



midlas  
building resilience



# 2020 - 2021 Annual Report



# ABOUT US

Midlas is a community organisation that has been operating for over 30 years. We deliver legal, tenancy, financial counselling, disability advocacy, and emergency relief services across Western Australia.

# VISION

Building Resilient Communities

# MISSION

To promote independence, strength and wellbeing in our community through support, advocacy and education

# VALUES

Caring for people

Supporting our Community, and

Developing Partnerships



# OUR SUPPORTERS

Midlas operates our suite of services thanks to the generous support of our funding bodies and key partners. We would like to thank them for their support, and ongoing commitment to our community.



Department of  
**Local Government  
and Communities**



Australian Government  
Department of Social Services

Public Purposes  Trust



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation  
and Safety



ST JOHN OF GOD  
Midland Private Hospital



LEGAL AID  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Swan  
Rotary



COMMUNITY LEGAL  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



NACLC  
National Association of  
Community  
Legal Centres



YES  
EQUALITY



FOOD  
BANK





# CEO REPORT

This past year at Midlas required a lot of introspection, as everything internally and externally has changed so significantly in such a small period of time. COVID has changed the way we live and work, and the ceasing of the moratorium on evictions, Jobseeker payments, and COVID stimulus has caused even further concern for our vulnerable communities.

Midlas has moved with community, been led by the changes to our environment and as a result is a service with a very different face to the one of old.

We moved to a bigger building, then needed a third building soon after to accommodate our growth in the Disability Advocacy space. Both look spectacular in our new branding.

We went mobile with the implementation of our 'Mobile Midlas Truck' which has opened our services to new communities and helped us to develop strong community partnerships which benefit our clients. We are now able to bring legal, financial, tenancy and disability advocacy services to people where they need, when they need, with dignity.

Our team has been ever-resilient through the changes as we have grown to 37 over the course of the year. The Midlas team has worked through changing climates, broadened our service delivery, refined and enhanced their skills to create new opportunities for clients, and assisted more families than ever before. We could not be more proud of the amazing people in our team.

Sarah Patterson



# CHAIRPERSON REPORT

2020-21 was a particularly challenging year for Midlas, as the core needs of the community evolved so rapidly and Midlas was required to consistently pivot to meet these needs.

Through strong leadership and governance from the Board and Midlas' executive team, we rose to these new challenges and found innovative ways to address community issues, increase services and provide a great workplace for our staff.

The Mobile Midlas initiative is a glowing example of this innovative problem solving. The team identified a need and created a solution that was built by the community, for the community and is creating exceptional outcomes. This was also our first real venture into philanthropy, and the partnership developed with Impact 100 has been hugely successful in enabling Midlas to deliver great outcomes to the community.

Midlas' strength has always been the staff. The passion for their work is infectious, and the Board is always amazed at the positivity that exudes from the office. Staff rave about Midlas and the work that they do, and this is indicative of the wonderful culture that has been built, and the vision the team share for a better, more equitable community.

In the coming year there will be new challenges and opportunities as we move into new areas of service provision, roll out the Outreach service on the truck, and continue to foster partnerships within our community. The Board of Midlas have complete confidence in the Midlas team to not only rise to these challenges but to excel and create even better opportunities for our clients and community.

Simon Kimber



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Midlas is governed by an experienced Board of Management with a range of specialities in governance, risk, and finance. Our Board set the strategic direction, and ongoing governance of Midlas.



Simon Kimber  
Chairperson



Merissa Van Der Linden  
Vice Chairperson



Deepak Sharma  
Treasurer



Mike Jones  
Secretary



Reg Yarran



Joseph Hoe



Jane Davies



Andries Pretorius



# AWARDS



## WINNER

2021 Community Service Excellence Awards

2021 Impact 100 Grant Awards

Swan Chamber of Commerce Award for NFP Innovation



## FINALIST

2021 Financial Counsellor of the Year (Wellbeing)  
(Amanda Ghouse)

2021 Hesta Award for Individual Achievement  
(Mandy Mountfort)

2021 Community Service Excellence Awards  
(Mandy Mountfort)



2021 NDS Disability Support Award  
(Midlas' Disability Advocacy Team)



# Legal Services

Midlas operates a holistic legal practice offering legal advice, legal case management, and representation. In 2020-21 we diversified our legal service offering, incorporating:

- Family Law
- Family Law: Property Matters
- Family Law: Children's Matters
- Family Violence Law
- Disability Discrimination Law
- Guardianship and Administration

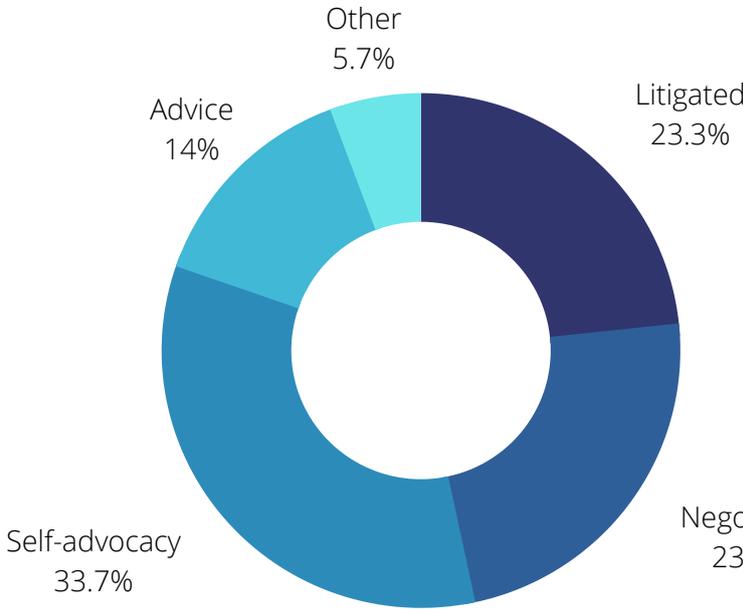
**722** legal advices    **221** cases



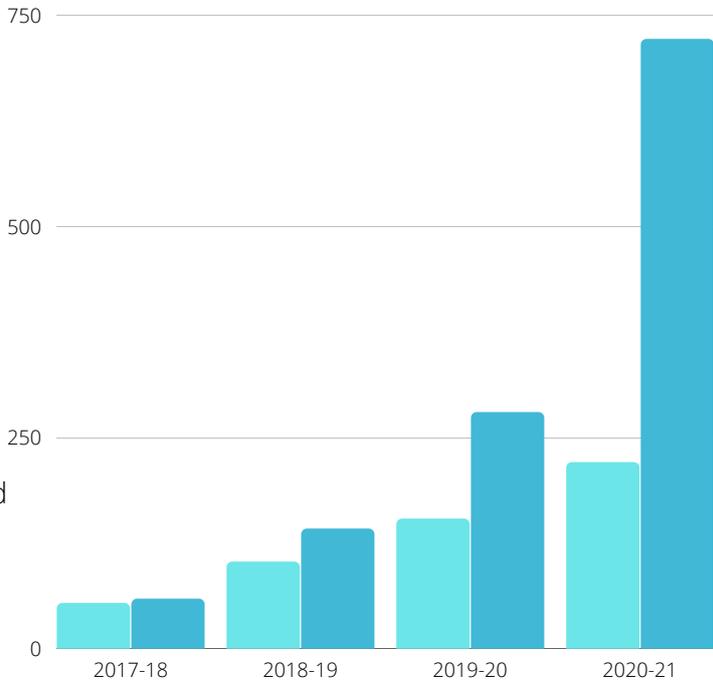
6.8% ATSI clients



23% CaLD clients



Client Outcomes



Clients assisted



50% of our legal cases related to family breakdown/ separation  
 18% involved Family Violence &  
 8% involved a person with a disability



# Disability Advocacy

Midlas offers advocacy, information and referral to people with a disability in the following areas:

- NDIS Access
- NDIS Appeals, Internal Review & AAT
- General Disability Advocacy &
- Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation of People with Disabilities

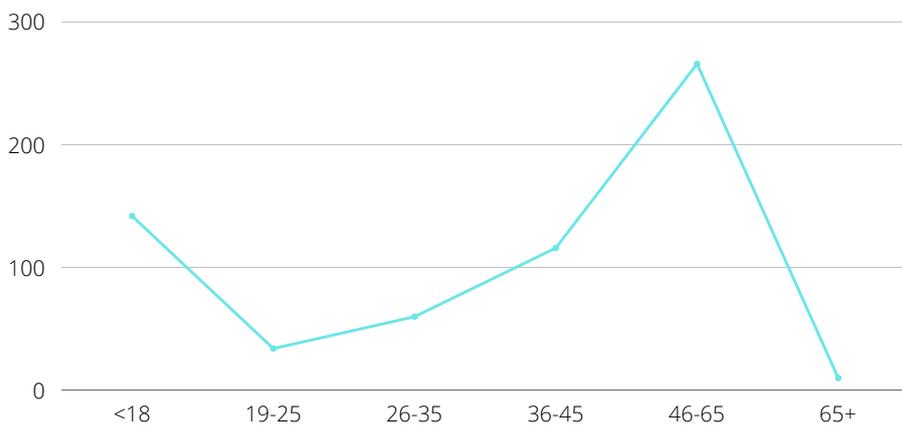


**240** people supported with first plans

**113** Internal and External Merit reviews

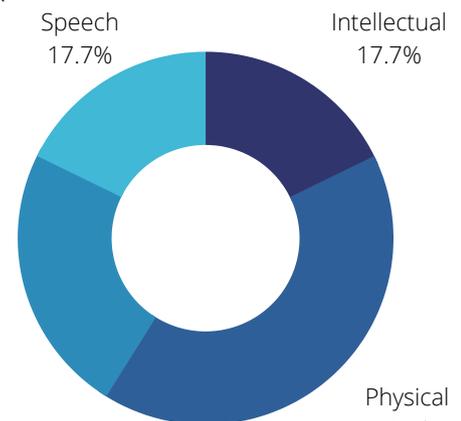
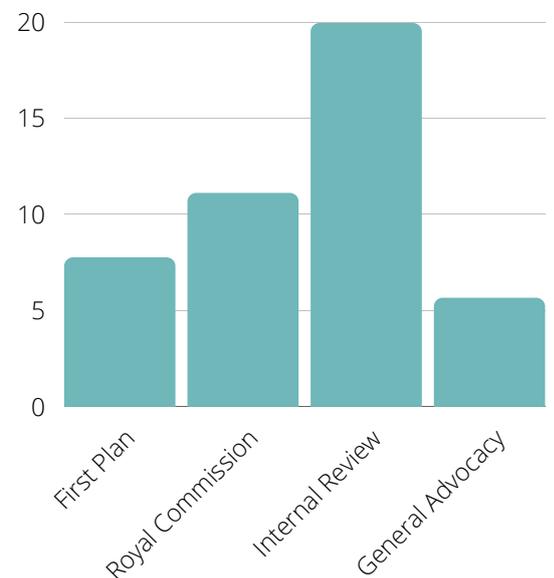
**350** people supported through general advocacy

 **12.5%** CaLD Clients  **3.9%** ATSI Clients



Client age groups

Average time per case



Primary Disability

"We tried for so long to get NDIS access for our son, and kept hitting brick walls. Thank you so much for all your help to finally get him approved!"

Psychological  
23.4%

Physical  
41.1%

# Financial Counselling & Capability

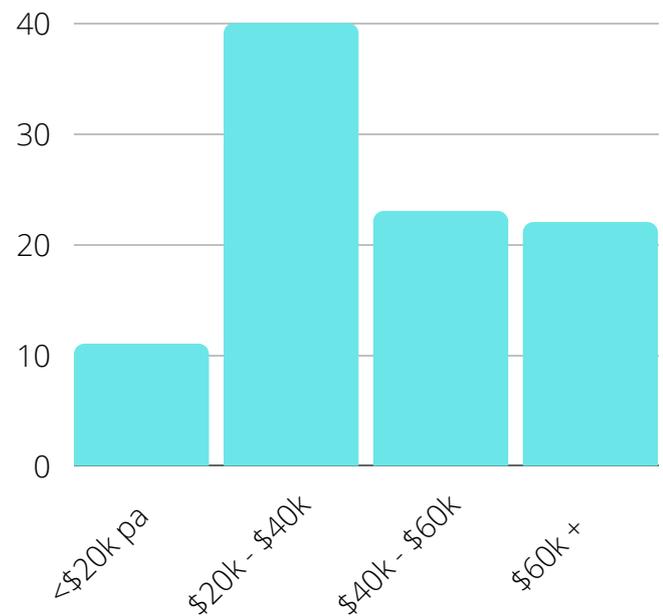
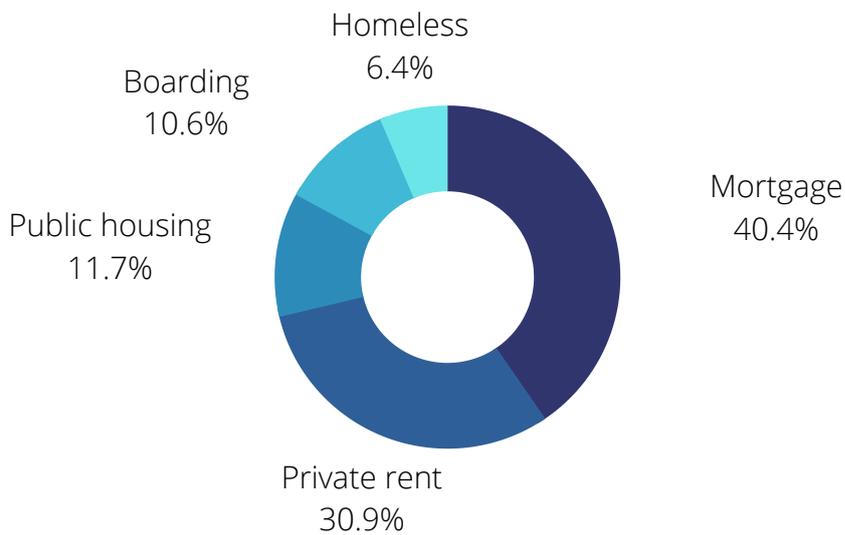
Midlas offers comprehensive Financial Counselling as part of the Financial Counselling Network - a collaboration between 14 community service agencies working towards building resilience and capacity in our communities. We also run Financial Capability and Wellbeing sessions to help people prevent financial hardship.

**489** clients

**140** sessions presented

**1656** hours

**709** participants



33% CaLD clients



10% Aboriginal clients

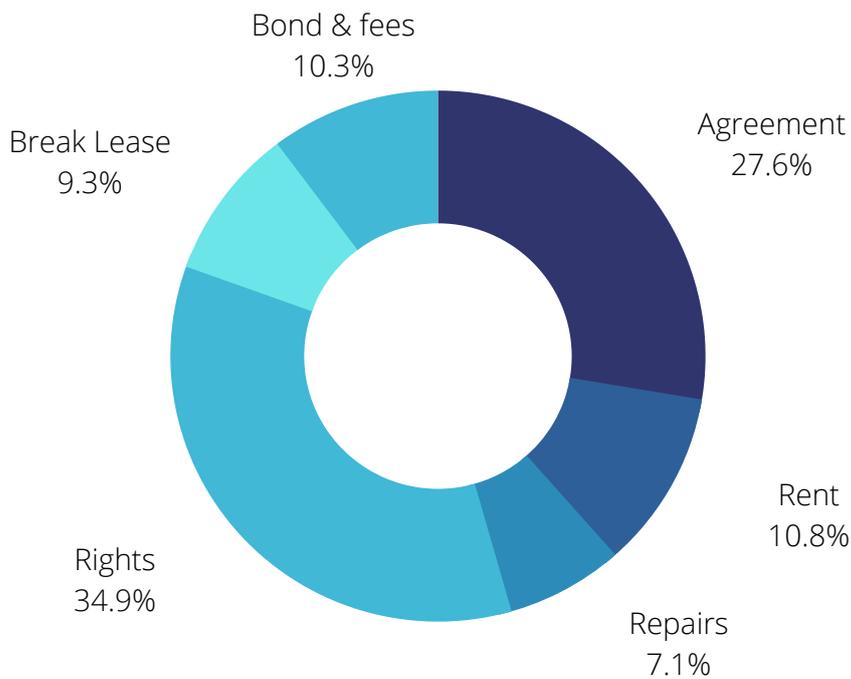
**12%** of clients were experiencing Family Violence, and **41%** had ongoing health/ mental health issues

**\$356m**  
of total debt  
assessed



# Tenant Advocacy

Midlas has a comprehensive Tenant Advocacy service that supports people who are facing eviction, having issues with their landlord, or who have received a breach or termination notice. Our Tenant Advocates report directly to the Principal Solicitor and are a part of our legal team.



260 casefiles

330 advices



129

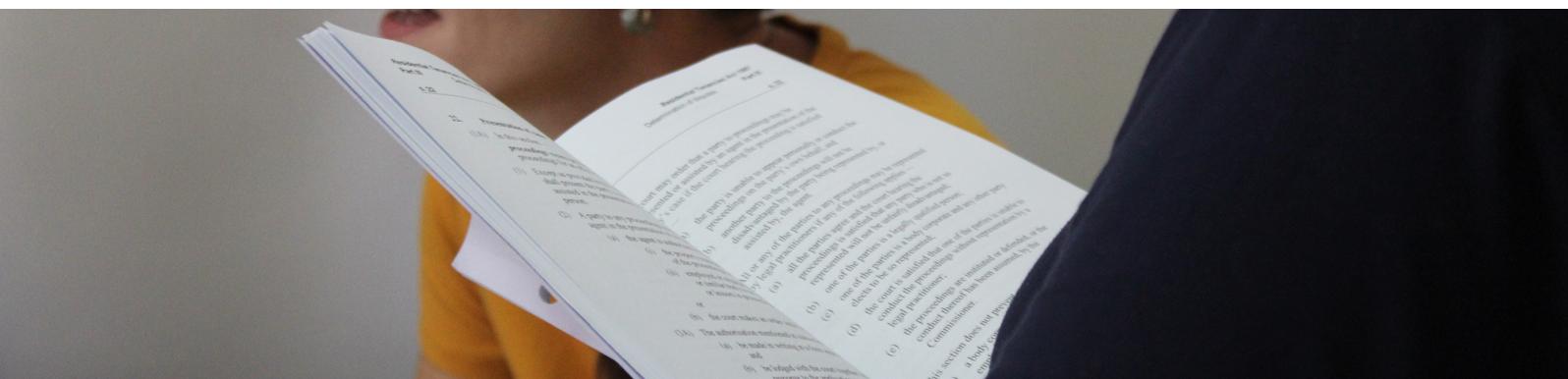
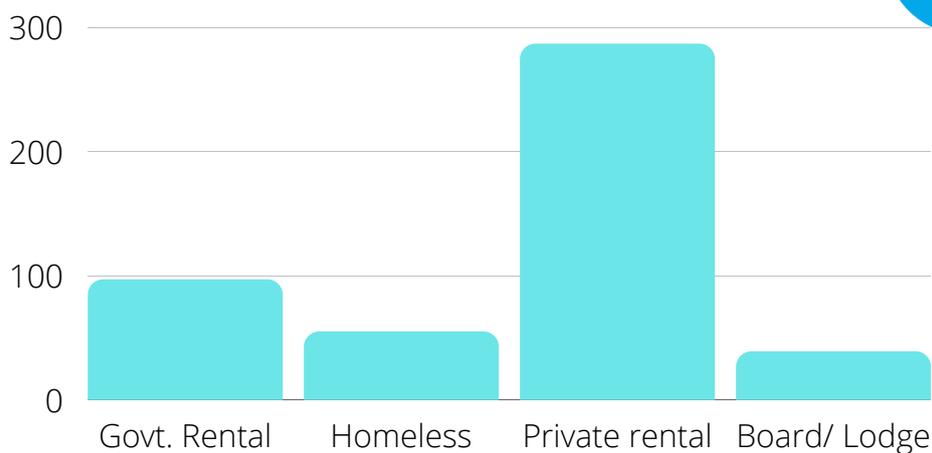
Assisted to self-advocate

50

negotiated outcomes

8

proceeded to trial



# Mobile Midlas

Mobile Midlas is a fully mobile office that was born from a need for community services to innovate on how we deliver services to vulnerable community groups. Midlas' full suite of services are available in the truck, as well as new services from agencies who have partnered in the venture.

**CoNect** Support for people with complex medical needs

**Street Doctor** Medical treatment for people experiencing homelessness

**Street Law** Legal support for people experiencing homelessness

**Wungening** Case management for people in homelessness

The initiative hit the road in June 2021 - so we are excited to see what the following year brings for our new, accessible community Outreach project!



# Woorooloo Bushfires

In early 2020 Perth experienced its second COVID lockdown, and our local community caught fire. The fire ravaged through Woorooloo, Gidgegannup and parts of Ellenbrook, and caused hundreds of families to flee to evacuation centres for safety while they awaited news on their property; including some of our own staff.

Midlas joined the recovery effort and based at each of the three recovery centres to identify what the immediate needs were and respond. Families, older people, and people with a disability were sleeping on cots in the evacuation centre, so this is where we began.

Midlas through our own reserves, and the support of the China Chamber of Commerce's generous donation was able to pay for immediate hotel accommodation for 42 vulnerable people. Our friends at Home Hub assisted in securing hotel rooms, and we sent families off to their temporary accommodation with food, clothes, and vouchers.

Midlas then assisted families affected by the fires to apply for grants, file their insurance claims and facilitate referrals to pro-bono lawyers who can address unsuitable Insurance settlements.

The fire is over, but there is still work to do and families dispossessed. The community pulled together at a time when it was most needed, and will continue to do so.



# Milestones



We launched the Mobile Midlas truck



We moved into our new head office



We supported more clients than ever before



We provided emergency supplies during lockdowns



We opened our specialist Disability Hub



We joined recovery efforts at Bushfire Evac



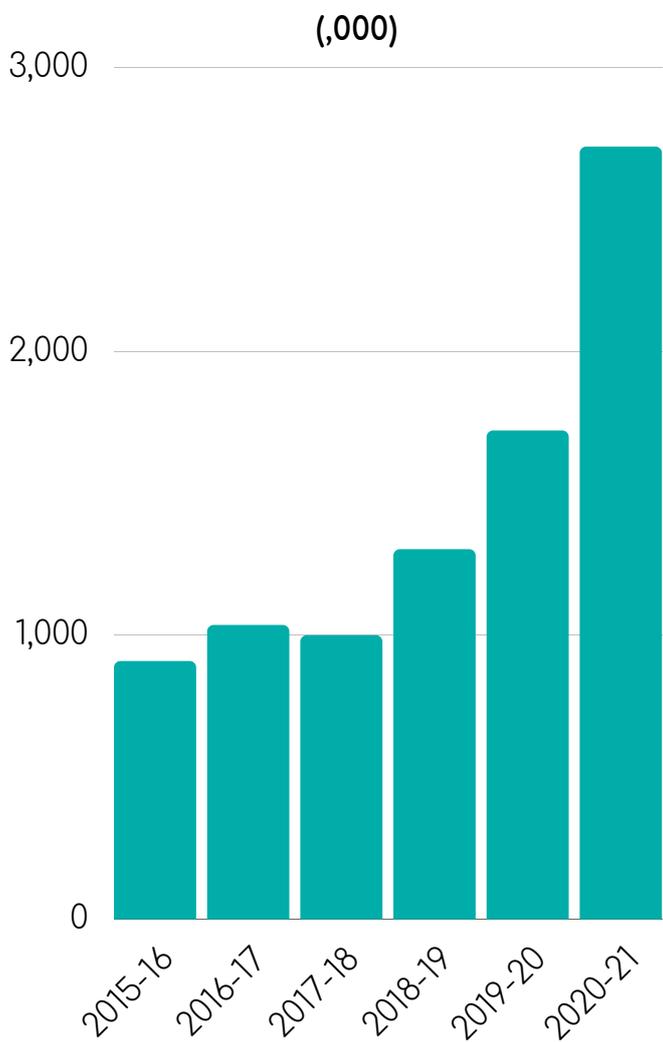
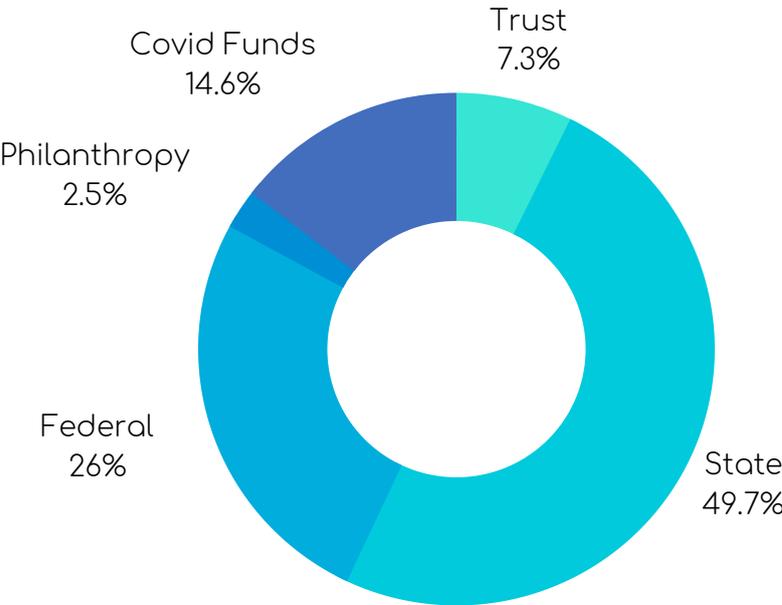
# 2020-21 Financial Statements



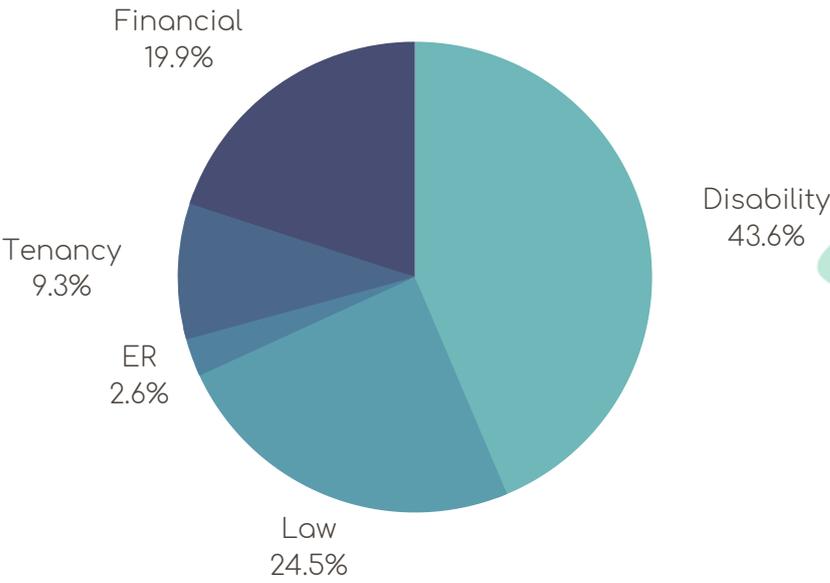
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# INCOME

## SOURCE

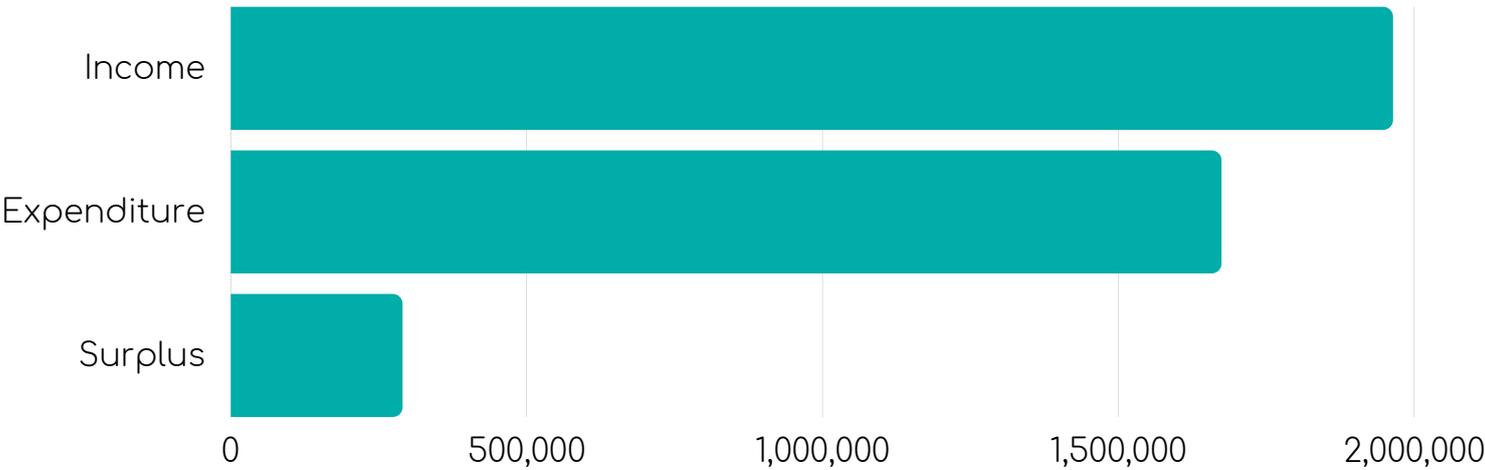
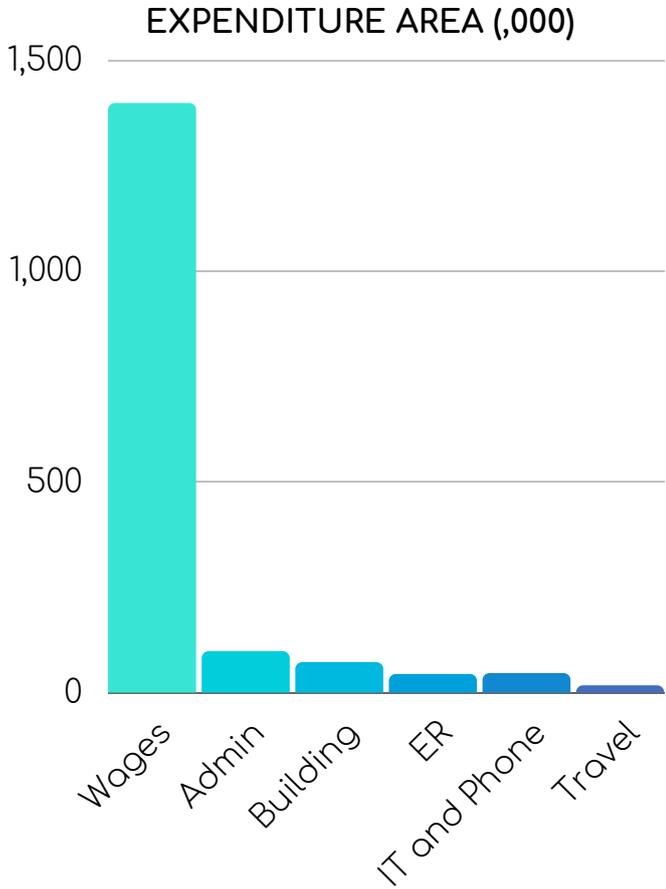
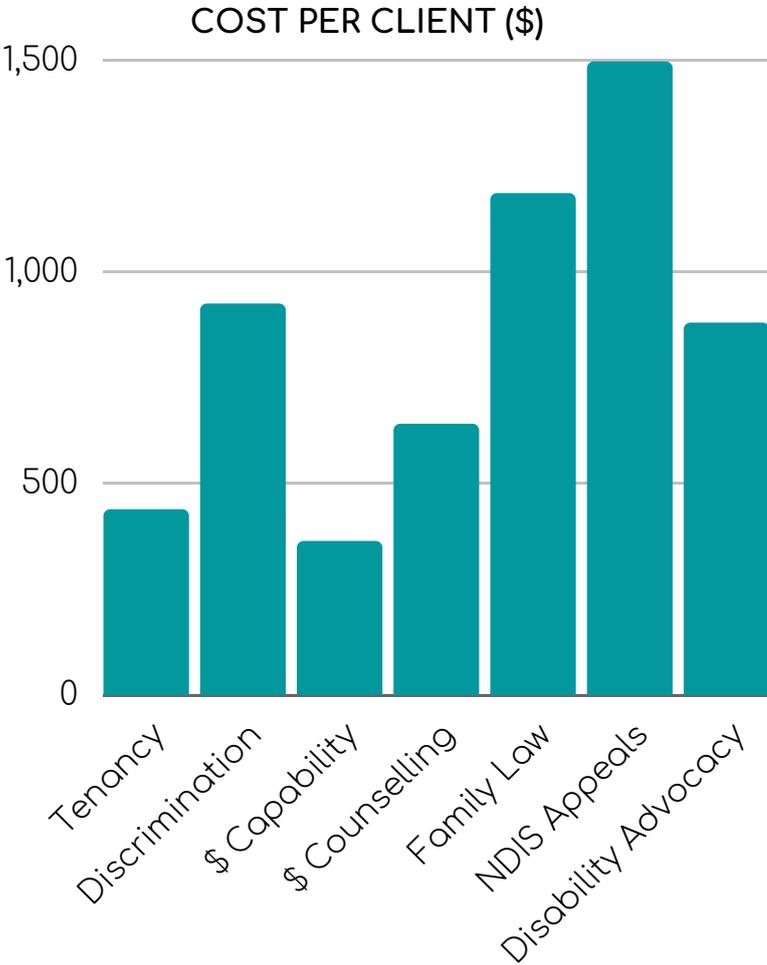


## PROGRAM



**108%**  
increase in  
revenue since  
2018-19

# EXPENDITURE



The background features several large, overlapping, stylized teal leaves of various shades, creating a sense of depth and movement. A single, smaller yellow leaf icon is positioned to the right of the main text.

# Building resilient communities



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building resilience