Days offered age-specific activities on PA days. The PEACE Program, in partnership with DASO, helped families heal from domestic abuse through an 8-week series. The Big Talks series, in collaboration with DART and Brightside YouthHub, focused on healthy relationships and anti-human trafficking. Special events included holiday-themed activities, an annual Christmas meal with Santa, and an ice cream party. Generous donations enabled events like shoe shopping days and a Halloween gift card giveaway which was incredible for the families. Summer activities included trips to Lake Lisgar and Canada's Wonderland, brunches, BBQs, and community guest visits.

This has been a busy year for the Children's Program, full of change and exciting fun! Looking forward to the coming year!

Brooke McCoy

Maintenance & Donations Program



The maintenance and donations program is responsible for the maintenance of the units and grounds including conducting unit inspections, recording damages, and informing tenants about move-out standards. The program is responsible for arranging contractors for cleaning, repairs, and painting, performing light repairs on plumbing, electrical systems, drywall, floors, ceilings, and paint, and overseeing contracted work. Ensuring units meet standards before new tenants move in, managing locking systems, conducting monthly smoke detector inspections, and responding to maintenance emergencies. Additionally, the program also liaisons with community agencies for donations, and manages a list of donated items.

Christine Tandy

Maintenance & Donor Coordinator

What a year it's been! Despite encountering challenges such as losses due to a flood, the year also brought forth numerous positive experiences and developments. The overwhelming generosity of the community during Christmas, despite storage limitations, was deeply touching and evoked tears of gratitude. The construction of the Pavilion provided a new and welcoming gathering space for families, fostering a sense of togetherness and joy.

However, ongoing improvements are necessary to continue enhancing the living environment. Plans are underway to replace unit mailboxes and plant hangers, reflecting a commitment to continuously improve and provide a supportive and nurturing community atmosphere at Ingamo Homes.

Looking forward to what the upcoming year has in store!

Christine Tandy

Community Development Program



Amy Maddess

Community Development Coordinator

The Community Development program focuses on building cooperative relationships with stakeholders, including funders and community partners. It involves coordinating, recruiting and training members for DART-Oxford, a collaborative committee comprised of social service, health and justice sector partners. The program also develops and delivers community-based education aligning with DART's and Ingamo Homes' strategic plan, coordinating initiatives, and organizing events, and workshops. Additional responsibilities include providing resource information, identifying training needs, supporting community committees, managing social media and websites, and engaging youth groups.

As the Community Development Coordinator for Ingamo Homes, I am pleased to highlight our key accomplishments over the past year. A major success was our delegation to the City Council of Woodstock and Oxford County Council, where we advocated for the recognition of intimate partner violence as an epidemic. This advocacy resulted in significant outcomes, including invitations for further delegations and a role in the Safe and Well Steering Committee of Oxford. These opportunities enable us to influence policies and initiatives at a systemic level, ensuring that the voices of survivors and advocates are integral to decision-making processes.

In addition to our advocacy, we focused on providing psychoeducational resources for our residents. We developed a series of in-person groups on topics like dating red flags, boundaries, and assertiveness, offering a safe space for residents to learn essential skills for healthy relationships and personal well-being. To reach a broader audience, we expanded these efforts through webinars, making valuable information accessible beyond our immediate community.

Moreover, Ingamo has spearheaded the coordination of a Femicide Prevention Table, bringing together stakeholders from diverse sectors to improve information sharing and resources aimed at preventing femicide. We have held two successful meetings, fostering collaborative efforts to create a safer and more supportive environment for all residents, with a strong focus on addressing gender-based violence and promoting gender equity.

Amy Maddess

Client Success Stories



Staff and Resident Spring BBQ – circa 1990 (includes participants of Pre-Employment Training Program now known as WERC)

Mental Health & Addictions Support Client

A woman who had experienced high levels of emotional abuse from their ex-partner worked in depth with our worker regarding their experiences and navigating ongoing co-parenting. This client shared that through our work together, they had rediscovered their voice where they felt it had been lost, and they were able to use their voice in advocating for themselves and their children in co-parenting. For them, this had a huge impact on their confidence and feelings of empowerment.

9

New Family Court Support client referrals

17%

Of participants saw an increase in setting boundaries after attending workshop series

Family Court Support Program Client

The family court process can be overwhelming and triggering for clients, especially when facing their abuser. Our Transitional Support Worker recently assisted a self-representing client in family court through our family court support program, as the client could not afford a lawyer. During the court appearance, the client became emotional. The Judge paused the proceedings to validate their feelings, attentively listened, and explained each step of the process in detail. The Judge frequently checked in to ensure the client understood and addressed their questions. Recognizing the importance of support, the Judge requested the worker's presence at the client's next court date. The Judge's patience and considerate approach significantly alleviated the client's stress, making the process more manageable.

Volunteer Spotlight

Don Taylor

Don Taylor became a friend of Ingamo when his wife Beth joined our Board of Directors in 2003. Both former high school principals in Oxford County, Beth and Don are dedicated to giving back to their community. Beth rejoined the Board from 2012 to 2017, serving as Chair, Vice Chair, and Personnel Chair, while both she and Don made significant impacts through their volunteer efforts at fundraisers and events.



After retiring, Don and his friend Rick Bell formed a carpentry duo called "The Two Tools." They have greatly supported Ingamo by repairing picnic tables, installing shelves and

cupboards in the children's playroom, and creating a new office space by studding a wall in the board room. With assistance from the Sweaburg Lions Club, Don and Rick built new benches for each unit, allowing residents to enjoy the courtyard and connect with neighbors. Don has also helped with painting and various fix-it jobs, and he is always available as a consultant.

In 2023, Don oversaw the construction of a new gazebo at Ingamo, funded by an Ontario Trillium Grant. He managed contractors, ensured the project stayed on schedule, and handled unforeseen issues. Additionally, Don has been a long-time volunteer with United Way Oxford, leading Days of Caring to complete essential tasks. He has also assisted our new maintenance coordinator, Christine, providing her with the confidence to tackle jobs independently.

Don has been a tremendous supporter of Ingamo Homes and we couldn't have accomplished some of the tasks without him. Don, we are so very grateful for your unwavering support to Ingamo, and can't thank you enough for all of the things you've done to support us over the years!

Board Members

Marion Dieleman – Chair

Heidi Becks – Vice Chair

Ashley Moussly – Treasurer

Pam Hagen – Director

Marissa Gale – Director

Nell Hostetler – Director

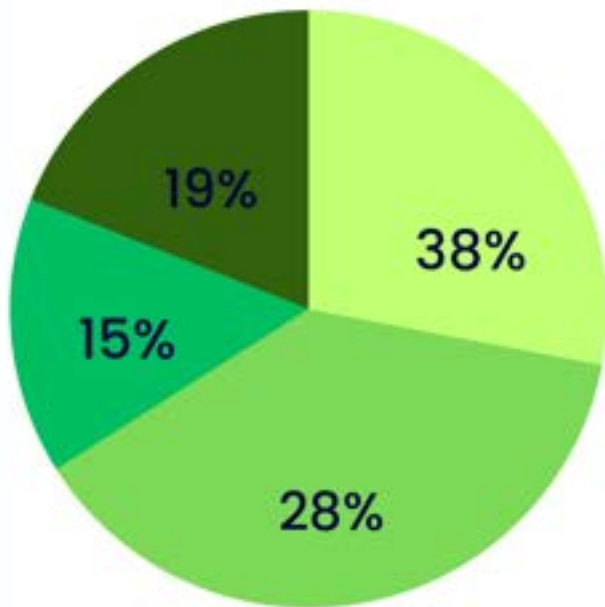
Tina Leon (resigned)

Wilma Markle – Secretary

Jennifer McLean – Director

Stephanie Hulls – Director

Revenue



38%

Oxford County
\$407, 306

28%

Ministry of Children,
Community and Social
Services
\$304, 367

19%

One Time Grants
\$194, 625

15%

Fundraising
\$163, 107

Total Revenue:

\$ 1, 069, 405

Oxford County
\$441, 836

42%

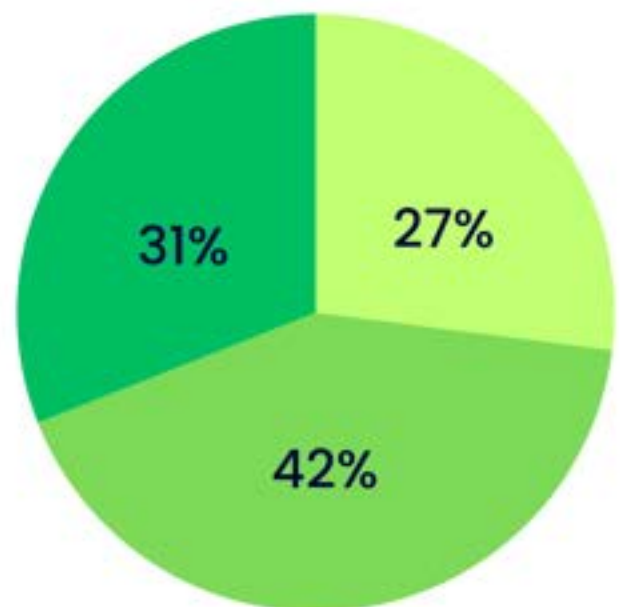
Community Based
Programs
\$326, 439

31%

Ministry of Children,
Community and
Social Services
\$291, 399

27%

Expenses



Total Expenses:

\$ 1, 059, 674

Thank you to our Supporters and Sponsors!

We have been fortunate over the past year, to receive numerous donations and sponsorships from our generous community. We also wanted to thank Ontario Trillium Foundation for their grant towards building a community gazebo. Thanks to everyone for their unwavering generosity over the years!



2024 Bonspeil



Kids Shoe Donation



**Hatfield Electric -
Lighting Donation**

**Enbridge Gas - Christmas
Cheer**



Trillium Fund Gazebo Opening



**UNIFOR Local 636 -
Christmas Donations**

Current Employees

Sariah Assing
Lori Demeester * (on leave)
Sophie Foster

Past Employees

Lisa Ball
Erin Timmins

Students

Sariah Assing
Kassidy Davies
Desreen McLean