LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales · Charity number 1005884

Details

Other names	LEEDS WOMEN'S AID INCORPORATING HALT
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	02627468
Registered	1991-11-12
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	PO Box 420 Leeds LS14 9JX
Phone	01132460401
Email	administration@leedswomensaid.org.uk
Website	www.leedswomensaid.org.uk

Activities

Objects: The objects of the charity are for the public benefit, including the promotion of women-centered support and the provision of services for the advancement of women and the support of those who have experienced Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse, in particular, but not limited to, women, children and young people in Leeds and surrounding areas.

Activities: Leeds Women's Aid works with women & children, being a voice & leader in the sector. LWA support women & children experiencing domestic violence and abuse and aims to eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls. We offer a range of services including safe houses and refuges, community & telephone support, women's groups and hubs, and support to children & young people and coordinate partnerships.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Accommodation/housing
- **Who:** Children/young People, Other Defined Groups

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Geography

- **Area of benefit:** IN PRACTICE LEEDS
- Leeds City

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£4,686,457	£4,491,153	£1,542,847	87
2024-03-31	£4,791,694	£4,425,912	£1,347,543	98
2023-03-31	£3,941,444	£3,923,942	£981,762	75
2022-03-31	£2,844,882	£2,802,201	£964,260	75
2021-03-31	£2,896,699	£2,697,113	£921,580	43

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Shruthi Ventakachalam		2025-10-02
HELEN LOUISE DANIELS		2018-06-26
Holli Kellett		2025-10-02
Jill MacTaggart Ezard		2022-09-21
Judith McAra		2017-07-26
LORRAINE WHEWELL		2017-07-26
Nneka Ikeogu		2013-05-20
Rebecca Tredget		2022-09-21
Ridwana Wallace-Laher		2025-10-02
Samantha Millar		2025-10-02
Susan Kerslake		2025-10-02
Vanessa Rolfe		2024-07-31

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LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1005884

Accounts

Charity registration number 1005884 (England and Wales)

Company registration number 02627468

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Ms H L Daniels Ms J M Ezard Dr N C Ikeogu Ms J Mcara Ms R Tredget Dr L Whewell Ms V Rolfe	 (Appointed 31 July 2024)
Charity number	1005884	
Company number	02627468	
Registered office	52 Saint Johns Lane Halifax HX1 2BW	
Auditor	BK Plus Audit Limited 52 St Johns Lane Halifax West Yorkshire England HX1 2BW	
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank plc 4 Brindleyplace Birmingham B1 2JB Triodos Bank Deanery Road Bristol BS1 5AS	
Solicitors	Wrigleys Solicitors LLP 19 Cookridge Street Leeds LS2 3AG	

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

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Leeds Women's Aid (LWA)

Trustees' Annual Report
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Directors' and Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2025

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The Chairs Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the Trustees' Annual Report for Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) for the year ending 31 March 2025. This has been a year of significant delivery, growing demand, deep reflection and strategic action. In a climate marked by increased financial pressure, rising complexity in our client base, and ever-changing national policy, Leeds Women's Aid has responded with resilience, ambition and clarity of purpose.

As ever, our staff and volunteers have gone above and beyond to support the women, children and families who turn to LWA in times of crisis. The impact is reflected not just in the numbers - over 13,000 contacts, 168 residents supported in refuge, and a near-universal victim-survivor satisfaction rate - but in the powerful, personal stories of lives changed, safety restored, and futures reimagined. These stories are at the heart of everything we do.

This year saw important progress across key areas of the organisation:

- The formal review and approval of our updated Reserves Policy ensures that LWA remains not just sustainable but equipped to grow and adapt.
- Our updated Risk Register and Business Continuity Plan reflect a mature and proactive approach to governance, addressing emerging risks such as cyber threats, utility cost inflation, safeguarding challenges and systemic funding shifts.
- We continued to expand our strategic partnerships through our leadership of both the Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS) and the Women & Girls Alliance Leeds (W&GAL) collaborations that enhance our reach, influence and ability to secure matched and consortia funding.
- We progressed towards the launch of the Children and Young People's Hub, with infrastructure investment planning and ringfenced reserves already in place; an exciting milestone that reflects our long-term commitment to supporting the whole family.

This was also a year in which we continued to invest in the capacity and wellbeing of our people. The pressures facing the women we support are also felt by our frontline teams. The Board remains committed to building an organisation that puts care, learning, equity and sustainability at the heart of our culture.

We are mindful that while demand for our services continues to grow, so too does the need for sustainable income diversification. Our efforts to strengthen income generation - particularly from individual giving, trusts and corporate supporters - have been encouraging and our Horsforth charity shop continues to be a vital part of this ecosystem, both financially and symbolically.

Looking ahead, LWA is entering a pivotal phase of strategic development. In 2025/26, we are beginning work on a new three-year strategy that will guide our direction through to 2028. Co-production is central to this process, ensuring the lived experience of victim-survivors, insight from frontline staff and volunteers, and strong governance from trustees and robust leadership all shape our future.

This work will be undertaken in the context of wider sector change, including anticipated reforms in domestic abuse funding, housing benefit and the increasing need for culturally responsive and trauma-informed services. Key areas being explored include: expanding early intervention for children and young people; embedding more specialist support for victim-survivors with complex needs; investing in staff wellbeing and professional development and securing operational and financial resilience through improved systems and income diversification.

We will launch the new strategy in 2026 and are already aligning our plans, budgets, and staffing models to deliver on its ambitions. Alongside this, the coming year will see us launch our Children and Young People's Hub, expand school-based prevention work through ELEVATE and continue to influence policy through initiatives such as Ask for Angela and Women's Night Safe Space.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank our extraordinary staff team, volunteers, donors, funders and partners. You each play a vital role in this work and your continued support means we can stand alongside thousands of women and families across Leeds and beyond as they reclaim their safety, strength and future.

As we look ahead, the need for LWA's services is as urgent as ever. With clarity of mission, strong foundations and shared vision, we move forward committed to empowering every woman, every child and every victim-survivor who needs us.

Nneka Ikeogu
Chair of the Board of Trustees
Leeds Women's Aid

Leeds Women's Aid (LWA)

Trustees' Annual Report
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Note

The structure of this report has now been improved to create a more streamlined strategic overview. This has been done as we've created separate, comprehensive Impact Reports, that have evolved into hugely important documents showcasing our work. Our Trustees' Annual Report now sits clearly alongside those, without duplicating operational achievements and successes. Our 2024 Impact Report can be found at https://leedswomensaid.co.uk/our-impact/

1. Objectives and Activities

Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) exists to provide trauma-informed, person-centred support, refuge, advocacy and empowerment services for women, children and young people who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence and abuse (DV&A). This includes - but is not limited to - sexual violence, coercive and controlling behaviour, forced marriage, honour-based abuse, stalking, harassment, trafficking, economic abuse, technological abuse and female genital mutilation (FGM).

LWA's approach is rooted in feminist principles, recognising the gendered nature of DV&A and its disproportionate impact on women and girls. However, LWA also offers inclusive services to men and trans+ individuals through its commissioned partnerships and helpline, ensuring all victim-survivors in Leeds have access to safety, advocacy and recovery support.

The charity's core objectives are:

- To protect and support individuals affected by DV&A and related harms.
- To provide safe, supported accommodation for women and children fleeing violence.
- To empower women and children to rebuild their lives free from fear.
- To advocate for justice, safety and equity through support with the criminal justice system, housing, finances and legal protections.
- To educate the public and influence systemic change that prevents violence and supports recovery.

Much more detail is included on our website: https://leedswomensaid.co.uk

Key Services Delivered in 2024/2025:

- **24/7 Helpline & Webchat**: Immediate emotional support, risk assessment, and signposting to services.
- **Independent Refuge and Safe Housing**: A range of self-contained and dispersed accommodation for women and families in crisis.
- **Children and Young People (CYP) Services**: One-to-one emotional wellbeing support, educational workshops, after-school clubs and holiday activities for young people exposed to DV&A.
- **Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs)**: Legal advocacy, safety planning and support through civil and criminal justice proceedings, including specialist IDVAs for young people and those with complex needs.
- **Access & Assessment Team (AAT)**: Initial point of contact handling referrals, triage and crisis intervention.
- **Staying Safe Programme**: A 10-week peer-support course focused on healthy relationships, boundary setting and recovery for women affected by DV&A.
- **Community Development and Resettlement Support**: Tailored post-refuge support to enable long-term independence and safety.
- **Strategic Partnerships**: Lead agency in the LDVS, coordinator of the W&GAL, and contributor to city-wide safety initiatives including "Ask for Angela" and the Women's Night Safe Space.
- **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**: Delivering accessible support across 27 nationalities and 22 languages, removing barriers through interpretation, cultural awareness and tailored approaches. Our work is grounded in intersectionality, recognising how overlapping forms of discrimination (such as sex, gender identity, race, disability, sexuality, age) can affect experiences of abuse and access to support. Inclusive practice is embedded in all aspects of our service delivery, staffing and governance.
- **Advocacy and Systems Change**: Engaging with West Yorkshire Police, local authorities and national campaigns to improve system responses to DV&A.

LWA's holistic and integrated service model reflects its belief that all individuals - regardless of age, background or circumstances - deserve safety, dignity, respect and support in their journey from abuse to recovery.

2. Achievements and Performance

2024/2025 at a glance:

- 13,000+ contacts for support across phone, email, webchat and referrals;
- 168 women and children supported in refuge;
- 2,700 helpline contacts received on average per week;
- 99% of service users better able to recognise abusive behaviour;
- 98% said support met their needs;
- 100% of women supported by IDVA team reported feeling safer;
- 132 children and young people referred to ELEVATE support service.

User Testimonials:

Refuge Support

"Using this service made a huge difference to my life. I was speaking with people who understood me, supported me and reassured me but also gave me hope."

"In terms of refuge, you do everything you can, and it is definitely enough. It made me more confident in my decision to leave my abuser when I did. Leeds Women's Aid have been the best service I've ever dealt with, and I am so grateful for everything you've done for me."

"You learn so much and forgive yourself and actually love yourself when you realise it was never your fault."

Helpline and First Contact

"You have treated me with so much care, so much compassion and so much understanding. Sometimes I feel like professionals just talk to me because it's their job, but you have spoken to me in such a way I truly feel supported and cared for as a person."

IDVA and Legal Advocacy

"My IDVA made a difference to my life. She listened when I had no one else. Sometimes I couldn't wait to speak to her because she was the one positive thing I had. I could speak how I felt and not be judged - I felt safe with her."

"My IDVA was very helpful in guiding me on the things I should do in terms of what happened and the next steps forward. She made me feel more confident and believed, and made me feel like it wasn't my fault."

Staying Safe Programme

"I feel like a different person. I identify signs better; my confidence has grown and I am being assertive in all aspects of my life."

"I've learned how to protect myself and what to watch out for with a new partner."

Children and Young People

"Me and my son are much happier now. We had great support and the staff are very good."
– Mother supported in refuge

"I've learned to love myself more and to believe in myself too."
– Teenage girl supported by ELEVATE

"Our school children are benefitting so much from this dedicated service. Previously we had nowhere to signpost children who needed tailored domestic violence support and we are thrilled to say we now do."
– Designated Safeguarding Lead at a partner school

"She's more settled at home... more settled speaking to me about stuff. She is just happier in herself... She's so confident now. She's not the same child."
– Parent supported by CYP team

General Feedback / Life Impact

"Since I received the help of LWA, my life and that of my child have changed. Now we live more calmly without stress and without fear. I have started to take care of myself. My health is improving and I feel positive and eager to continue improving."

"I feel like I've got my life back. I didn't think I would smile again - but I do now, every day."

"It has made me realise I don't deserve to be treated like I was and that you can get your confidence back and your life back and become the person that you once were."

"Without LWA support, I would still be in a violent relationship, or even worse, I could have been killed."

3. Financial Review

This has been another significant year for Leeds Women's Aid, marked by both an increase in income and an expansion of our reach.

Our financial sustainability continues to be underpinned by our core funding sources; primarily Local Authority contracts and rental income, including Housing Benefit. We remain deeply grateful for the strong partnership we have with Leeds City Council, whose continued support and collaborative approach have helped us secure additional funding for our much-needed services. Their robust and considerate contract management plays a vital role in enabling us to meet rising demand.

The Trustees are pleased to present the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. During this period, our total income was £4,686,457, while our total expenditure was £4,491,153, resulting in a net surplus of £195,304. This surplus is primarily on unrestricted funds totalling £188,414 that will be carried forward to support future service delivery. This compares to a surplus of £365,782 of mainly restricted funds in the previous financial year (2023/2024), reflecting our continued progress in securing and managing resources effectively. Reserves carried forward are £1,542,847 of which £557,277 are restricted and £985,570 are unrestricted.

Principal Funding Sources:
Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) is funded through a diverse range of income streams that reflect both the breadth of its service delivery and the strength of its partnerships across the public, private and voluntary sectors. This mixed funding model ensures a degree of financial resilience while supporting LWA's ability to deliver holistic, high-impact services for women, children and families affected by domestic violence and abuse.

Ethical and victim-survivor-centred approach to Fundraising
All fundraising and income-generation activities align with LWA's mission and values, ensuring no partnerships, donations or funding sources compromise our independence, victim-survivor safety or equity commitments.

Fundraising is embedded within our organisational strategy and linked to diversification targets and long-term sustainability planning. LWA operates in line with:

- Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice - Transparency, honesty, and accountability in all donor communications.
- Charity Commission Guidance - Full compliance with charity law, governance obligations, and trustee duties.
- Chartered Institute of Fundraising - ensuring professionalism, transparency and accountability.
- Gift Aid Scheme - HMRC-registered to claim Gift Aid on eligible donations.
- Data Protection (UK GDPR) - Ensuring supporter data is processed lawfully, securely, and transparently.
- Safeguarding in Fundraising - Protecting staff, volunteers, and supporters during events or campaigns.
- Ethical Fundraising Policy - Screening donors and partners to avoid conflicts of interest or reputational risk.
- NCVO Ethical Principles - promoting a beneficiaries first approach.

The charity received no complaints about its fundraising activities during the year.

Local Authority Contract
A significant portion of LWA's funding comes from commissioned services through Leeds City Council, including its role as the lead agency in the LDVS consortium. These contracts support the delivery of refuge accommodation, 24/7 helpline services, IDVA support, community-based services and outreach work.

Government and Statutory Bodies
LWA receives project-based and strategic funding from national government departments and agencies, including:

- Ministry of Justice;
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), formerly known as Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC);
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority;
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

This funding supports key initiatives, such as Sanctuary Support, specialist IDVA roles and safety infrastructure for victim-survivors.

Charitable Trusts and Foundations
LWA benefits from the ongoing support of a number of charitable trusts and grant-making foundations. These contributions enable the charity to expand capacity, innovate and respond flexibly to emerging needs. Key supporters in 2024/2025 included:

- AABIE
- Clothworkers
- Elizabeth & Prince Zaiger Charitable Trust
- Garfield Weston
- George Moore Foundation
- Keith Howard Foundation
- People's Postcode Community Trust
- Smallwood Trust
- Sovereign Community Programme
- The Big Give
- The Barratt Foundation
- The Liz and Terry Bramhall trust
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Wolfson Foundation
- Wade Charity
- West Riding Masonic Charities Ltd.'s Community Fund

Corporate Support and Partnerships
LWA works with socially responsible businesses who provide not only funding, but also in-kind donations, sponsorship, volunteering and awareness-raising. In 2024/2025, corporate partners included:

- Aecom
- AETC
- Avery Walters Solicitors
- Barratt Homes
- Bevan Brittan
- Cartwright Pickard Architects
- COOK
- DLA Architecture Ltd
- Engage Interactive
- Equans UK
- Equifax
- Farnell Global
- Fenton Packaging Solutions
- From the Fields
- Fusion Unlimited
- Hays

- Heneghan & Sons Ltd
- IPL Brightgreen
- John Lewis
- Knight Frank Promise - City Square House
- Lights Out Tattoo
- Marks & Spencer Pudsey
- Marshalls Mill
- Mastercard
- Michael Page
- Network Rail
- Plus-Project Ltd
- Ride Shotgun Leeds
- RSMUK
- SAAF Education Ltd
- Santander
- Shoosmiths
- Sovereign Health Care
- Superfriendz
- The Football Association Premier League Limited
- Thorton Jones Solicitors
- Tigerbond
- Torsion Construction
- Unite theUnion
- University of Leeds - Payroll Giving
- Valuation Office
- Wates Construction (North)
- Zurich - ZCT Challenge Teams

Community Fundraising and Individual Donors
In addition to institutional support, LWA receives vital contributions from individual donors, sponsored challenges, workplace fundraisers, community groups and local events. The LWA charity shop in Horsforth continues to generate unrestricted income, while also raising awareness and providing a tangible link to the community.

Notably, £34,320 worth of volunteer time was gifted to the charity shop in 2024/2025, demonstrating strong community engagement and support-in-kind.

Strategic Alliances and Consortia
As the lead partner in both the LDVS and the W&GAL, Leeds Women's Aid plays a pivotal role in shaping, coordinating and delivering high-quality, City-wide responses to domestic violence and abuse. These strategic alliances allow LWA to share resources, align funding opportunities and deliver integrated, intersectional support across Leeds. Together with our enhanced profile, these partnerships also enable us to take a more active role in campaigning, influencing policy and providing thought leadership at local, regional and national levels.

Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS)

LWA is the lead agency in the LDVS - a long-standing, commissioned partnership between Leeds Women's Aid, Behind Closed Doors and Women's Health Matters.

This collaboration also includes the LDVS Voices Project, which empowers individuals with lived experience of DV&A - including women, men, children and LGBTQ+ victim-survivors - to shape and improve future service delivery and inform policy. In 2024/2025, this project enabled dialogue with senior leaders at West Yorkshire Police, contributing to internal reforms and increased usage of Clare's Law.

Through LDVS, LWA is able to access shared infrastructure, specialist staffing and joint funding streams that enhance the resilience and reach of services, particularly important during times of high demand or funding uncertainty.

Women & Girls Alliance Leeds (W&GAL)

LWA also leads the W&GAL - a powerful consortium of 12 local organisations united by a shared mission to improve outcomes for women and girls across the City. The Alliance is built on a foundation of feminist principles and intersectional inclusion and focuses on the empowerment, safety and wellbeing of all women and girls, particularly those facing multiple disadvantages.

Flagship initiatives delivered under this Alliance in 2024/2025 included:

- **Women Friendly Leeds**, which promotes safety and representation in public spaces through campaigns such as *Ask for Angela* and *Women's Night Safe Space.*
- **Empowering Systems Change**, a project providing flexible, holistic support for women with multiple and complex needs who often fall through gaps in traditional services.
- Health and wellbeing groups, art and activism sessions, culturally-specific women's groups, and safety awareness training ("Switch on to Women's Safety").
- **The Women and Girls Equality Hub**, brings together any woman or girl, women's centred organisations, groups and projects to identify and respond to the issues and challenges faced by women and girls in Leeds.

By working in partnership, W&GAL enables LWA to extend its influence and impact beyond direct service delivery, engaging with communities, statutory bodies and policymakers to drive systemic change and create a safer Leeds for all women and girls. Combined with our elevated profile, these alliances amplify LWA's ability to shape public discourse, lead sector conversations and influence policy reforms to create a safer Leeds for all women and girls.

Recent examples of LWA's leadership in campaigning and thought leadership include:

- Leading local and regional consultations, including the Women's Lives Leeds Community Conversations – a platform enabling women and girls across the City to share their lived experiences and priorities directly with decision-makers. These conversations provided Leeds City Council with valuable insight, resulting in a series of pledges to address the issues and concerns raised.
- Driving media campaigns and public awareness initiatives, including radio interviews and op-eds (written opinion pieces) focusing on the urgent need for improved funding and systemic reform.
- Participating as keynote speakers at sector conferences and regional safeguarding forums, where LWA has highlighted intersectional approaches and trauma-informed practice.

Reserves Policy:
Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) maintains a formal reserves policy that aligns with good practice in the charity sector, ensuring both financial resilience and the ability to respond flexibly to risk, opportunity and change. The policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees and is closely aligned with LWA's strategic priorities, operational risk register and business continuity planning. The Board of Trustees receives and reviews reports on reserves as part of their governance responsibilities and takes decisions on designated and unrestricted fund usage to balance short-term priorities with long-term sustainability.

Purpose of the Reserves

LWA's reserves are not based on a multiple of monthly expenditure but are instead calculated using a needs-based model that considers:

- Working capital to support the continuity of core operations;
- Coverage for key risks identified in the organisational risk register;
- Funding to enable infrastructure investment and service innovation;
- Financial response capability for unexpected disasters or income shocks;
- Designated funds for specific growth opportunities or initiatives;
- Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and utility cost spikes.

Actual Reserves

As of March 2025, unrestricted reserves stood at £985,570, an increase from £797,156 in the financial year 2023/2024, reflecting:

- Increased unrestricted donations;
- Better costing of full cost recovery;
- Strategic plans to develop the organisation.

Target Range

The Trustees consider an adequate level of unrestricted reserves to be between £887,000 and £996,000. This range:

- Covers all expected working capital needs;
- Provides for all designated funds;
- Includes contingency funding for infrastructure and emergencies;
- Allows partial coverage (between 25% - 66%) of risk-rated financial liabilities.

While it is unlikely that all identified risks will materialise simultaneously, the policy ensures LWA is positioned to navigate both planned developments and unforeseen challenges without disruption to core services.

Investments:

We continue to have our investments in CCLA's deposit fund, giving us over £60k of unrestricted income in interest. This also reduces the risk for us in terms of having funds in numerous bank accounts and having any amounts that are not covered by the Financial Services Compensation scheme.

4. Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document and legal structure

Leeds Women's Aid is a registered charity governed by a board of trustees who meet regularly to oversee the strategic direction and financial health of the organisation. The charity is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association, last amended on 9th November 2020.

Board of Trustees

The Charity is overseen by a Board of Trustees who meet regularly to set strategic direction, monitor performance and ensure the Charity's assets are safeguarded. Trustees are also responsible for ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory obligations, including those set by the Charity Commission and Companies House.

At the year end, the Board comprised of 7 trustees. Trustees serve on a voluntary basis and do not receive remuneration for their role.

Trustee recruitment and appointment

Following a regular assessment of the trustee skills and experience we need to deliver our strategy, trustees are recruited by external advertisement in the same way that staff are recruited, and there are role profiles and an application form.

Board skills and diversity

Building on our growing profile, we attract both planned and unsolicited interest from potential trustees. In 2025/2026, following a skills audit, we are undertaking targeted recruitment to strengthen the Board with expertise in fundraising, business transformation and housing, while prioritising protected characteristics and lived experience to ensure our leadership reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.

Applicants are interviewed by the Chair/Vice Chair and Chief Executive, and the final decision is made by the Trustee Board. All new Trustees receive an induction, and training is planned, commissioned and delivered regularly to ensure trustees remain informed about legal duties and sector developments.

Management delegation

Trustees delegate day-to-day management to the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leadership Team. Clear reporting lines and performance measures are in place to ensure accountability.

Partnerships

LWA is the lead agency in the LDVS, working in partnership with Behind Closed Doors and Women's Health Matters. It also leads the W&GAL, a consortium of 12 organisations.

5. Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. All activities undertaken by LWA during 2024/2025 directly further its charitable objectives and deliver significant public benefit.

This includes:

- Emergency refuge and safe housing;
- Support for marginalised groups, including disabled women and non-English speakers;
- Free, trauma-informed support across all services;
- Engagement with policymakers and system change initiatives to protect future victim-survivors.

6. Risk Management

The trustees recognise their responsibility for managing risk and ensuring that Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) has a robust system of internal control. In 2025, the Board have commenced a comprehensive review of the Business Continuity Plan and Risk Register and in 2025/26 will - with input from our Risk Manager - update them both in line with our new strategic plans.

This proactive approach reflects LWA's commitment to ensuring operational resilience and protecting beneficiaries, staff and assets. The updated Risk Register is likely to include 21 specific risk areas across governance, operations, finance, cyber security, safeguarding and service delivery. Each risk will be supported by action plans and mitigation measures, with responsible leads assigned to ensure risks are being actively managed.

Key risks identified and managed in 2024 - 2025 included:

- **Financial Risks**: Ongoing diversification of income streams and development of anti-fraud policies to mitigate against contract loss and funding shortfalls.
- **Cyber Security and Data Loss**: Enhanced IT asset audits, staff training on insider threats and regular testing of system backups to protect critical data and prevent operational disruption.
- **Safeguarding and Criminal Risk**: Updated policies and frontline training to address potential criminal exploitation affecting service users, especially in refuge settings.
- **Reputational Risk**: Strengthened media and crisis communications strategies, including staff training and external stakeholder engagement.
- **Loss of Access to Premises or Services**: Incident response and contingency plans developed for potential loss of refuge accommodation or utility failures.
- **Strategic Risks**: Planning underway for the 2026 - 2028 Strategic Framework to ensure alignment with national and local policy changes, particularly around housing benefit and refuge funding.

LWA will also introduce a new risk category related to criminality, ensuring safeguarding protocols remain strong even in the face of emerging risks affecting vulnerable individuals.

The Board of Trustees reviews the Risk Register quarterly and ensures mitigating actions are embedded across the organisation. Risks are not seen solely as threats but as opportunities to improve governance, resilience and service delivery.

7. Plans for Future Periods

Looking ahead, Leeds Women's Aid is entering a pivotal period of strategic development. During the next financial year (2025/26), LWA will initiate the process of designing a new three-year strategy, which will set our direction through to 2028. This will build on the foundations of our current values-led model and our commitment to continuous improvement, inclusion and victim-survivor-centred practice.

A core principle of this new strategy will be co-production. We firmly believe that the people who use our services - and those who deliver them - are best placed to shape how they evolve. As such, our approach will be deeply consultative, engaging:

- Victim-survivors with lived experience through structured workshops, 1:1 feedback and collaboration via the LDVS Voices Project.
- All employees and volunteers through focus groups, reflective practice sessions and opportunities to shape priorities from the ground up.
- Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team, who are working together to embed good governance, financial sustainability, equity and trauma-informed practice into every level of the organisation.

The strategic review will also be informed by national and local developments, including anticipated changes to domestic abuse funding frameworks, housing benefit reform and the growing demand for intersectional, culturally appropriate support.

Key areas of focus being explored in the strategic design process include:

- Expanding preventative education and early intervention work with children and young people.
- Embedding specialist support pathways for victim-survivors with multiple and complex needs.
- Strengthening staff wellbeing, retention and professional development.
- Enhancing equity, diversity and inclusion across all organisational levels.
- Scaling and sustaining key services through diversified income streams.
- Ensuring operational resilience through continued investment in infrastructure, data systems and digital access.

The new strategy will be launched in 2026 and will align our organisational plans, budgets and staffing structures to deliver on its ambitions. Our goal is not just to respond to need—but to lead with compassion, courage and evidence, ensuring that LWA remains a vital, trusted and future-facing organisation for years to come.

In 2025/2026, LWA also plan to:

- Complete and launch a new Children and Young People's Hub to support over 100 children annually in refuge.
- Expand the ELEVATE school-based DV&A programme, pending further funding.
- Strengthen service delivery through trauma-informed training and staff development.
- Continue to lead partnership working through the LDVS and W&GAL.
- Engage in policy influence and campaigns, including Ask for Angela and Women's Night Safe Space.

8. Statutory Information

Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees, who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that period. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS102)
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Statement of disclosure of information to Auditors

The Trustees of the company who held office at the date of approval of this annual report confirm that so far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each Trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved on behalf the Board

.....

Nneka Ikeogu
Director and Chair of the Board

Date 02/10/25.....

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Leeds Women's Aid (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the industry sector;
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation and data protection, anti-bribery, employment, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- Ensured laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- Making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was a susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- Understanding the design of the company's remuneration policies.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we;

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions
- Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in note 2 were indicative of potential bias; and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risks of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- Reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- Reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the company's legal advisors.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from the financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Victoria Atkinson FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of BK Plus Audit Limited, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Certified Accountants
52 St Johns Lane
Halifax
West Yorkshire
HX1 2BW
England
Date: 14 October 2025

BK Plus Audit Limited

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	179,544	221,316	400,860	63,025	49,982	113,007
Charitable activities	4	1,026,600	3,122,965	4,149,565	1,010,291	3,531,614	4,541,905
Other trading activities	5	75,779	-	75,779	68,679	-	68,679
Investments	6	60,253	-	60,253	68,103	-	68,103
Total income		1,342,176	3,344,281	4,686,457	1,210,098	3,581,596	4,791,694
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	7	74,963	-	74,963	71,256	-	71,256
Charitable activities	8	1,078,799	3,337,391	4,416,190	1,164,109	3,190,547	4,354,656
Total expenditure		1,153,762	3,337,391	4,491,153	1,235,365	3,190,547	4,425,912
Net income and movement in funds		188,414	6,890	195,304	(25,267)	391,049	365,782
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		797,156	550,387	1,347,543	822,423	159,338	981,761
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		985,570	557,277	1,542,847	797,156	550,387	1,347,543

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**15**		74,293		95,066
Current assets					
Debtors	**16**	200,609		156,968	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,671,752		1,443,929	
		1,872,361		1,600,897	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**17**	(403,807)		(348,420)	
Net current assets			1,468,554		1,252,477
Total assets less current liabilities			1,542,847		1,347,543
Net assets			1,542,847		1,347,543
The funds of the charity					
Restricted income funds	**20**		557,277		550,387
Unrestricted funds			985,570		797,156
			1,542,847		1,347,543

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2025, although an audit is required under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small company regime.

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 02/10/25

Dr N C Ikeogu
Trustee

Company registration number 02627468 (England and Wales)

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	27		186,448		(224,643)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(18,878)		(47,693)	
Investment income received		60,253		68,103	
Net cash generated from investing activities			41,375		20,410
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			227,823		(204,233)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,443,929		1,648,162
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,671,752		1,443,929

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Leeds Women's Aid is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is 52 Saint Johns Lane, Halifax, HX1 2BW.

1.1 Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1 **Accounting policies** **(Continued)**

Donated facilities and donated professional services are recognised in income at their fair value when their economic benefit is probable, it can be measured reliably, and the charity has control over the item. Fair value is determined on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity. For example, the amount the charity would be willing to pay in the open market for such facilities and services, a corresponding amount is recognised in expenditure.

No amount is included in the financial statements in relation to volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102). Further detail is given In the Trustees' Annual Report.

Gifts in kind, donated for resale, are recognised within 'Income from other trading activities' at the net realisable value in the financial year in which they are sold.

Fixed asset gifts in kind are recognised when receivable and are included at fair value. These gifts are not deferred over the life of the asset.

Income from trading activities, includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity. Income is received in exchange for supplying goods and services in order to raise funds and is recognised when entitlement has occurred, income from the charity shop is included in the financial year in which it is received.

The charity receives government grants in respect of its charitable activities, income from government and other grants are recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement to them and after any performance conditions have been met, when it is probable that the income will be received and when the amount can be measured reliably. If these entitlement conditions are not met the income is treated as deferred income.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and equipment	Straight line over 4 years
Fixtures and fittings	Straight line over 4 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1 **Accounting policies** (Continued)

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 **Critical accounting estimates and judgements**

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 **Income from donations and legacies**

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	124,675	221,316	345,991	63,025	49,982	113,007
Legacies	54,869	-	54,869	-	-	-
	179,544	221,316	400,860	63,025	49,982	113,007

4 **Income from charitable activities**

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities						
Rental income	949,891	-	949,891	866,266	-	866,266
Personal Service Charge income	74,411	-	74,411	69,884	-	69,884
Contract income	(584)	3,122,965	3,122,381	74,141	3,526,344	3,600,485
Management charges income	2,882	-	2,882	-	5,270	5,270
	1,026,600	3,122,965	4,149,565	1,010,291	3,531,614	4,541,905

5 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Shop income	75,779	68,679

6 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Interest receivable	60,253	68,103

7 Expenditure on raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Trading costs		
Operating charity shops	34,943	31,623
Staff costs	36,428	36,020
Depreciation and impairment	3,592	3,613
	74,963	71,256

8 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Charitable activities 2025 £	Charitable activities 2024 £
Direct costs		
Staff costs	2,444,315	2,348,119
Depreciation and impairment	36,059	26,648
Premises costs	384,301	434,622
Repairs and maintenance costs	156,433	147,043
Office costs	46,101	51,265
Advertising costs	7,168	9,223
Other personnel costs	21,473	10,692
Training costs	46,688	49,284
Motor and travel costs	14,034	14,004
Health and safety costs	20,212	14,669
Subcontractor costs	1,021,696	1,035,042
Activities and service costs	72,196	86,096
Bad debt provision	41,506	9,370
Other costs	162	1,583
	4,312,344	4,237,660
Share of support and governance costs (see note 9)		
Support	103,846	116,996
	4,416,190	4,354,656
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	1,078,799	1,164,109
Restricted funds	3,337,391	3,190,547
	4,416,190	4,354,656

9 Support costs allocated to activities

	Charitable activities 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Governance	103,846	116,998

9 Support costs allocated to activities (Continued)

Governance costs comprise:	2025 £	2024 £
Audit fees	7,476	5,989
Legal and professional	67,563	78,666
Governance costs	2,583	1,300
Recruitment costs	21,076	29,436
Bank and credit card charges	5,148	1,607
	103,846	116,998

10 Net movement in funds

The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2025 £	2024 £
Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	7,476	5,989
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	39,651	30,261

11 Auditor's remuneration

Fees payable to the charity's auditor and associates:

	2025 £	2024 £
For audit services		
Audit of the financial statements of the charity	7,476	5,989

12 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

13 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Refuge and Aftercare	44	48
Community Services	25	36
Social Enterprise and Funding	4	3
Management and Administration	14	11
Total	87	98

13 Employees (Continued)

Employment costs

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	2,190,787	2,109,304
Social security costs	195,130	185,805
Other pension costs	94,826	89,030
	2,480,743	2,384,139

The average head count of employees during the year was 87.

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000 is as follows:

	2025	2024
	Number	Number
£70,001 - £80,000	1	1

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	322,771	289,263

The key management personnel of the charity have been identified as the CEO, Operations Director, Fundraising and Marketing Director and Projects, Partnerships Director and Finance Manager.

14 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

15 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and equipment	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	147,865	112,068	259,933
Additions	12,126	6,752	18,878
At 31 March 2025	159,991	118,820	278,811
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 April 2024	85,405	79,462	164,867
Depreciation charged in the year	24,192	15,459	39,651
At 31 March 2025	109,597	94,921	204,518
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2025	50,394	23,899	74,293
At 31 March 2024	62,460	32,606	95,066

16 Debtors

	2025	2024
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	78,889	124,702
Prepayments and accrued income	121,720	32,266
	200,609	156,968

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2025	2024
		£	£
Other taxation and social security		41,329	43,438
Deferred income	18	265,000	77,824
Trade creditors		44,546	162,313
Other creditors		15,214	13,518
Accruals		37,718	51,327
		403,807	348,420

18 Deferred income

	2025	2024
	£	£
Arising from Deferred income	265,000	77,824

18 Deferred income (Continued)

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	265,000	77,824
Movements in the year:		
Deferred income at 1 April 2024	77,824	804,444
Released from previous and current periods	(3,217,020)	(3,417,302)
Resources deferred in the year	3,404,196	2,690,682
Deferred income at 31 March 2025	265,000	77,824

19 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes	2025	2024
	£	£
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	94,826	87,654

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

20 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Bon Iver	21,530	2,317	(11,716)	-	12,131
Designated Donations	10,000	-	(1,500)	-	8,500
New Burdens Fund -Domestic Violence Voices	13,613	106,528	(99,654)	-	20,487
Donations	92,523	172,371	(12,041)	-	252,853
Donations - Emmeline Play Area	23,478	-	(8,605)	-	14,873
Early Help Hub	-	122,200	(122,200)	-	-
Empowering Systems Change	34,422	162,324	(196,746)	-	-
Equalities Womens Hub	-	5,180	(3,264)	-	1,916
Household Support Fund	-	37,023	(16,992)	-	20,031
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	2,946	204,685	(204,685)	-	2,946
Leeds Domestic Violence Service - Non LWA Funds	-	229,600	(229,600)	-	-
Leeds Domestic Violence Service - Lot 1 IDVA	-	352,171	(352,171)	-	-
LDVS Lot 2	-	248,925	(248,925)	-	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	15,586	75,023	(87,732)	-	2,877
MOJ - Elevate Fund	-	61,836	(61,836)	-	-
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	123,869	153,314	(245,691)	-	31,492
New Burdens Fund - Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	68,761	299,767	(367,537)	-	991
New Burdens Fund - LDVS Community Based	59,843	371,735	(401,510)	-	30,068
New Burdens Fund - Practitioner Support	12,226	50,086	(54,721)	-	7,591
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support	16,505	372,351	(361,414)	-	27,442
Northern Training Consortium	746	2,986	(3,000)	-	732
Online Chat	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
Police Commissioner Grant	-	70,008	(70,008)	-	-
Safer City Centre	-	3,944	(3,944)	-	-
Safer Streets 4	46,175	116,853	(48,845)	-	114,183

20 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

Staying Safe	2,921	-	-	-	2,921
UKSPF	-	89,499	(89,499)	-	-
Women's Centre Funding	-	31,056	(31,056)	-	-
	550,387	3,344,282	(3,337,392)	-	557,277

20 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Bon Iver	11,949	9,942	(361)	-	21,530
Comic Relief	6,672	88,561	(95,232)	-	-
Designated Donations	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
New Burdens Fund -Domestic Violence Voices	-	106,528	(92,915)	-	13,613
Donations	43,865	92,182	(43,524)	-	92,523
Donations - Emmeline Play Area	31,301	-	(7,823)	-	23,478
Early Help Hub	-	122,000	(122,000)	-	-
Empowering Systems Change	21,062	255,283	(241,923)	-	34,422
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Refuge	-	248,922	(248,922)	-	-
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	709,339	(811,393)	105,000	2,946
Ministry of Justice - Elevate Fund	-	59,992	(70,489)	10,497	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	12,702	90,608	(87,724)	-	15,586
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	-	341,049	(217,180)	-	123,869
New Burdens Fund - Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	-	463,268	(289,507)	(105,000)	68,761
New Burdens Fund - LDVS Community Based	-	398,488	(328,148)	(10,497)	59,843
New Burdens Fund - Practitioner Support	-	49,861	(37,635)	-	12,226
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support	-	355,929	(339,424)	-	16,505
Northern Training Consortium	-	746	-	-	746
Safer City Centre	-	24,056	(24,056)	-	-
Safer Streets 4	13,604	81,465	(48,894)	-	46,175
Staying Safe	2,940	-	(19)	-	2,921
VRU Police Control Room	-	83,377	(83,377)	-	-
	159,338	3,581,596	(3,190,546)	-	550,387

21 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

Details of our reserve policy and designated funds are included in the financial section of the Trustees Report.

	At 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
General Funds	363,880	1,342,176	(1,153,762)	(116,724)	435,570
Designated Funds	433,276	-	-	116,724	550,000
	797,156	1,342,176	(1,153,762)	-	985,570

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Designated funds	433,276	-	-	-	433,276
General funds	389,147	1,210,098	(1,235,365)	-	363,880
	822,423	1,210,098	(1,235,365)	-	797,156

22 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025
	£	£	£
At 31 March 2025:			
Tangible assets	74,293	-	74,293
Current assets/(liabilities)	911,277	557,277	1,468,554
	985,570	557,277	1,542,847

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024
	£	£	£
At 31 March 2024:			
Tangible assets	71,588	23,478	95,066
Current assets/(liabilities)	725,568	526,909	1,252,477
	797,156	550,387	1,347,543

23 Operating lease commitments

Lessee

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Within one year	11,589	40,360
Between two and five years	-	11,589
	11,589	51,949

24 Capital commitments

Amounts contracted for but not provided in the financial statements:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Property improvements	245,803	-

25 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024 - none).

26 Ultimate Controlling Party

The charity is under the control of the board of trustees.

27 Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations

	2025	2024
	£	£
Surplus for the year	195,304	365,782
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(60,253)	(68,103)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	39,651	30,261
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(43,641)	82,554
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(131,789)	91,483
Increase/(decrease) in deferred income	187,176	(726,620)
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	186,448	(224,643)

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1005884

Accounts

Charity registration number 1005884

Company registration number 02627468 (England and Wales)

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Every woman deserves
respect and support

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Ms C Clapham (Resigned 22/10/24) Ms M Clarke (Resigned 31/7/24) Ms H L Daniels Ms J M Ezard Dr N C Ikeogu Ms J Mcara Ms R Tredge Dr L Whewell Ms V Rolfe (Appointed 31/7/24)
Charity number	1005884
Company number	02627468
Registered office	52 St John's Lane Halifax HX1 2BW
Auditor	BK Plus Audit Limited 52 St John's Lane Halifax West Yorkshire England HX1 2BW
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank plc 4 Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2JB Triodos Bank Deanery Road Bristol BS1 5AS
Solicitors	Wrigley's Solicitors LLP 19 Cookridge Street Leeds LS2 3AG

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

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LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

TRUSTEES REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Directors' and Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2024

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The Chair's Foreword

I am once again delighted to introduce the Directors' and Trustees' report for Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) for the year ended 31 March 2024. LWA has had another very successful year, and we achieved much of what we set out to do, in line with our strategic objectives and while keeping in mind that we would be moving into the final year of the commissioned contracts from April 2024.

This year saw a significant increase in our income to £4.7m, up from £3.9m in 2022-2023, ensuring that the financial position of the organisation remained strong – something that we do not take for granted when we are in such a challenging financial climate overall. Prudent financial management has seen our reserves grow to a healthy amount – within the range agreed by the Board and as outlined in our Reserves Policy – leaving us confident in our ability to discharge our duties in the event of an unforeseen reduction in or loss of income.

We often remark as a Board that we wish there was no need for our organisation and its services, however, whilst the need is so clearly there, we are committed to continuing to provide services to the highest standards to meet that need. As with previous years, the demand for LWA's services continued to grow this year and we have continued to respond to this in increasingly creative ways and through both leading and working in partnership with other organisations through the Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS) and Women & Girls Alliance – Leeds (W&GAL) consortiums.

At the end of the financial year that this report and audited accounts deal with, the country was looking towards an unexpected general election, and along with the rest of the sector, we were interested to see the direction of travel for the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) sector. We are delighted the new government has committed to halving violence against women and girls within a decade. As an organisation, we look forward to being part of this is narrative in the coming years. We will continue to work collaboratively with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), Leeds City Council (LCC) and West Yorkshire Police (WYP) in service of this commitment, and with a particular focus on the night-time economy and we hope to be able to continue to provide innovative services such as the Women's Night Safe Space, which has supported well over 1,000 women since it began and has garnered a high level of praise from many as well as media attention and featuring on BBC News Look North.

We are extremely proud of the start of a major project to build a new Children and Young People's (C&YP) Hub; an idea that came from feedback from some of the children and young people who have spent time in our refuges with their mothers. The idea for the hub and what it will provide for children and young people who are being supported within the refuges has resonated with a number of individuals and organisations, and we are well on our way to meeting the target amount set for the build. The projected timeline for completion of the hub is late 2025.

Work on the overall strategy and specific strategic objectives continued through the year and were further refined by the Board. Detailed information regarding progress against the objectives can be found in the full report. We continue to be committed to the strategy in service of our overall aims and a belief that all women and children should live in safety, and free from abuse and fear.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank the entire staff team and volunteers for their hard work and dedication throughout the year, especially during some particularly challenging times. As ever, I would also like to offer sincere thanks to each and every one of LWAs supporters and donors. We have had an incredible response to some of our campaigns and for which we are incredibly grateful, as much of our work would not be possible without these generous donations, both of time and money. We are excited to continue our work and to develop the organisation over the coming year and beyond.

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

TRUSTEES REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Executive Summary

1 Our Provenance

LWA was established 52 years ago in 1972 by committed feminist activists wanting to support women and children experiencing and living with Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV & A). In 1973 we opened the first refuge outside of London which was the second in the whole of the UK. LWA is now the largest women's charity in Leeds.
It is an incredible honour to be able to celebrate over 50 years of delivering such amazing lifesaving services. We are very proud of what we have achieved and pleased to outline our future plans.

> "Thank you so much for being there to support women who need it; without any biasness; irrespective of skin colour, ethnicity, race, religion, creed or age. LWA has given us more than what we could have ever asked for, furniture, lights, clean water for drinking, hot and cold water for bathing, tub, shower, cupboards, side tables, reading lamps, wardrobes, clean beds, blankets, duvets, pillows, cutlery in the kitchen, washing machine, dryer, storage for our belongings. This list is endless."
>
> "I have become more confident. I am able to go out freely without being controlled. I can now make my own decisions and can now use my phone and learning how to use a laptop. I am a very strong woman now and I can provide for my children. I am happy now and so are my children."

2 What We Do?

We provide a comprehensive and wide range of services to support women and children experiencing and living with DV & A and are also a leading voice for individuals and our sector to end VAWG.

Much more detail is included in this report and on our website: **www.leedswomensaid.org.uk**.

This financial year 2023/2024 resulted in a record income for us, following additional funding from three main sources:

- The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as part of New Burdens Funding, established by the government in response to the Domestic Abuse Act.
- WYCA
- Ministry of Justice (MOJ) funding for our DV & A work.

This meant we could plan to further increase and develop services, but also importantly invest in our current, mainly accommodation based, offer. This funding continues through to March 2025. Additionally, we achieved funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for our work leading the Women Friendly Leeds movement in partnership LCC.

3 How We Do It?

The additional funding has enabled us to increase our staff numbers and deliver more services and reach more women and children. Again, our contacts, through our first point of contact services, increased to record levels, see section 3.1 of the main report.

Our people remain our greatest asset and strength, and we support, develop and invest in our teams. Together, we deliver lifesaving services that we know are needed and we also lead the agenda for ending violence against women and girls, ensuring that women and children's voices are heard across the City.

4 Fundraising and Finance

This year has been a remarkable year for our charity, expanding our services, increasing our income and our reach, and continuing to diversify our work. Our partnership work has gone from strength to strength and our reputation in thought leadership and influencing social change is intensifying.

During this year we launched our ambitious C&YP Hub project, aiming to raise over £300,000 to build a state-of-the-art Hub for our children and young people who live in our emergency accommodation. The idea for the Hub originated from our beneficiaries in December 2022 and they are at the forefront of its design. During this financial year we created a project board, with many trades giving us thousands of pounds worth of pro bono time and expertise, we launched our

public appeal, received huge amounts of publicity and started our capital fundraising scheme. We are aiming to have this built by late 2025, and will be reporting progress on a regular basis.

As to our overall financial position, see section 5.9 for more detail but in summary we:

- Increased our income to £4,791,694.
- Delivered a surplus of £365,782 in 2023/24.
- Maintained a level of unrestricted reserves of £797,156 compared with a policy level of between £710,000 and £818,000. During the year, we used some designated reserves (£25,267) by investing in the initial development and fundraising campaign for the C&YP Hub.
- Due to the expansion in this year, an amount of £75,000 has been designated as a general contingency for the next financial year, with an additional £25,000 contingency should we need to support the C&YP Hub.

5 Governance and risk management

Our governance structures are well defined and work well. Our redefined board-led committees: People and Organisational Development Committee, Finance and Governance Committee and Fundraising, Marketing and Social Media Committee, are driving our strategic objectives forwards.

The Board ensure that risk management is regularly considered and our risk register is fit for purpose.

6 Our future

LWA's strengths are in delivering excellent services, leading collaborative partnerships, developing new and innovative services and having strategic influence locally, regionally and nationally.

This year has seen another increase in demand for LWA's services, both in our stand-alone services, and in leading the LDVS projects.

Additionally, we are continuing to work in partnership with the W&GAL and Women Friendly Leeds (WFL) to introduce new services and improve influence across the City in line with our strategic objective to be a leader of, and a voice for, women-centred support in Leeds and surrounding areas.

The Board has revised our strategic objectives and has been working with our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to:

1. Evaluate and report on the performance against our strategic objectives.
2. Work with LCC commissioners on extending our LDVS commissioned services from April 2025 for a further three years to March 2028, covered in more detail in section 5.1.
3. Continue to develop our people, both staff and trustees, ensuring that they are supported, developed and invested in.
4. Continue our work on equity, diversity and inclusion, with our forward focus on mental health and supporting staff.
5. Create strategies to mitigate the financial and social challenges facing the country and charities in respect of the continued impacts of the cost of living crisis, political changes and the uncertainty of future government funding.

The Board and SLT are determined to build on the successes illustrated in this report and do even more to deliver on our beliefs that:

- All women and children should live in safety, free from abuse and fear.
- Every woman and child have a voice and should be empowered, inspired and listened to.
- Women centred support is powerful and improves the lives of women, men and children.

These beliefs are the major driver for why we do what we do and provide the inspiration to our staff, trustees, volunteers, funders and supporters.

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

TRUSTEES REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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1 Purpose and Impact

1.1 Summary

LWA was established in 1972 and therefore celebrates its 52nd year in operation. It was formed by committed feminist activists wanting to support women and children experiencing and living with DV & A.

LWA is the largest women's charity in Leeds and although the scope of our work and activity has developed, supporting women and girls who have multiple and the most complex of needs through our partnership work, and additionally, coordinating some services to men and transmen through our commissioned services, we remain committed to our feminist approach and the client groups with whom we work. We continue to provide a range of the very best services for vulnerable women and families who are victims and survivors of: domestic, sexual & honour-based violence and abuse; forced marriage; trafficking; stalking and harassment.

LWA continues to be the lead agency in the local authority commissioned LDVS Consortium and the W&GAL, leading on the National Lottery Community Fund and UKSPF funded projects. LWA also continues to lead on various other partnership initiatives around voice and influence and women and girl's safety.

LWA is leading the LDVS consortium in the 7th year of the 8-year commissioned contracts, being responsible for the quality and performance of all services that are delivered in partnership. LWA is responsible for the delivery of the commissioned LDVS emergency accommodation and refuge provision, the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service, the 24/7 helpline, and various community-based services.

In addition, LWA continues to deliver our flagship independent refuges, and offers community development, police control room consultation and support, on-line live chat support, healthy relationship and staying safe programmes and activities, support for women with multiple and complex needs and continues to deliver the newer partnership projects such as Ask for Angela and the Women's Night Safe Space.

LWA supports women and children predominantly from Leeds and the Yorkshire and Humber region, but also often works with women from across the UK when safety issues arise.

The continued DLUHC funding has enabled us to continue to lead, develop and expand the large multi-agency partnership on behalf of LDVS. This includes the Sanctuary Support Team (SST), as well as the LDVS Voices project, working collaboratively with partners to obtain and share the views of victims-survivors of DV & A across Leeds from a range of people and communities, including women, men, LGBT+ people and children and young people.

We continue to be the charity of choice for many individuals and organisations, developing our work with individual and community fundraising, along with working with corporates to develop lasting relationships.

In summer 2023, we launched our capital fundraising appeal for a new dedicated C&YP Hub which will be based at the commissioned refuge. The Hub is an exciting and innovative project and will make a huge difference to lives of children and young people who have been impacted by domestic violence and abuse.

From April 2023 to March 2024 we supported over 107 children and young people in refuge settings, with almost every adult accessing the refuge service having one or more children who have witnessed or experienced the trauma of domestic violence and abuse.

We want to break the cycle of abuse and ensure children in our refuges can access support to overcome the trauma of abuse. We report on this in section 2.5.

From April 2023 to March 2024, the numbers of calls to our helpline continued to increase, surpassing previous peak levels and last year's record. Total calls and short-term work reached almost 7,742 for the year. Requests for our refuges continued to soar, but we can rarely admit more than a fraction of those that make enquiries or we receive referrals for due to a lower number of transfers to alternative accommodation.

LWA continues to show leadership and strength in the sector, working hard to increase funding to partners to help influence positive changes. We have ensured that our LDVS partners, and other organisations that we've brought into the large LDVS-led consortia projects, have received further funding. We also continue to show generous leadership with the W&GAL, sharing information, ideas and opportunities. As one Alliance partner said *"Thank you for always being so thoughtful and generous with your time and knowledge. It really means a lot and makes a genuine difference to us."*

1.2 Highlights

We have continued our collaborations with the WYCA and LCC, regarding reducing VAWG, particularly in relation to streets and parks, and the night-time economy. In addition, we started our work funded through the UKSPF.

LWA has been instrumental this year in working with partners in the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, VAWG Board, Domestic Abuse Voice & Accountability (DAVA) Forum and Safer Leeds Executive, to raise awareness and action regarding both VAWG and domestic abuse, including increasing the number of victims-survivors voices that are heard and acted on.

Our work leading the SST continues to create national conversations and shows how we can holistically support people from different backgrounds and communities whilst making their properties more safe and secure. This year we added a further post, working for the first time in partnership with Age UK, to offering dedicated support to women over 50 who experience DV & A.

We have made huge advances in working with victims-survivors in our DV&A Voices project, in ensuring that their voices are heard and that their lived experience is used to influence real change in the City by stakeholders, commissioners, decision makers and planners. The Voices project started a huge conversation with West Yorkshire Police, supporting victims-survivors to engage with senior police officers to listen to their experiences in order to help enact change.

We are also delighted with the work our expanded C&YP's teams are doing both in refuge and in the community, and have a section dedicated to this work in 2.6 below.

1.3 Progress on strategic objectives

Our strategic objectives remain central to our deployment and impact during this year and we have refined our strategic objectives and extended our strategy to 2026.

This year saw us refine our strategic objectives to four, focussing in on the areas of most importance to us. Recent progress against each of them is reported on below.

1.3.1 To be a leader of, and a voice for, women-centred support in Leeds and surrounding areas

This objective from previous years remains key through to 2026, as it focusses our attention on how we can help to lead our sector in improving our combined and collaborative voice and improve the lives of women and girls in Leeds.

We are a 'leader' in two different ways – "Leadership" in relation to being formal leaders of consortia, attending meetings, being an expert and voice of the sector, and "Generous Leadership" which is equally important to us and involves pro-bono work, supporting smaller organisations and using our time and resources for the benefit of others.

Examples of our Leadership this year:

Increased awareness of the W&GAL and the work we are doing, in particular, consultations with young women on spiking, which will lead to a report with three 'asks' to be shared in August and September 2024 with partners, culminating in a Leeds wide focus on reducing the levels of, and fear of, spiking.

We have been leading on voices and influence work of women who have experienced DV & A, leading on domestic abuse strategy, ensuring that stakeholders recognise that it has to be driven by voices and victim-survivors experiences.

On behalf of W&GAL and the third sector, LWA led on our partnership work with LCC and WYCA for the UKSPF to shape it to focus on women and girls' outcomes.

Towards the end of the financial year, we started to work within the Northern Training Consortium, funded through the MOJ, to deliver a series of monthly lunch and learn sessions for front line staff who work with victims-survivors of sexual violence and abuse. Our role is to deliver sessions for Yorkshire & Humberside, so we brought in some of our local colleagues, including Support After Rape and Sexual Violence Leeds, Kirklees, Calderdale & Wakefield Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre and Bradford Rape Crisis to deliver expert, creative and engaging training sessions.

Examples of Generous Leadership this year:

Our CEO shares relevant opportunities with colleagues, particularly through the W&GAL, including sharing the details of the CCLA deposit fund, which improves financial security by spreading investment risk, and also provides income from interest.

Our CEO started to work with one of our very small partners in the W&GAL to help them redesign and take forward their strategy, and to create a new post of CEO/Director. This was started in this financial year, but is continuing. LWA are helping with the project management, HR, advertising and recruitment work.

1.3.2 To be a great place to work where people can develop and grow and our values, including equity and diversity, underpin what we do and how we do it.

This newly updated strategic objective has been driven by our desire to be an employer of choice and to create development and leadership opportunities, and effective succession planning.

Due to our expansion we have continued to invest in our people and in our people department, having expertise in-house to lead on a people and culture strategy along with learning and development. This has just begun and we will report further next year.

We are proud that many of our front-line staff have started with us through casual relief work, and then progress to become employees. Additionally, due to successful succession planning and leadership and development training, over 70% of our team leaders and managers are promoted in-house.

We have started our programme of mandatory anti-racism and neurodiversity training for staff and trustees, and had our first ever internal staff conference for May 2023 focussing on these two main issues, having external speakers and staff experiences, along with staff awards nominated by the staff themselves. Our recent staff survey showed that 90% of staff felt that they were comfortable talking about their background and cultural and personal experiences with their colleagues.

Our staff-led Wellbeing Committee goes from strength to strength and has begun organising our next staff conference specifically around mental health, to be held during Mental Health Awareness Week. For the second year, we will also have the following staff awards celebrating our committed and passionate staff. Colleagues will nominate who they think exemplifies the best of our values:

- **Above & Beyond Award (Be Exceptional)** – someone who consistently strives to give their best to LWA, their colleagues and everyone they come into contact with.
- **Everyday Hero Award (Be Courageous)** – someone who moves out of their comfort zone to accomplish something they believe in or to achieve personal growth.
- **The 3 Cheers Award (Be Inclusive)** – someone who gets the best out of me/others by always being available to listen, include and offer support.
- **The High Five Award (Be Inspirational)** - someone who continuously works on building and maintaining trust within the team.

- **Helping Hands Award (Be Responsive)** – someone who is the first to put their hand up and support a project.

1.3.3 To be an organisation that innovates by identifying and investing in opportunities ensuring long term sustainability and stability.

This year's income was over £4million and marginally above that budgeted. However, as for many charities, the next few years will be a challenge with the political landscape being unclear, and the hope that government funding will increase due to the huge demand on the sector.

We plan to invest in the Fundraising and Marketing team to increase funding opportunities, including individual giving, events and activities. Our strategic aim emphasises the need to be challenging and courageous in diversifying our reach and our funding.

By investing our time on developing corporate partnerships, we have received an increasing number of 'Charity of the Year' nominations.

1.3.4 To reflect on and assess how our accommodation offer impacts clients in Leeds and to explore opportunities to enhance high quality accommodation provision.

This strategic objective is our most challenging, but one we find inspiring and very relevant to our values. Our current provision is excellent, innovating and lifesaving. A review of our accommodation offer shows that we work hard to ensure that the emergency accommodation offer we have is a welcoming space for people from a range of different backgrounds and we promote and support timely move-on for victim-survivors when it is safe for them to do so.

Staff are trained in sex-based and gender-based violence and have a clear understanding of sex and gender inequalities. Whilst our safe accommodation and support is provided predominantly to women and girls, due to them experiencing disproportionate levels of violence and abuse, our teams do recognise that DV & A can impact people of any gender, and therefore some of our dispersed accommodation offer is open for people of any gender, where appropriate. The approach we take and the specialist training that staff benefit from allows us to adapt and implement support that is relevant and personal to individual service user's needs, thus understanding the complexity of historic and current inequalities of power balances that exist in society. We also need to differentiate between a wide range of backgrounds, ethnicities, beliefs and cultures. For example, we have recently delivered awareness sessions with our service users discussing human trafficking, impacts of forced-marriage and Female Genital Mutilation practices and safety measures with regards to children and young people visiting families overseas, and also within the UK.

Our teams work effectively and proactively with external agencies via partnership working, to address multiple needs of victim-survivors from a range of different backgrounds. This is to ensure wrap-around multi-agency intervention and support throughout their stay. This also ensures appropriate continued support is in place for when service users exit our service and in case any potential safe measures or options are required if repeat violence or abuse occurs. These key support areas relate to housing, health, finance, legal, employment, education, religious or ethnic beliefs, language, community or cultural activities and learning. This is both on an individual basis and on a broader basis, for example work we deliver with the Hamara Centre, local mosques or temples who provide refuge families with weekly donations of dry and culturally appropriate food. We also provide access to support via women-focused agencies for immigration advice, educational learning or access to employment, often providing first-time opportunities.
Currently we have four accessible units for service users who require physical support and access. This may also often entail working alongside statutory services to ensure we do meet the individual needs of all disabled service users. This could be access to additional aids, movable/fixed adjustments within the home, referrals to Occupational Therapy assessments, support with hearing or sight impairments and further linking in with external agencies who deliver specific additional support. This coincides with relevant safety planning, risk assessments and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs).

We are committed to breaking down barriers whereby cultural sensitivity and inclusivity is at the forefront in everything we do. We continually aspire to identify that our accommodation respects and acknowledges different cultural practices, neurodiversity, traditions and community pressures. We deliver this by providing individual responses to all of our service-users accessing support whilst also factoring in an understanding of any additional difficulties for victim-survivors being able to escape DV & A. Within our accommodation, we also provide practical items such as furnishings, cultural items or similar. For example: lotas, tawas and other cooking utensils, prayer mats and religious/holy texts are also provided in first-languages.

Welcome packs are provided for each service user accessing accommodation which is age relatable and specific to different backgrounds, including for children and young people. These welcome packs outline the services we offer,

service expectations during their stay, information about local services and relatable service user feedback or experiences.

For children and young people, age appropriate toys and services are provided during their stay. These include activities that raise awareness of DV & A, identifying the differences between unhealthy or healthy relationships, providing a safe space for learning, voicing their experiences as a victim, understanding parental relationships/dynamics, answering questions they may have at their stage of development and also to provide an opportunity to have fun with other children and young people of their age through play. Support plans and safety plans are additionally created with children and young people that are relevant to their own individual needs with regular one-to-one support provided by specialist children and young people's workers.

'Move-on & Resettlement support' is at the forefront of support planning and often starts when service users initially access safe accommodation with us. This usually takes some time to bring to fruition, hence resettlement and housing options are discussed in initial support planning, where support workers guide service users with their options and identify goal-setting objectives during their stay. This may include a number of housing options including social, private, return to home (if it's safe to do so and with safe provisions put into place) or on occasion purchasing new homes for the first time.

Our Housing Management and DV & A Support worker teams use this information to develop individualised 'Move-On & Resettlement' plans with service users. These plans are usually implemented when it is appropriate to recovery i.e. as soon as the service user feel emotionally, psychologically and physically able. It is paramount that they feel they are sufficiently recovered from the trauma, experiences and impacts of fleeing domestic violence and abuse. Once developed, these plans are reviewed every 6-8 weeks and coincide with needs assessed and survivor-led support plans and risk assessments.

Service users are given realistic and achievable advice. All housing options are considered to open a variety of pathways forward and these are reviewed together on an ongoing basis. Staff support service users with understanding and completing multiple housing applications, encourage active & regular weekly bidding, applying for bond assistance or funding to support tenancy move-on, search for private rented accommodation or to consider any alternative accommodation that may support their individual needs i.e. ongoing supported accommodation, sheltered accommodation etc.

Our Housing Management team are constantly looking for access to move on properties though Registered Landlords and Private accommodation providers by establishing and sustaining effective partnerships and attending meetings or housing forums to deliver/present information about the work and services that we deliver, whilst highlighting the paramount need for move on, turnover of refuge provision and the overall purpose of offering safe accommodation to all victim-survivors at heightened risk/crisis point.

Service users who identify as requiring additional support with immigration barriers or access to No Recourse to Public Funds (or similar) are provided guided support in accessing legal immigration advice. This specialist advice is often sought prior to and then during their stay. DV & A support workers will attend these meetings with service users and make necessary arrangements for travel to/from these meetings often paid via funding obtained to support overcoming the barriers.

Often our service users have never lived alone. Throughout their stay with us and throughout their 'move-on and resettlement' support (up to 6-8 weeks exiting refuge) they are provided with continued guidance to enable successful independence, empowerment and to set down links within their new communities. This is often delivered in a variety of ways depending on the needs of the service user, and can include funding for deposits, provision of furniture, essential white goods, household items and advice to understand tenancy management, paying bills or managing finances. Information about local services, community support and partnership links are created or offered. This helps to ensure that the move is sustainable and does not re-trigger trauma but mitigates transferable mirroring of experiences of when they fled from domestic violence and abuse.

During this time our support to families with children and young people will also continue as we are aware that this transition can also be a trigger or another trauma for them too. The wrap around support from the very start of their stay within refuge to the exit point from our services helps families with stability, at a significant time of heightened stress.

Additionally, all service users are offered a programme named 'Staying Safe' (currently funded externally) which helps victim-survivors to recognise and recover from domestic violence and abuse and their individual experiences. Importantly, it also helps each service user to recognise signs of potential domestic abuse and violence and to know as far as possible how to prevent this happening again. The Staying Safe programme aims to help families to avoid getting into a cycle of domestic abuse and ensure a safe, secure home. It is currently being delivered in three community languages (English, Urdu and Polish) via groupwork and on a one-to-one basis. Where appropriate, both English and non-English versions are delivered for greater interaction and understanding.

Our children's team additionally deliver the 'You and me, mum' programme which aims to empower and support survivors in furthering their understanding of their role as mothers, address the needs of their children and young people who have lived with or are victims of domestic violence and abuse. It empowers mothers to empower themselves and their children during recovery and to hopefully move forward successfully.

Along with our current offer, we are also looking at how we can develop and expand our accommodation services due to the huge lack of housing properties in Leeds and throughout the UK. Our Housing Management Coordinator is working hard in partnership with a wide range of housing related stakeholders to consider our future develop of accommodation.

We are exploring options of working with affordable housing associations and planning to buy some of our own accommodation like other refuge providers have started to do.

2 Achievements and Performance

LWA continues to grow from strength to strength and our impacts are being felt across the City and the wider UK. Some specific achievements are:

2.1 Staff Engagement and Commitment

Recruitment continues to improve and we have seen some great additions to our staff teams. We are pleased that we continue to recruit, induct, support and invest in new and existing staff.

LWA has a challenging Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to ensure that LWA treats all staff, colleagues in other agencies and service users fairly and in a way that encourages them to feel included in LWA's activities and goals and to encourage all members of staff to achieve and maintain a high standard of conduct, especially in relation to the treatment of colleagues and service users who may not share their ability, age group, ethnicity, gender, marital status, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic as laid down by legislation.

Staff engagement remains high, and we are particularly proud of how we have prioritised working together to put anti-racist practices and neurodiversity firmly on our agenda this year, along with wellbeing and support for mental health.

In a recent staff survey, 100% of staff say they are committed to the values of LWA, 93% know where to access relevant information to support their wellbeing and 85% feel accepted for who they are.

2.2 Awards and Recognition

Our Access and Assessment Team (AAT) were nominated for two national awards at the Helplines Partnership Conference for 'Helpline of the Year' and 'Mentor of the Year' which is an incredible achievement considering it was our first year of attaining the Helplines Partnership Standard.

Our Sanctuary Support Team (SST) were highly commended this year for "Diversity Project of the Year" at Leeds Compassionate City Awards 2023.
In March 2024, the SST commissioner's fed back that the SST were mentioned in the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation National Expert Steering Group Annual Progress Report.

Following the success of us winning the Horsforth Christmas shop window competition 2022, we came a fantastic 2nd place in Christmas 2023.

Our Chief Executive, Nik Peasgood, was nominated for a national Police VAWG award at the national policing recognition event for co-chairing the West Yorkshire Police VAWG Independent Advisory Group. She didn't win the national award but won the regional award for Rising Star.

Nicola Marlow, our DV&A Voices Projects Manager, was also nominated for an award at this year's Police VAWG awards in the category of Victim centred and collaborative working. Results in the next annual report.

Nik was also selected as a shortlisted nominee for the West Yorkshire Policing Awards 2024 in the VAWG – The Mary Ethel Danby Award category during this financial year - outcomes in the next annual report.

2.3 Business Partnerships

We continue to maintain and develop valuable business and community relationships. Support includes money raised from fundraising activities, business grants and in-kind support.

"LWA was overwhelmingly the choice to be our Leeds Office Charity. We recognised the amazing work that the charity does to support people affected by domestic violence and raise awareness of the ongoing importance of this issue. Everyone in our Leeds Office was keen to provide their support – whether that was through fundraising activities like canal walks and 10K runs, or by donating clothing to the LWA shop."

- **Bevan Brittan LLP**

"Eversheds Sutherland Leeds have been proud to support Leeds Women's Aid over the past four years. It's important for us at Eversheds to be involved with local charities, the sharp rise in incidents of domestic violence during COVID brought the invaluable work of LWA to our attention. Domestic violence awareness is now part of our Gender Network and we will be a longstanding partner to LWA by raising awareness of this issue among colleagues and the wider community as well as fundraising to enable its work to continue for those in need."

- **Eversheds, Leeds**

2.4 Our Refuges

Our refuges are committed to providing the best service to our residents as well as meet our obligation for the health and safety of our residents and to achieve and exceed where possible the Decent Homes Standard. Housing contributed in the following ways:

2.4.1 Housekeeping

Our housekeeping team have worked tirelessly to ensure the refuges remain in good condition, clean, welcoming and responsive to the needs of residents and the organisation. They worked to affect a 3-way move between 3 refuges to enable a resident due to have a baby, another with a toddler and a third client, to move to a more suitable unit. This involved cleaning, carrying out void repairs, restocking and dressing each unit simultaneously.

As well as working with staff they respond to individual residents to ensure they have the right cooking utensils and crockery and provide a welcoming toy in children's rooms.

They collect food donations from Sainsbury's supermarket weekly and Hamara warehouse and distribute it to our clients. They also arranged for a stock of religious books and prayer mats in the refuges so they are available to clients upon request.

2.4.2 Contractors

We use various trades to carry out repairs to our units. As a feminist organisation and working frequently with vulnerable women, we felt that we should also encourage female businesses and partners. We sought to increase the number of female contractors with whom we work and welcomed 2 new female led maintenance contracting companies onto our books for domestic plumbing and electrical work.

2.4.3 Health & Safety

We have had a renewed focus on Health and Safety over the past 12 months. Areas actioned from fire risk assessments included working with our landlord to update the emergency lighting and fire doors at two of our schemes. We arranged three sessions for fire warden training for our staff, which will be repeated regularly for new staff and as refresher training.

2.4.4 Household Support Fund

We have been successful in obtaining increased funding through the Household Support Fund which was to be used to address energy and water costs for residents. The funding allowed us to give 12-weeks' relief from Personal Service Charge payments for each of our residents. Personal Service Charge payment covers the cost of utilities that the individual household uses which can't be claimed from Housing Benefit, and due to the cost of living crisis and huge rise in utility costs, these payments were very essential.

We were also able to distribute food vouchers for all families in refuge, giving amounts in relation to their requirements, along with purchasing a range of essentials linked to energy reduction which helped to address general health, health and safety and allowing residents to be more energy efficient, thus also reducing costs

2.4.5 Kitchens

The main commissioned refuge was surveyed and plans drawn up to install new kitchens. Staff were able to review and change the plans to improve storage and work areas in some of the kitchens. The staff will help to coordinate the work being carried out.

2.4.6 Wi-Fi and telephones

We are also getting ahead of the analogue shutdown by installing a new phone system and improving access to Wi-Fi in our units and offices.

2.4.7 Impacts

Regular awareness sessions and interactive activities have been introduced within our main site commissioned refuge during the past year engaging with residents in a group setting benefitting from the following sessions.

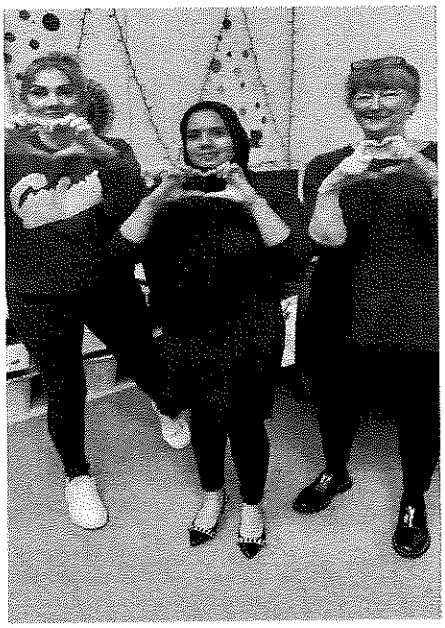
Creating awareness around DV & A in a group setting (additional to one-to-one support and the Staying Safe Programme). This has been welcomed by all, with a much greater number of attendances from our residents. These sessions have been taking place each month with facilitation delivered by our trained DV & A refuge support workers. This has introduced an additional safe space for peer support and supportive mechanisms from our service to educate and explore topics that meet the identified needs of our residents.

Additional needs have been considered in the delivery of these sessions such as creating awareness, understanding and delivering guidance on coping strategies. Examples of sessions delivered this year are:

- **Dry January** - Having open and confidential discussions around dependency, binge-drinking, safe levels of alcohol use, how we can look and explore the benefits of reducing, actively implementing safe drinking and how to respond and support others with dependencies.
- **Human Trafficking, Modern Day Slavery and Exploitation** - Covering the signs, effects and impact of being trafficked on the victim-survivor and families along with services and support that is available within our communities. Understanding the main types and key principles of trafficking, legislation and criminal support measures around exploitation, discussing myths and misconceptions and understanding the concepts of force, coercion, abuse and power or position of vulnerabilities.

Following the session all clients are provided with a brief toolkit of information to take away and can be used during support sessions with their DV Support workers.

The teams also arrange large and small get-togethers for refuge families, including celebrating International Women's Day on 8 March, where staff wore purple, green and pink and took part in activities with residents. The theme was Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress and Inspire Inclusion. All were involved in creative art work with clay which everyone enjoyed and welcomed as an alternative method of expression. Our residents were encouraged to reflect on inspirational and positive quotes to add to personalised plaques they had made. Resident feedback showed that they really enjoyed participating in these activities, were inspired by the learning and felt empowered by discussions around all inspirational women and women who are making an active change in our society.



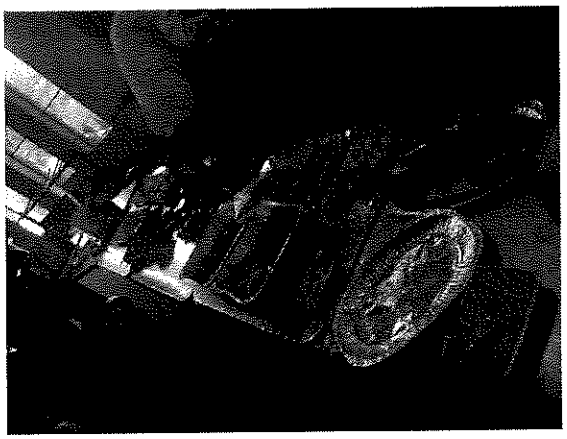


The teams have been working in close partnership with Hyde Park Source and we are in the initial stages of implementing a Women's Gardening Group just for our resident women to give an opportunity to develop friendships and peer support, and do something that they are really passionate about as a hobby.

Maui Thai Self-defence hosted a class in honour of Leeds Women's Aid which was really supportive, and raised £200.

The teams have successfully supported multiple residents with access to the Home Office's 'Future Fund' by completing individual applications to provide greater opportunities in residents move-on plans. For example, the team supported a resident to access the Fund which enabled the family to return home to Romania so that they could be near family, friends and support networks, where the family expressed they felt most comfortable to start their lives again.

Eid Celebrations continue to take place each year. This year the teams hosted activities across all refuge sites, which were well attended. Activities included various games, sharing of cultural foods and many fun activities for the families.



Our Muslim families had a great Ramadan this year and during fasting periods our teams adapted communication and welfare call timings to support families with sleep schedules and altered commitments.



Teams are in the process of identifying differing cultural heritages and will be implementing further celebrations, understanding of inclusion and creating awareness of multiple communities who reside within our refuges and Leeds.

2.4.8 Training

We have welcomed a number of new employees and relief workers to our refuges over the past year. All have been involved in completing shadowing of key roles and participated in relevant training facilitated by our team leaders outlining service deliveries. For example, a "Q&A session' was delivered by our Refuge Team Leader and further shadowing was introduced so new colleagues could apply their learning into typical scenarios that arise. The 'Q&A session' covered aspects such as 'about the services we deliver', 'types of DV & A experienced by our current residents', 'awareness of survivor voices by delivering real-life examples of experiences of DV & A' and details of programmes, interventions and meetings delivered within the refuge.

Other best practice training has taken place, e.g. – Internal Safeguarding Processes, Understanding and delivering Professional curiosity, Inclusion and Anti-racism, and Understanding Neurodiversity.

All teams have been involved in attending one of our partners training sessions to help increase knowledge and ensure best practice in their support delivery with residents. The teams have been attending Forward Leeds training courses on understanding, responding and supporting alcohol and substance misuse or dependencies.

2.4.9 Partnership working

Our refuge teams have regularly been engaged in partnership working with a number of local services in and around Leeds. This is to provide support and guidance with residents during their stay, whilst also creating additional pathways of support for future purposes. This delivery is always with a person-centred approach focusing support on the needs of individual clients specifically. A few examples include:

Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service (LMWS): the team have been supporting residents to access specialist LMWS support for their mental health and wellbeing. Our residents have been engaged in a number of interventions including access to online groupwork, one-to-one talking therapies and telephone support. The psychological themes that are discussed primarily relate to increased anxiety, stress, insomnia, depression, impacts of circumstances, fear of change and uncertainty. The team have also created referral pathways with Single Point of Access (SPA) for immediate crisis mental health support relating to suicide prevention.

Hyde Park Source: the C&YP team continues to work alongside the LCC Healthy Holidays Scheme providing activities to our families, including creative arts, outdoor activities like gardening or sports. They have been promoting healthy eating, discussing budgeting options and affordable food options to support all families impacted by the cost of living i.e. increases in the cost of food products, consumer inflation etc. Throughout the Christmas period, Hyde Park Source offered all families in refuge an opportunity to come to two family sessions at a local church. This provided families with a Christmas themed meal and a food hamper to bring home.

Teams have built a great partnership with a local perfume business who were looking to work with a charity within Leeds. On request, they are providing prayer mats, Qurans in Arabic, Persian, English and other languages to our residents.

We have also developed another great partnership with Santander Bank who have been providing financial budgeting and awareness training sessions to all staff. This ensures knowledge of financial aspects is current and equips our staff with the ability to share their knowledge with our residents which enables them to manage finances effectively.

Our residents are receiving regular weekly donations of food and ready meals from a company named 'Cooks' who have chosen to support LWA. This has very much been welcomed by all families.

2.4.10 The Out of Hours (OOH) Team

The team continue to answer the helpline and support clients in refuge whilst taking care of the refuge building outside of normal office hours, leading to huge numbers of positive feedback and compliments. Many people need or chose to contact our helpline out of office hours, due to work, family commitments, ability to speak for longer amongst some of the reasons. Our OOH team are so essential to the services we offer. Not only are they based in person at our main site commissioned refuge, but they offer direct support and help to our 43 families at any time of day or night.

The team leader successfully completed her Institute of Leadership & Management level 3 qualification. She has trained all the refuge team leaders and the DV & A support workers to increase the number of staff able to support the helpline and to improve the workers confidence and skills. Many of the workers support our LDVS Access and Assessment Team (AAT) during particularly busy periods, creating incredibly positive feedback and partnership work.

There have been residents at high risk with complex needs at refuge sites where the OOH team have gone to support in person, working over and above their contractual obligations to create and develop valuable partnerships with other agencies e.g. police, paramedics and Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs).

A client in refuge thanked an OOH worker when leaving as she helped her daughter create a CV and this made a real difference towards her future opportunities.	A client in refuge was grateful to another OOH worker for supporting her and her daughter when she was going through a Mental Health crisis.

2.5 Service User/ Victim-Survivor Feedback for refuges and safe houses

"I have become more confident. I am able to go out freely without being controlled. I can now make my own decisions and can now use my phone and I'm learning how to use a laptop."

"I am a very strong woman now and I can provide for my children myself. I am happy now and so are my children."

"This service has bought me so much peace, serenity, hope and freedom."

"It really helped to get the extra rest on a morning as I would stay up to pray, the staff really supported me by working to calls and sessions around the timings of my fasting, as it is was very important for me to be able to spiritually reconnect."

"Thank you, honestly. I don't think I could have gone through this process of applying for PIP without you. It has been perfect. Thank you for all for your help. I really appreciate."

Letter from an ex- resident

Dear all, Leeds Women's Aid entire staff,

I've come to Leeds refuge as a 36-year-old woman with a six-year-old son, devastated, shattered, hopeless, isolated, completely alone on the 4th Aug 2023.

Today, I have received my results for the General Pharmaceutical council (GPhC) assessment and I have passed. From the 15th December 2023 I shall be on the register as a registered pharmacist.

My heartfelt gratitude to the entire team of Leeds Women s Aid. I have been able to do this with your support. You all gave me a shelter, a safe space for myself and my son, a conducive environment for me to study for my assessment. You helped me with stationery for my studies. You all have given me a new life, a new vision, everything I could have ever asked for. You gave my son after school club, so I could spend that time studying. You have given me more than I could have asked for.

Thank you is not enough, yet I'm expressing thanks for all that each and every one of you do in your own way to make a positive difference in the lives of victims of abuse like me and my son and hundreds of families whom you are saving every year.

Thank you for doing your jobs with so much of love and respect.

I wish, one day I can give back to Leeds Women's Aid in my own way, to enrich the lives of other women, especially of Asian background as I am an Asian ethnic origin. Yet, you all did not bias nor show any disrespect or indifference to me, rather embraced my diversity with open arms for me and my Son.

God bless you for all your work.

This is the beginning of a new chapter for me and my son. My success is Leeds Women s Aid Success.

Please embrace mine and my son's joy and happiness today.

Kind regards,

2.6 Children and Young Peoples Teams

We are really delighted that we have teams of C&YP Workers both within our refuge provision and within the community. Our Refuge C&YP team work with all of C&YP in our safe accommodation and refuges. This can be as many as 100 at any one time. Our community C&YP project, Elevate, works with children as young as 5 in the community who have witnessed or experienced DV & A.

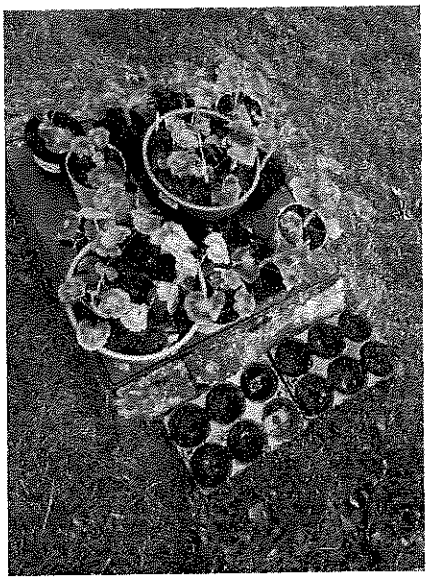
Refuge and safe accommodation Team

The team continue to work closely with DV & A support workers in refuge to ensure comprehensive support to families, they provide support to C&YP in refuge and also support around parenting to the adult residents. The work includes activities such as:

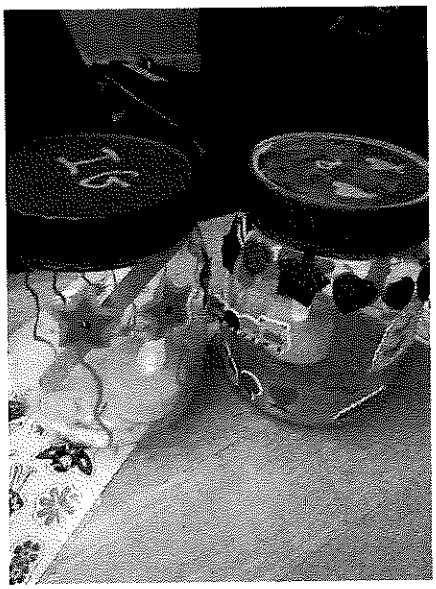
2.6.1 After School Club

The C&YP team have successfully run a weekly after school club for all children across refuge sites. This is really well attended and they are engaged in weekly set and structured activities as well as free play. Examples of activities are cooking, jewellery making, baking, arts and crafts.

Our resident children took the opportunity to do some planting in the garden at refuge. C&YP helped to add the soil and planted plants and have been regularly taking care of them since the session. The children are loving watching them all grow.



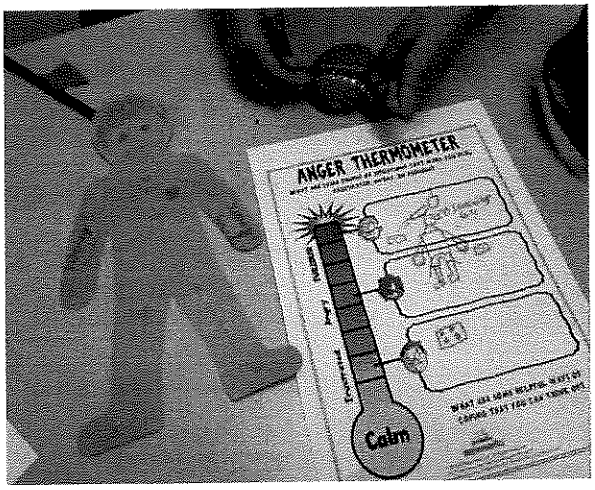
Our resident children have also decorated and designed some memory jars with our C&YP team. This is so that they can keep special memories in a special jar and look back at these for years to come. This was a great activity.



2.6.2 Nurture Group

The C&YP team also run six 6-weekly Nurture groups for different cohorts within refuge. For example: Teenage group, Boy's group, Primary aged group. This has been really successful and we have covered topics such as budgeting, online safety, healthy relationships andfamily relationships.

Our resident children took part in an interactive activity game 'Anger Thermometer'. This was an activity done in our Nurture group with primary school aged children. This was to look at feelings of anger and how this impacts individuals and others. We looked at 'strategies when feeling angry and how best to deal with those feelings', providing further specialist guidance.



A focused session about worries was delivered within refuge with families. The C&YP team utilised the 'Worry Tree' concept to look at 'worries and what solutions we can find for these', ensuring each support is individualised to each C&YP's needs.

2.6.3 You and me, Mum

Our C&YP workers have delivered two 10-week programmes of You and me, Mum in which residents took part in the program over the 10 weeks to learn and understand the impact of DV & A on children and how this can be addressed within the home environment.

2.6.4 Study club

A new Study club has been introduced to refuge whereby all high school aged children have a safe and educational space to come and do homework whilst getting support with school work (if needed) from our C&YP team.

2.6.5 School Holiday Hangout

A timetable of activities and trips throughout every school holiday is in place.

2.6.6 Trips

Over the last year our refuge teams have coordinated a number of family outings and trips. These include:

- **Circus:** A great trip to the Circus in Pudsey, all families welcomed across our refuge sites. The children had a great time. Families were provided a snack box catering to cultural dietary needs and transported there and back working in partnership with a coach company we regularly use. Families particularly enjoyed the gymnastics show, jugglers and the clowns. Everyone also learnt how to sing a song in sign language which was great!
- Farm trip
- Soft play for under 5's
- Bowling
- Seaside
- Theme park

Additionally, the C&YP team actively promote new groups, ask for ideas from clients, consult with residents for their voice and feedback through coffee mornings and resident meetings.

Community Team (Elevate)

"Sessions within refuge have made me feel more confident in taking action."
"Me and my children really enjoyed the Eid party and the food was delicious - thank you to everyone for the effort put into this".
"Staff are very supportive and will always make time to help you."

Elevate is a pilot project which supports C&YP affected by DV & A in the community. We have just two part-time workers who provide 1:1 support in school for approximately 12 weeks. The workers are managed by the C&YP Team Leader. Elevate began delivery in mid-January 2023 and is funded by the Ministry of Justice until March 2025. An interim report/evaluation on the project and learning is being finalised.

In Leeds, there is very little specialist provision to support C&YP affected by DV & A, including for boys exhibiting harmful interpersonal behaviour. The availability of counselling via schools is variable and often limited to short-term (six sessions) with long waiting lists (Two to three years). Waiting lists for Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) are also long and thresholds for therapy are prohibitively high.

Elevate this year delivered a presentation to the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board raising awareness about their project, introducing referral pathways and providing an update of their project successes to date. They have also delivered presentations to relevant services who currently provide immediate support to victims and survivors of DV & A, such as WYP Police at Elland Road, Linking Leeds, Cluster Teams, the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs), SST and our other LDVS partners.

For some C&YP, the support from Elevate was described as 'life-changing', significantly improving their overall wellbeing and school engagement.

Feedback from two parents whose C&YP had been supported by Elevate was wholly positive. They appreciated the worker's calm, friendly and skilled approach and reported positive changes in their children because of the support. They also appreciated the support provided to them as parents, which helped them understand the impact of DV & A on themselves as well as their children.

School staff gave examples of benefits for children supported by Elevate workers:

> *"He was struggling with behaviours [in school and out of school] and understanding what's going on but he's opened up so much ...**it's changed his whole school life massively. It's made such a difference to that child's life.** It's been brilliant... because **he was able to be really open, really honest, in a really safe space...it's been fabulous."***

> *"We've seen massive improvements. I think he's **starting to understand himself a lot more** and understand why he was experiencing those extreme emotions where he was in fight-or-flight mode... it's helped him massively with friendships, he was really having difficulty with appropriate language and appropriate touch with his peer group. And [worker] has given him techniques and strategies. So **he's evolved massively as a person and he's been able to self-regulate a lot more.... it's really really changed his school life for the better.** His attainment levels have gone up slightly. He's accessing the learning and he's actually enjoying it a bit more."*

> *"**She shared so so much with [worker] that she'd never opened up to anybody else about** and I think to her that must have been massive and such a relief."*

Case : Peter* (not his real name)

Peter's Mum was in an abusive relationship with Peter's Dad. Mum was working with our LDVS services to help support and process her experience and impacts of DV & A. Mum felt it was necessary for Peter to also have a safe space to explore his feelings, therefore, referring Peter into Elevate. A Child Arrangement Order was in place regarding contact, which Dad often didn't abide by. This had a regular impact on Peter who found the arrangement emotionally distressing. Peter's behaviour was expressed in physical anger and outbursts towards other students within the school.

Mum felt she was not supported enough by the school and often found communication challenging. Mum was also struggling financially and it was observed that since Peter's behaviour had deteriorated. Dad was sending Peter fortnightly letters which Peter was refusing to open. Mum was encouraging Peter to open these letters as it was within the court order.

The Elevate C&YP worker, supported Peter on an individualised and person-centred journey of processing the abuse which emotionally and psychologically affected him daily. Peter is a child victim of DV & A. Peter was adamant he did not want any contact with his Dad and initially struggled talking about his experiences and impacts with Elevate. Through the course of support, Peter shared aspects of emotion and detail of incidents he had witnessed which he had never shared with anyone before. During the course of these disclosures Peter had stated "he felt a weight had been lifted off of his shoulders." Peter was able to be emotionally vulnerable in a way he had felt he couldn't before.

Throughout the support, Peter learnt how to express and process his emotions in different ways. Peter was able to share with his worker how he was feeling and she was able to help Peter learn how to express this to others i.e. communicating with Mum so that family and friends around him can meet his needs. During this journey, Peter was able to understand his feelings better and understand how they were affecting his thoughts and physical health and wellbeing.

Peter often had fears and nightmares of Dad kidnapping him due to Dad requesting his passport and verbally threatening Mum. This also affected Peter's eating habits and his sleep patterns. Through learning healthy coping mechanisms and working one-to-one with Elevate on aspects such as implementing a sleep diary and feelings log, Peter was able to get both his eating and his sleeping back on track. Providing him confidence in being able to take back control, focus on his self-esteem and make choices for his own self-care.

Together, his worker was able to guide Peter in creating an individualised safety plan to ensure he knew how to keep himself safe and who to speak to if he was to find himself in a dangerous or uncertain situation. The safety plan included safe measures and guidance on being taken to locations such as airports/train stations/bus stations or unfamiliar places identifying who to speak to in those situations to seek help - when and if he is able to.

The Elevate worker and Peter created a really strong professional rapport which helped them work on healthy relationships, confidence building, self-esteem, communication, coping mechanisms, processing of feelings or experiences and changing of negative thinking.

During the support, a court hearing was put in place with Elevate helping both Peter and Mum to work with CAFCASS ensuring their voices were validated and heard. This helped to ensure details of the DV & A were expressed in court as effectively, factually and clearly as possible. Fortunately, the verdict was that Peter would not have to engage in any unsupervised contact with Dad, with a process of supervised contact within a contact centre only. However, both Mum and Peter were not prepared for this arrangement, and Mum did not feel prepared or able to deliver the news about supervised contact to Peter, therefore she asked Elevate to help support her due to Peter feeling calm and having trust in his worker.

The Elevate worker met both Mum and Peter at school and explained the arrangement. She explained what this would look like going forward and guided them on the support available. At the time, Peter and Mum both got very upset. The Elevate worker was able to support them both through this emotionally and help them look at practical things that they could both put in place to support each other going forward. Peter and Elevate were able to work together on discussing ways that Peter could set boundaries with his future relationship with his Dad to ensure he was protected emotionally, psychologically and physically.

Mum decided it was best to move Peter to a new school and Elevate helped with this transition by working with the new school he was moving to. This was to ensure Peter's needs could be continually met. Elevate visited Peter during his first two weeks at his new school to see how he was doing and Peter was settled in and feeling extremely positive.

Peter did not want the support to end and asked if this support could continue forever. Mum expressed how grateful she was for the support and how much Elevate will be missed by them both.

2.7 Staying Safe Programme (SSP)

The latest SSP ran between September and December 2023; sessions were held at Little London Primary School and crèche facilities were provided. Six women attended with five successfully completing the programme. Feedback was very positive. All the women were positively impacted with regards to mental health/wellbeing, confidence, self-care, increased knowledge around DV & A and skills to stay safe, confidence in avoiding an abusive relationship, ability to cope in difficult situations/resilience and increased awareness of support available.

The worker has recently trained the refuge team leaders so that they can manage the referral pathways for some of the residents, and support the staff to deliver it on a one to one basis. This will help to support sustainability of the programme should funding not be continued after March 2025.

Case: Samira* not her real name

Samira was supported by refuge who provided practical and emotional support, including sorting out a benefit claim. The refuge team also supported Samira in obtaining a Non-Molestation Order, helping her settle and register her child for a new school and GP service. Samira was supported to obtain a new phone and change her number and email address.

While she was in refuge, Samira was referred to the SSP. She engaged well with the programme despite being initially very emotional, tearful and withdrawn.

Over the 10 weeks of the programme, Samira grew in confidence and self-esteem. She made friends with the other women on the programme who were all extremely supportive. They encouraged Samira to leave the refuge and get out and about on her own for the first time in years. Although the prospect of doing this terrified Samira, she was so proud of herself for doing it.

As a result of the support provided in refuge and by attending the SSP, Samira feels more safe and secure. She is bidding to be re-housed and she no longer feels so isolated. Her mental health and her general wellbeing has improved. She feels comfortable and settled and is able to make her own decisions in life. Her child is now settled in school, and has gained many rewards for school curriculum activities, opening up doors for new opportunities. Samira has also attended courses and passed exams meaning she is now a qualified health professional.

Recent feedback from a group member:

"Just wanted to say thank you so much for guiding me through the staying safe programme, I met someone recently and recognised some behaviour we discussed in class such as love bombing and within 2 days I decided to look into his background though Clare's Law. Turns out he has a very colourful past and if it wasn't for your class I may not have picked up on it so quickly. Thank you so much."

2.8 LDVS

LDVS is appreciative for the continued funding of the core services from the local authority and the additional investment from the DLUHC, WYCA and MOJ.

We continue to work in strong partnership with Behind Closed Doors (BCD) and Women's Health Matters (WHM) to deliver tailored support at all stages of each service user's journey. Communication and flexibility between services continues to be a strength to ensure the best support to each person approaching our service.

The service continues to deliver a 24/7 helpline through our Access and Assessment Team (AAT), delivered by LWA, along with assessment, drop-ins in central locations and coordinating the Daily Risk Assessment Meeting (DRAM) contacts. We also deliver the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service, which involves a team leader, lead IDVA, two senior IDVAs one working with adults with complex needs, the other children and young people, together with IDVAs specialising in the domestic violence court, Independent Domestic & Sexual Violence Advocates (IDSVAs) working with women and girls experiencing sexual and domestic abuse, and victim-survivors requiring mental health support. Most of our IDVAs and all of our IDSVAs are accredited either by SafeLives or Women's Aid Federation England (WAFE), and our team leader is SafeLives trained and accredited. 58% of all of our referrals come through DRAM and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC's).

DV & A continues to be a gendered issue: in the LDVS-wide community services 98% of people supported were female with 95% of the perpetrators being male; in refuge 100% of people supported were female, 90% perpetrators were male. Across all services 84% abusers are current or ex-partners.

The cost of living crisis following the legacy of the lockdowns continues to impact on service users' isolation, mental health, separation from family and friends, parental stresses, financial problems, and job losses, so all roles now include more emotional support and partnership working, alongside the practical help to continue to ensure that service users get the best outcomes possible.

2.8.1 AAT

The AAT celebrated their hard work at the beginning of the year with recognition of achieving the Helplines Partnership Standard, with excellent feedback. The trustees and SLT are so grateful to have such committed, knowledgeable and passionate staff that dedicate their time to this work. We were delighted that the team were also nominated for two national awards at the Helplines Partnership Conference for Helpline of the Year and Mentor of the Year.

The AAT Team Leader was invited to lead a workshop focusing on wellbeing and vicarious trauma at the National Helplines Partnership webinar which received positive feedback.

Delivering our 24-hour helpline really is a partnership approach from our service, with the day time AAT supporting our OOH refuge team and vice versa to deliver this challenging and rewarding service. The team continue to deal with initial calls to all victim-survivors going through the DRAMs as well as general helpline calls.

Drop-ins are established with Together Women's and are being established with Citizens Advice. They provide a safe space for women to meet face to face with a worker and are popular for women with specific vulnerabilities who may find a telephone service more daunting to make first disclosures. Also, being more informal increases the engagement of many women who don't want to access formal or mainstream services. The host venues are risk assessed and are also safe for our workers.

The AAT Team Leader visited Witness Care Services at the Magistrates Court to discuss how LDVS can support victim-survivors and the referral process.

2.8.2 IDVA

The IDVA Team Leader has established a new streamlined process with the Police Safeguarding Unit and Domestic Abuse Team, with a weekly meeting now taking place on Teams where we can request police updates. This has enabled quicker and more effective sharing of information on high risk cases. We are able to check with the police on weekly arrests and the charged status of suspects to feedback to victim-survivors. A meeting has also taken place with Professional Standards within the police to raise awareness of LDVS services in order to ensure victim-survivors, in cases where the abuse is a police perpetrator, receive appropriate support. We are also able to share information or intelligence with this department to ensure appropriate action is taken against abusive officers or police staff.

Our IDVA team leader has also been liaising with relevant police leaders regarding discussions about reinstating the Domestic Abuse Car, Police Control Room IDVA, and exploring the DV Text Alert initiative to enhance services for victim-survivors. The first two being services that we have delivered in recent years, which have been hugely popular, innovative and successful but neither have secured further funding.

We have also been integral in establishing a quarterly forum with IDVA services and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) across Yorkshire & Humberside. This forum aims to facilitate best practice exchange, provide feedback on CPS responses, and discuss case management challenges, ultimately strengthening links between IDVAs and CPS and improving support for vulnerable victims.

The team were involved in the set-up of the Leeds Specialist Domestic Abuse Courts (SDAC) again, as this had paused during COVID. A specialist court IDVA attends the court every Thursday to obtain DV & A results for our service users, and IDVA, CPS and Court have bi-monthly meetings to check the effectiveness of these SDACs.

Unfortunately, the IDVA team are still regularly over capacity and unable to support as many victim-survivors as we have done in the past. We were concerned about the reasons for this until an analysis was completed by our Impact and Performance team which measured a typical amount of time that is spent on meetings.

The IDVA team attend: each DRAM; twice weekly MARACs and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS)/Clare's Law meeting on a weekly basis. We discovered that we spend 74.5 IDVA hours on preparing for, attending and following up meetings per week. We also spend 21 hours a week on administrative support.

This adds up to just over two full time IDVA posts to attend meetings and 21 hours a week additional administrative support, with little additional funding.

It is important that we attend and advocate for the victim-survivor as often we are the only ones to have made contact and to have heard their voice and how they would like to proceed.

However, this is having a significant impact on the number of other cases the team can support. We are waiting to receive an evaluation on the DRAMs as this will potentially guide how the IDVA service develops.

The two senior IDVA's working with those adults and C&YP with complex needs attend meetings to raise awareness of their service and continue to work intensively with service users, often having smaller caseloads for more assertive outreach work. They work hard to overcome entrenched barriers and achieve positive outcomes for their service users.

The C&YP IDVA attended Leeds University to meet with the Harassment & Misconduct Team who predominantly support students that fall into the age bracket of the clients the C&YP IDVA typically supports. We found this to be really helpful to explain our respective roles and responsibilities.

2.8.3 Practitioner Quality Support Coordinator (PQSC)

This has been established for a couple of years, and supports newly created specialist DV & A workers in four other supported housing organisations, offering peer support, coordination, development of training and consistency of good practice. The practitioners meet four-weekly with the PQSC.

The PQSC is already working alongside Safer Stronger Leeds communities in order to lead the DV & A sector in offering

joint training to practitioners across Leeds.

The PQSC is main point of contact for practitioners attending the Domestic Abuse Practitioner Forum and an offer has been made to agencies across Leeds to act as a point of contact if practitioners are working with service users and would like specialist support or advice. A report is being prepared which will capture the outcomes from the agencies and give a picture of the impact that that the practitioner roles make across Leeds, which will be reported on next year.

2.8.4 Sanctuary Support Team (SST)

Funding has continued and been enhanced for the SST through the local authority as part of the government's New Burdens Funding. The SST continue to work alongside Leeds Housing Options (LHO) who manage the sanctuary scheme itself, ensuring additional target hardening and safety measures are installed at victim-survivor's properties. LHO will then send referrals through to SST, to look at what support can be provided to those individuals. Additionally, SST also accept referrals from the partner organisations and directly from LDVS.

The SST has worked with victim-survivors at every risk level, however it was recognised early in the project that the nature of target hardening measures required meant that those accessing the scheme were generally at the higher risk. With the flexibility and skill of the team they were able to adapt to this quickly, offering support to high risk cases, which in turn has helped increase referrals across the service.

The multi-disciplinary team, hosted by a range of partner organisations, offer emotional, practical and advocacy support focusing on, but not limited to, their experience of DV & A and has created additional pathways for victims-survivors of honour-based abuse and forced marriage and for those who are seeking asylum, enabling them to access the specialist support they need.

SST is a partnership of nine organisations, led by LWA who employs the SST Leader. The project employs nine support workers that specialise in working with clients that come from various backgrounds and marginalised groups including:

- Behind Closed Doors, who specialise in supporting women and men
- Women's Health Matters, who specialise in working with women around pregnancy and disabled women
- Karma Nirvana, who specialise in forced marriage & honour-based abuse
- Shantona and Asha Neighbourhood Project, who both employ a worker specialising in working with culturally diverse and migrant communities
- PAFRAS who specialise in Refugees & Asylum Seekers
- Age UK, who specialise in working with clients aged 50+

The final speciality is a post supporting LGBTQIA+ communities. This was previously employed by Touchstone; however, it is currently vacant. The Team Leader is actively pursuing opportunities to engage the appropriate specialist organisation to continue this support.

The SST are managed using the successful, but complex matrix management system, developed within the W&GAL which involves a line manager from the support worker's employing organisation and the SST Leader.

The SST Leader has embedded systems and procedures to support the hosting arrangements of the front-line delivery team. The team meet regularly, for updates and reflective practice, on a one to one basis and joint meetings with the SST Leader and the organisational line manager, with one to one meetings focussing on a review of each of their cases. The joint meetings take place on a quarterly basis, and include the support worker and their line manager ensuring that staff have the opportunity to discuss potential issues and to celebrate successes, with both managers present.

While support centres around safe housing and DV & A, they are able to be person-centred in their approach and with some service users suffering isolation the team have assisted in helping them feel more included in their local community, including: learning new skills in a group setting and accessing mental health groups; language classes and family groups.

SST continues to gather feedback from service users once support ends, with one recent example below:

'My support worker was absolutely amazing, she was lovely inside and out and I'm just so grateful for her and for the support. She was honestly like my fairy godmother. Her whole aura was just so calming and reassuring, I wouldn't be where I am without her. I almost didn't want the support to end, and felt emotional when it did. She always saw my potential and helped me believe in myself.'

Another service user said:

'I felt that my case was very specialist due (to) abuse towards myself and towards my daughter, and I felt that my support worker was absolutely brilliant. The Police weren't listening to me and Social Services had closed the case, my support worker came in and helped me so much. They helped me get in touch with who I needed to and made me feel supported. I know now I can ask for help when I need it and am better at recognizing triggers.'

The LDVS 2023 Impact Report, that LWA's Impact and Performance team worked really hard on, highlighted successes in that year, one of which was that the SST were highly commended this year for "Diversity Project of the Year" at Leeds Compassionate City Awards 2023.

In March 2024, the SST Commissioner fed back that the SST were mentioned in the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation National Expert Steering Group Annual Progress Report.

They said:

It's great that the Team is being recognised in this way - I'm sure that DLUHC receive a lot of case studies, so it is a real testament to the value of the work that you are all doing that they have included it.'

2.8.5 DV & A Voices

This really exciting new project is focussing on the victims-survivors voices and experiences and has been incorporated into LWA's Projects and Partnerships Team this year. Following on from the successful foundations developed through our previous Labyrinth Project, this project aims to facilitate a range of victims-survivors to contribute to and influence conversations and decisions in the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board.

With a key focus being on: women's; men's; children's; and the LGBT* communities' voices, a multi-disciplinary team, facilitated by LWA on behalf of LDVS, and hosted with partner organisations, has been established.

The team are currently working on a collaborative podcast, that can be included in statutory training. The "You Don't Know What You Don't Know" podcast will be played during the training to inform attendees about personal challenges and experiences of victims-survivors around accessing their services and what changes they would like to see. We will report on this more next year.

This work is being keenly followed by the Domestic Abuse Commissioners Office, who are prioritising victim-survivor voices.

2.9 DRAMs

These are ongoing daily risk meetings which were introduced in order to reduce the burden on agencies of the previous daily MARAC meetings, and to facilitate quicker and safer responses to victims-survivors in Leeds. The three core agencies are the Police, LDVS and Children Social Care.

The arrangements are now established and they work by triaging the high-risk police incidents, allowing a more consistent approach to cases to be discussed at MARAC. Although the DRAM has reduced pressure on all of the other MARAC agencies who now only need to attend two MARAC meetings per week, the pressure is significant for LDVS within our resources (the police and Children's Social Care meet daily anyway to discuss families reported to the police as part of the Front Door Safeguarding Hub).

LDVS attempt contact with every single victim-survivor before the DRAM meeting at 1pm each day. This has been an incredible feat with the IDVA and AAT teams working closely and cleverly in a fast paced and pressurised environment, to process the referrals that begin to arrive from 7.30 am through to the contacting of victims-survivors and having the meeting later in the day.

These arrangements continue to have a profoundly positive affect on victims-survivors as their views are integral to the meetings, and appropriate referrals and support can be targeted immediately, whereas the previous MARAC system wasn't able to do that. The effects on LDVS however remain a significant challenge.

After undertaking a detailed review of the DRAM process from the point of view of LWA delivered parts of the LDVS service, for each DRAM meeting (1½ hours) it takes 19 staff hours. This is phenomenal and really shows how invested we are in the process. This is equivalent to 2½ days of staff time for each 1½ hour DRAM meeting (12½ per week).

2.10 DVDS/Clare's Law

The IDVA team continue to be active in these meetings, attending panel meetings, sharing decisions for what should be disclosed and how, and often undertaking joint disclosure meetings with the police and victims-survivors. Under the scheme, members of the public can ask the police for information on their partner's criminal history and therefore know if their partner poses a risk to them, under a "Right to Ask" provision. Additionally, the police can approach someone, unsolicited, under a "Right to Know" provision, when information held by them or any other agency shows concerning or safeguarding related information about another person whom they are in a relationship with.

The increase in demand has meant that Clare's Law meetings, often chaired by LWA, have increased again to four times a month. The additional work for IDVA's to attend these meetings (including the meetings) is 13 hours per meeting. Plus 2 hours per meeting for the data officer.

2.11 W&GAL

The Women's Lives Leeds (WLL) partnership changed its name to the W&GAL last year, to better reflect the Alliance of the 12 organisations. Some of the Alliance's funded projects retain the WLL brand name, including the WLL Empowering Systems Change project. This work aims to: embed the Complex Needs Service and its learning; develop the partnership of the Alliance itself, including strategic development; and include women and girls from their respective organisations in those conversations. The "Women's Speak Group" is proving to be successful in facilitating voice and opinion from those who attend.

The name change is one milestone in the Alliance's development, along with the re-development of the existing website, a restructured purpose, new values and an exciting emerging strategy to drive the Alliance forward. The strategy will be reported on next year.

The WLL VOICES project funded by the Comic Relief Power Up Fund continues to lead the WFL movement and provide opportunities for women and girls to influence and shape conversations around their safety, health and wellbeing. Highlights include a Q&A Session with Detective Superintendent Vanessa Rolfe; A Menstruation to Menopause event as part of the Women of West Yorkshire (WOW) festival. Being chosen as the project to receive funds from the American rock group, Bon Iver, and an incredible programme called Arts to Activism in partnership with Leeds Beckett University, which delivered workshops across the City.

Due to a successful partnership application to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the work will continue for a further 18 months.

The Women's Safe Parks consultation and "Reclaim the Parks" activities have been the springboard for future involvement to inform the development of national guidance, which aims to influence local authorities when developing parks and public spaces.

LWA's Projects and Partnerships Director was invited to be a speaker and panellist at the event hosted by Leeds University to launch the guidance.

The value and impact of our work on influencing safe spaces, public areas and parks is demonstrated by an invite from Bristol University for LWA to be involved as a steering group member for a similar initiative in Bristol.

The Women's Night-time Safe Space (WNSS), which initially took the form of a Health Bus on Dortmund Square in Leeds City centre, is still being funded and continues to successfully support women in the night-time economy. Evidence is continually being collected which will be pulled together and consulted on before developing a business case for the sustainability of this initiative in the next financial year. The WNSS has already supported some very vulnerable women, with on average 30 women accessing it each night, demonstrating its value and necessity as a service.

3 Support provided

3.1 The numbers from April 2023 to March 2024:

There has been an increased demand for both our accommodation and community-based services, higher even than the dramatic increases that we saw last year.

Most referrals and requests for refuge and emergency accommodation cannot be accepted due to capacity constraints, however the total number of women and children supported in refuge accommodation was 184.

The 24-hour telephone helpline calls and one-off work reached 7,742 calls. This is an increase again on last year from just under 7,600, which was our previous record year.

Our community-based services, including helpline, IDVA and drop-ins continued to support more clients.

Support was provided to adults aged between 16 and 76, 22 different languages spoken, including BSL, 11% of people supported required an interpreter, 55% had mental health vulnerabilities and 51% had a disability.

3.2 Types of Abuse

The average length of the abuse our service users have experienced is just over 5 years.

- 70.5% (up from 70% last year) have experienced controlling and coercive behaviour
- 43% (up from 41% last year) have experienced financial abuse
- 53% (down from 55%) have experienced harassment/stalking/surveillance
- 86% have experienced emotional abuse
- 69.8% have experienced physical abuse
- 28% have experienced sexual abuse.

3.3 Impact and Service User Feedback

Service user feedback included:

100% said

- I feel that my privacy was respected
- I was listened to and believed by staff here
- I was supported to make my own choices
- The service I accessed was non-judgemental
- After being supported here, I feel better about myself
- After being supported here, I feel more confident
- After being supported here, I know more about domestic abuse
- After being supported here, I feel more confident to ask for help when I need it

98% said

- I was supported to talk about my experiences of violence and abuse
- I'd come back to the service again, if I needed to
- I'd recommend this service to family/ friends if they needed help
- Staff here have been knowledgeable and competent
- The service met my needs effectively
- The service understood and respected my particular needs

95% said

- I was able to access the service quickly

86% said

- Coming to this service has made a positive difference in my life

Service users said:

Q: If using this service made a difference in your life, please tell us how – what's changed for you?

"Coming to the service made you realise you not alone"

"My worker was informative, kind, listened, patient. She always kept to her word and called when she said she would. I felt supported."

"I feel a lot happier I am receiving help and support from my key worker. I have become more confident. I am able to manage my own money, contact college and have made friends with others in the refuge."

"we now have two bedrooms, which helps to keep our dignity. And this service supports us by finding a lawyer for us to complete the application to home office. This is very helpful because people who work here take care of us and try make sure that we feel secure and feel safe."

"I feel safe and can see a future for the children and myself."

"I have become more confident. I am able to go out freely without being controlled. I can now make my own decisions and can now use my phone and learning how to use a laptop. I am a very strong woman now and I can provide for my children. I am happy now and so are my children."

"It has made me realise I don't deserve to be treated like I was and that you can get your confidence back and your life back and become the person that you once was."

"I have never felt so safe and secure till now."

"My Support worker was very helpful in guiding me on the things I should do in terms of what happened and the next steps forward and she made me feel more confident and believed and made me feel like it wasn't my fault."

"Using this service made a huge difference to my life. I was speaking with people who understood me, supported me and reassured me, but also gave me hope. They were absolutely amazing, had great knowledge of what I was going through, and helped me to realise I wasn't alone or at fault"

"Thank you!!! I can't praise everyone enough, they were my only support network."

Q: How would things be different for you if you'd not received support here?

"I do not think that I would have been alive today if it wasn't for this service."

"I think I may have had to return to the house with my husband and children as I was homeless otherwise."

"I would still be in a violent relationship or even worse I could have been killed."

"I'd have been lost, wouldn't have understood the system or the processes. It was very alien to me. My IDVA explained everything every step of the way. Thank you so much. I was fortunate to get a very positive outcome and I can now close that chapter of the book and move on."

"My life would have been very different, I couldn't have coped any longer with what I was having to live with, I wouldn't of gone back to court for a second time and got the outcome I did in order for me to live a free and independent life. I would also of had a lot more health / mental health conditions to cope with, become totally isolated, reclusive."

"I would still be a total wreck not being able to cope with what is going on in my life"

"I would have been stuck in an abusive relationship with no future."

"My in laws would've proved that I was not capable of looking after my child. They would have taken my child away from me. I would have lost my life. They'd abused me... LWA refuge has given me a new life. I owe my life to you!! I am alive, because you guys are doing your job with utmost diligence and respect. I bow down to you for your work. My heart- felt gratitude to you. You've given me support, you've given me my profession. It is entirely because of LWA... I'd always thought beggars are not choosers; but LWA, made me experience that beggars can be choosers. Before coming here while I was on the phone to my support worker, she asked me, would you be okay to climb to the third floor, it felt so good to experience that you are about the disabled, or women with health concerns.
The refuge was clean, tidy so spacious; well-maintained gardens front and back. You all have really looked after your residents - it's like giving a life back to the dead; cause prior to coming here I was like a robot with no heart, no emotions; just working and never loving myself- I wasn't allowed to. I was like a servant of the household.

"Thank you so much for being there to support women who need it; without any biasness; irrespective of skin colour, ethnicity, race, religion, creed or age. LWA has given us more than what we could have ever asked for, furniture, lights, clean water for drinking, hot water, cold water for bathing, tub, shower, cupboards, side tables, reading lamps, wardrobes, clean beds, blankets, duvets, pillows; cutlery in the kitchen; washing machine, dryer, storage for our belongings. This list is endless. I can continue writing this feedback and yet it will never be able to do justice to what you've given."

4 Values and Culture

At LWA, our behaviours continue to support our purpose and create our culture, which in turn drives innovation and growth.

We do what we do because we believe:

- All women and children should live in safety, free from abuse and fear.
- Every woman and child have a voice and should be empowered, inspired and listened to.
- Women centred support is powerful and improves the lives of women, men and children.

Our **Values** reflect our organisation's views; they are the principles, standards & qualities that tell the story about the way in which we conduct our work.

Be Exceptional
We are experts in our field and proud of having a women-centred approach. We are pioneers and leaders, striving to perform and innovate.

Be Courageous
We are honest, inventive and have the integrity to challenge perceptions and practice.
We are encouraging and empowering of each other to be courageous and brave.

Be Inclusive
We are diverse, welcoming, approachable and inclusive as employers, service providers and people.
We promote unity, fairness and respect.

Be Inspirational
We are proud of our creativity and how we motivate, listen, empower and support each other.
We are encouraging and lead by example to achieve the best.

Be Responsive
We are collaborative, aware, compassionate and sensitive.
We adapt our approach to meet changing needs.

4.1 The Behaviours that create our Culture

Our Culture is a set of basic assumptions that we all share, these are 'norms' that guide the way people interact with each other and others or put in a different way, 'the way we do things here'.

These behaviours apply to everyone, irrespective of position or seniority. Structural hierarchy represents the division of work and skills, not the division of people.

We not only agree to uphold professional ethical standards but will go further in our commitment to hold ourselves accountable to maintaining behaviours that seek to create a safe and respectful culture and prevent incidences of workplace bullying.

Our key principles are:

- To challenge and support each other to be exceptional by being curious about different ways of doing things, thinking beyond our roles, and embracing learning and development in all its forms.
- To be courageous enough to demonstrate humility and vulnerability, and to approach failure with curiosity rather than criticism.
- We welcome, accept and include everyone based on inherent worth and value, enabling divergent thinking in an inclusive environment.
- We believe that everyone has the potential to be inspirational both in what they do, and the way they do it.
- Through our compassionate lens, we find solutions by being responsive, agile and adaptable.

4.2 Staff feedback

Once again in our staff survey we asked our teams "What's the best thing about working for LWA?"

The results were:

Colleagues
"The people - passionate, caring, empathetic, supportive and fun", "I feel appreciated", "inspiring colleagues"

LWA Mission – sense of purpose
"Making a real difference to people's lives", "sense of a positive purpose in my role"

Supportive environment
"A very person-centred organisation", "able to work flexibly around other parts of our life", "supported to do your job the best you can".

5 Operating model and risks

5.1 Fundraising

We are regulated by the Fundraising Regulator and all our fundraising practices are ethical and considerate. We have an in-house Fundraising and Marketing Director and all our fundraising and marketing is done to further the organisations charitable activities.

We fund our work with income from a wide range of restricted and unrestricted funds. Our restricted funds include our commissioned services by which we are contracted after an open tender to deliver and report back on specific service delivery. Our largest contract is from Leeds City Council, delivering the LDVS consortium. Other restricted income includes additional grants from LCC, along with grants from the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF), the MOJ, Home Office, WCYA and Comic Relief.

Our unrestricted income gives us the flexibility to fund a range of work directly for our service users and for our infrastructure. It also allows us to invest in reserves (see section 5.8), which can be designated for specific charitable purposes.

For a large part of 2023 our fundraising capacity was reduced due to people leaving and difficulty in recruitment (which is currently a common factor within the charity sector). We recruited a Fundraising Officer in early 2024 and the team have worked really hard in raising our profile and funds for both restricted and unrestricted income streams in which we raised just over £113,600.

In summer 2023, we launched a fundraising appeal for a new dedicated C&YP Hub which will be based at our main site refuge. The Hub is an exciting and innovative project and will make a huge difference to lives of C&YP who have been impacted by DV & A. As well as raising funds through the public appeal, money will be raised through a variety of income streams including grant making trusts, business and community support. The team are working with key stakeholders to promote the project effectively and we aim to reach our fundraising target of £317,000 by early 2025.

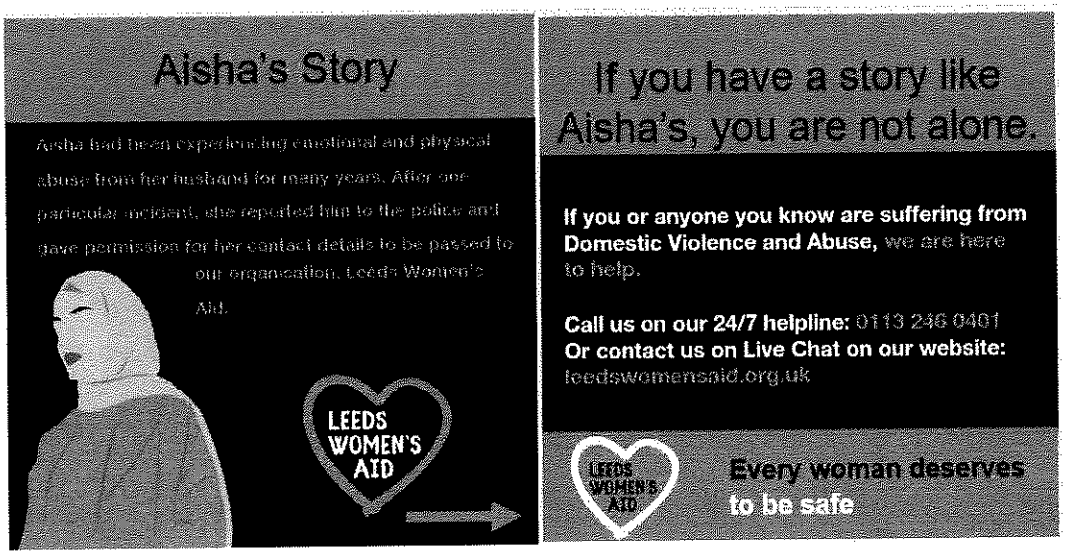
Our strategy of increasing individual giving and our supporter base is continuing, and we have a wide range of regular givers, one off donations, people doing fundraising events and are developing our legacy strategy. Fundraising events have included supporters doing the Three Peaks challenge, Outward bounds challenge, 5k runs, a fashion show, and Leeds Women's Aid online silent auction which had an amazing response from the public. Our amazing supporters raised just over £41,000 last year.

5.2 Marketing

In 2023, we ramped up our social media output on all our official channels, sharing information about our services, client case studies, organisational announcements, statements on current news topics and fundraising content. This has resulted in significant audience growth, with over 1,000 new followers across Instagram, X, LinkedIn and Facebook. Our social media approach has involved creating new forms of content including a series of Instagram Reels for 16 Days of Activism in collaboration with a local band, to speak out against misogyny and raise awareness of our services.

We have updated our promotional materials, producing new versions of our bookmarks and posters. We also designed LWA coasters which include our contact details and information on how to spot lesser-known signs of abuse. We have continued to build up strong contacts with various community organisations and venues across the city to display our materials and signpost people to access support.

We also ran some story lines for social media, using different service user stories, running with between six and ten slides sharing clips of their stories, ending with a shout out to other women who may have experienced something similar, with contact details.



5.3 Ambassador

In June 2023, Leeds Women's Aid welcomed Laura Bartlett, founding editor and publisher of global magazine House of Coco, as its first ever charity ambassador. Laura has already hosted a large-scale International Women's Day event in support of LWA, which resulted in many new supporters and strong social media engagement.

5.4 Charity Shop

> *"It is a real honour to be the first Leeds Women's Aid Ambassador, I have immense admiration for the work that the team does and I think that the service they provide is one of the most important in my hometown of Leeds. I look forward to spreading the word of the work that Leeds Women's Aid does so that women around the city who need a safe space can access it." Laura Bartlett*

Our charity continues to have a positive presence within the local community and has a strong and loyal customer base and receives high quality donations which we are very grateful and sincerely thank them for. The retail manager has been resourceful in raising a diverse range of income through the shop such as RAG's, eBay, we buy books scheme, and recycle for charity. We also participated in the local community late night Christmas shopping event and hosted local makers (arts and crafts).

We offer a really unique additional service, whereby our retail manager arranges special shopping events for groups of residents from our refuges to come to the shop and choose whatever they like from the shop for free. These events are very well received by both residents and staff alike as it really helps families.

Excitingly, we made 2nd place in the Horsforth Christmas shop window competition 2023:

Leeds Women's Aid Shop you always make such an effort with your windows year round. We walk past the shop every day on our way for school drop off and love the passion you have! You are a great member of the new road side community and the proceeds of your efforts for Leeds women and kids is admirable and needed.

5.5 Donations

We have received grants, donations and gifts in kind from hundreds of individuals and organisations, and would particularly like to thank the following donors and funders:

AECOM, Amazon Community, Arla Foods, Bevan Brittan, Burberry, Cartwright Pickard, Calverley Parish Church, Centurion management, Children's Service (LCC), Coco Cola, Dunelm, Elizabeth & Prince Zaiger Charitable Trust, England Cricket, Engage Interactive, Eversheds Sutherland, ENGIE Power Ltd, EKPCC GEN, FABB, Foresters, Golden Acre Foods, Headrow House, John Lewis, Leeds Playhouse, Leeds Women's Ice Hockey Team, Leeds Rhinos, Leeds United, Leeds University Women's Rugby Team, Luminate, Lyons Davidson Solicitors Marshall Mill, Michael Page, Northern Diamonds, Opera North, Punch Creative, Trust, Ridley & Hall Legal, St Columba, South Group Family Services, Church TPS Leeds, Wade Charity, Wagamama, Water Lane Boat house, Wates, White Rose Academies Trust, Women's Institute, Wickes, Yorkshire County Cricket Club, Yorkshire ITV, Yorkshire Housing.

In addition, LWA values its individual supporters and fundraisers for their dedication and hard work, some of whom have been tirelessly fundraising for the organisation for over 22 years.

Some reasons why people support LWA:

"I hope this contributes to your brilliant efforts in helping women and their families during difficult times."

"This is an important charity and you do valuable work. Thank you."

"Thank you, Leeds Women's Aid for the incredible work you're doing for women and children in our region."

5.6 Volunteers

We are proud to work with volunteers of all ages from teenagers working on their Duke of Edinburgh Award to people wanting to support LWA and help their community. Due to their hard work and dedication we have a thriving and well-established shop and without them the shop would not be the success it is today.

We currently have 17 regular volunteers assisting in the day to day running of the shop.

Why people volunteer:

"I have chosen to volunteer for this charity as I am confident it makes a difference to women and families. The staff and customers invest in the charity...I have met some generous people who I believe understand the importance of this work."

"I have volunteered at the Leeds Women's Aid shop for almost 7 years now. I love the friendliness, the chance to chat to customers and the satisfaction of giving something back to a worthwhile charity"

5.7 Investments

We continue to have our investments in CCLA's deposit fund, giving us over £60,000 of unrestricted income in interest. The also reduces the risk for us in terms of having funds in numerous bank accounts, leaving only amounts that are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

5.8 Reserves Policy

The Board review our reserves policy at least annually, and the policy is risk-based and considers good practice in the charity sector and is therefore:

- Based on a detailed understanding of the actual and predicted cash inflows and outflows of the charity.
- Not based upon holding a set number of months cover on expenditure.
- Integrated with the risk assessment and strategic plans of the charity.

- Not based upon a closure scenario unless this is considered likely.
- Regularly reported to and reviewed by the Trustee Board.

It was agreed that our reserves policy should provide:

- A level of working capital that protects the continuity of our core work, allowing for funding we receive for restricted funded projects.
- A level of security against the financial risks identified in our risk assessment, including cover for unforeseen expenditure or unanticipated loss or deferral of income.
- A level of funding for possible opportunities (Designated Funds).
- A level of funding following the unexpected and unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 to plan for any future similar occurrences.
- A level of funding for infrastructure investments.

Arising from a review of our risk-based reserves policy, the Board approved an updated reserves policy in September 2024, assessing the level of reserves required between £710,000 and £819,000. Our new unrestricted reserves total falls comfortably at the higher end of this range. Although some funders still work on the out-dated model of between three- and six-months running costs, ours is the model recommended by the Charity Commission.

Due to the expansion in this year, an amount of £75,000 has been designated as contingency for the next financial year, with an additional £25,000 contingency should we need to support the C&YP Hub.

5.9 Financial Review

Principal funding sources continue to be Local Authority contracts and rental income including Housing Benefit. We are very grateful for the respectful partnership that we continue to enjoy with LCC. This year they have continued to provide us robust and considerate contract management and worked with us to secure additional funding for our much-needed services.

We continue to be appreciative of the continued government funding and contracts, discussed in other sections above.

Our figures for our voids (empty refuge spaces) totalled 11.7%, which was a reduction on last year's 15.8%. This breaks down to 9.7% for our Independent refuge, and 15.2% for our LDVS commissioned refuge. This is a positive reduction in our independent refuge, but an increase in our commissioned refuge. Work is regularly done to liaise with our registered social landlords regarding managing our turnaround of properties.

Bad debt written remains very low at 1%.

The trustees submit the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. The net income for the year amounts to a surplus of £365,782. This is mainly due to restricted funds to be carried over. This compares to a surplus in 2023 of £17,502. Reserves carried forward are £1,347,543 of which £550,387 are restricted and £797,156 are unrestricted funds.

Our unrestricted reserves at £797,156 falls comfortably at the higher end of the new reserves range.

6 Future plans

LWA's strengths are in delivering excellent services, leading collaborative partnerships, developing new and innovative services and having strategic influence locally, regionally and nationally.

Demand for our services continues to increase and we are proactively looking at ways in which we can develop, improve and increase our services to support more women and children. We do this by playing to our strengths for development and working within our partnerships.

We have started to evidence progress against our new strategic objectives for 2023 – 2026, as reported on in section 1.3, they are:

1. To be a leader of, and a voice for, women-centred support in Leeds and surrounding areas.
2. To be a great place to work where people can develop and grow and our values, including equity and diversity, underpin what we do and how we do it.
3. To be an organisation that innovates by identifying and investing in opportunities ensuring long term sustainability and stability.
4. To reflect on and assess how our accommodation offer impacts clients in Leeds and to explore opportunities to enhance high quality accommodation provision.

7 Governance and decision-making

LWA operates as a charitable company and registered its purpose and objectives with the Charity Commission on 12 November 1991. It is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association which set out clearly the purpose of the charity together with rules about how it conducts its business, including its governance.

Following a regular assessment of the trustee skills and experience we need to deliver our strategy, trustees are recruited by external advertisement in the same way that employees and workers are recruited, and there are role profiles and an application form.

Our growing reputation and profile mean that we also receive unsolicited approaches from time to time.

Applicants are interviewed by the Chair/Deputy Chair and Chief Executive, and the final decision is made by the Trustee Board. All new Trustees receive an induction, and training is planned, commissioned and delivered regularly.

The organisation employs a Chief Executive who takes decisions on the day to day running of the charity. The Chief Executive manages staff, ensures proper financial management, follows policies agreed by the Trustees, and complies with legal obligations and those directed by funders, the Charity Commission, Companies House and other regulatory bodies. Trustees ensure adherence to legal requirements, i.e. maintaining correct policies: Health and Safety at Work; Fire Safety; Risk Assessments; recruitment and selection; and other policies such as grievance and disciplinary.

LWA is an independent organisation - however, it benefits from being part of the wider Women's Aid network across the UK.

All Trustees give of their time freely and no Trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Chair of Trustees and in accordance with the charity's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest could arise.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations: none of our Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a Trustee or senior manager of the charity with a client or other stakeholder must be disclosed to the full Board of Trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

We are also keeping abreast of the developments in the Charity Act 2022, Some provisions have been introduced in this financial year, with the second tranche in the next financial year.

7.1 Risk management

The Trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- A fully updated Risk Register, comprising of an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces.
- The establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual reviews.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.
- A review of our committee structure, with two separate committees focussing on risk, Finance and Governance Committee and People and Organisational Development Committee. These committees have trustee and senior management representation along with a commissioned external and independent Health & Safety consultant and the organisation's Data Protection Lead when required.

The Risk Register focuses attention on the areas of: Governance and Management; Operational Risks regarding People and Activities/Premises; Financial; Environmental and External. We identified further risks following an incident of someone being housed in refuge who was unbeknown to us a serious offender, which was duly reported to the Charity Commission. This incident has been successfully closed by the Commission.
Other risks regularly identified include that of our service users being at risk of injury or even death. There are also ongoing, daily risk assessments on service delivery, and at regular intervals in respect of premises.

Attention has also been focused on other non-financial risks including those arising from fire, flood, terrorist attack, technology, reputation and health and safety of staff. These risks are managed by having robust policies and procedures in place, and through regular awareness training for staff.

Financial sustainability is one of the risks identified by the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of LWA's financial position through management reports including available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, liaison with the bank when necessary, and active management of debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital. LWA continues to be dynamic and strategic in its use of unrestricted and designated reserves.

7.2 Data Security and Protection

Data security and protection is of paramount importance to LWA. We deal with very sensitive personal data relating to the people we support, our staff and our supporters so it is vital that we process this information securely and in accordance with data protection law.

The organisation continues to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. As data controllers, LWA continues to monitor and review our statutory due diligence. LWA has a named Data Protection Lead (DPL), who is a qualified Data Protection Practitioner.

She continues to report to the CEO and the Finance and Governance Committee of the Board regarding Subject Access Requests, Data Breaches and areas of consideration and improvement. This is reviewed both internally within LWA, and also as consortium lead for our LDVS and W&GAL partnerships.

All LWA staff receive data protection training, which was updated this year and continues to be rolled out. Briefings and regular updates are circulated to all staff to ensure that they remain up to date.

There have been no breaches of data which have needed to be reported to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

7.3 Information, Communications, Technology (ICT)

Our ICT strategy evolves depending on environmental and staffing changes. Next year we are conducting an organisational wide IT refresh, to enable better hybrid working and hot desking for staff and for partners in other organisations.

8 Statutory information

8.1 Auditors

A resolution to appoint BK Plus Audit Limited, Chartered Certified Accountants & Registered Auditors as auditors for this financial year was proposed and agreed at the Annual General Meeting, following an open and transparent invitation to tender process.

8.2 Trustees of the charity

The Directors of the charitable company are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law. The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year end are listed at the front of the financial statements.

8.3 Public Benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, the Trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit in the Charities Act 2011 in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance on the advancement of health and saving of lives.

8.4 Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that period.

In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

8.5 Statement of disclosure of information to Auditors

The Trustees of the company who held office at the date of approval of this annual report confirm that:

So far as the Directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each Director has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved on behalf of the Board.

Nneka Ikeogu

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Nneka Ikeogu
Director and Chair of the Board

19/11/2024

.....

Date

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Leeds Women's Aid (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees' report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE TRUSTEES OF LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the industry sector;
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation and data protection, anti-bribery, employment, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- Ensured laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- Making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was a susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- Understanding the design of the company's remuneration policies.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we;

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions
- Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in note 2 were indicative of potential bias; and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risks of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- Reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- Reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the company's legal advisors.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from the financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)
TO THE TRUSTEES OF LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Victoria Atkinson FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of BK Plus Audit Limited

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

BK Plus Audit Limited

21 November 2024

52 St Johns Lane
Halifax
West Yorkshire
England
HX1 2BW

BK Plus Audit Limited is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	63,025	49,982	113,007	43,419	62,817	106,236
Charitable activities	4	1,010,291	3,531,614	4,541,905	797,576	2,969,230	3,766,806
Other trading activities	5	68,679	-	68,679	63,366	-	63,366
Investments	6	68,103	-	68,103	5,036	-	5,036
Total income		1,210,098	3,581,596	4,791,694	909,397	3,032,047	3,941,444
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	7	71,256	-	71,256	69,225	-	69,225
Charitable activities	8	1,164,109	3,190,547	4,354,656	839,724	3,014,993	3,854,717
Total expenditure		1,235,365	3,190,547	4,425,912	908,949	3,014,993	3,923,942
Net income/(expenditure)		(25,267)	391,049	365,782	448	17,054	17,502
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	(57,353)	57,353	-
Net movement in funds	10	(25,267)	391,049	365,782	(56,905)	74,407	17,502
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		822,423	159,338	981,761	879,328	84,931	964,259
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		797,156	550,387	1,347,543	822,423	159,338	981,761

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	15		95,066		77,633
Current assets					
Debtors	16	156,968		239,523	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,443,929		1,648,162	
		1,600,897		1,887,685	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(348,420)		(983,557)	
Net current assets			1,252,477		904,128
Total assets less current liabilities			1,347,543		981,761
Net assets			1,347,543		981,761
The funds of the charity					
Restricted income funds	20		550,387		159,338
Unrestricted funds			797,156		822,423
			1,347,543		981,761

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2024, although an audit has been carried out under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.
The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 19/11/2024

Nneka Ikeogu

.....
Dr N C Ikeogu
Trustee

Company registration number 02627468 (England and Wales)

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	26		(224,643)		246,207
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(47,693)		(42,663)	
Investment income received		68,103		5,036	
Net cash generated from/(used in) investing activities			20,410		(37,627)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents			(204,233)		208,580
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,648,162		1,439,582
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,443,929		1,648,162

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Leeds Women's Aid is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is 52 Saint Johns Lane, Halifax, HX1 2BW.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, [modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value]. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Donated facilities and donated professional services are recognised in income at their fair value when their economic benefit is probable, it can be measured reliably, and the charity has control over the item. Fair value is determined on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity. For example, the amount the charity would be willing to pay in the open market for such facilities and services, a corresponding amount is recognised in expenditure.

No amount is including in the financial statements in relation to volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102). Further detail is given In the Trustees' Annual Report.

Gifts in kind, donated for resale, are recognised within 'Income from other trading activities' at the net realisable value in the financial year in which they are sold.

Fixed asset gifts in kind are recognised when receivable and are included at fair value. These gifts are not deferred over the life of the asset.

Income from trading activities, includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity. Income is received in exchange for supplying goods and services in order to raise funds and is recognised when entitlement has occurred, income from the charity shop is included in the financial year in which it is received.

The charity receives government grants in respect of its charitable activities, income from government and other grants are recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement to them and after any performance conditions have been met, when it is probable that the income will be received and when the amount can be measured reliably. If these entitlement conditions are not met the income is treated as deferred income.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and equipment	Straight line over 4 years
Fixtures and fittings	Straight line over 4 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	63,025	49,982	113,007	43,419	62,817	106,236

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities						
Rental income	866,266	-	866,266	737,215	-	737,215
Personal Service Charge income	69,884	-	69,884	55,110	-	55,110
Contract income	74,141	3,526,344	3,600,485	5,251	2,969,230	2,974,481
Management charges income	-	5,270	5,270	-	-	-
	1,010,291	3,531,614	4,541,905	797,576	2,969,230	3,766,806

5 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Shop income	68,679	63,366

6 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Interest receivable	68,103	5,036

7 Expenditure on raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Trading costs		
Operating charity shops	31,623	29,552
Staff costs	36,020	36,081
Depreciation and impairment	3,613	3,592
	71,256	69,225

8 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Charitable activities 2024 £	Charitable activities 2023 £
Direct costs		
Staff costs	2,348,119	2,036,675
Depreciation and impairment	26,648	23,905
Premises costs	434,622	376,755
Repairs and maintenance costs	147,043	147,422
Office costs	51,265	45,109
Advertising costs	9,223	11,300
Other personnel costs	10,692	10,288
Training costs	49,284	47,287
Motor and travel costs	14,004	9,325
Health and safety costs	14,669	12,183
Sub-contractor costs	1,035,042	413,897
Activities and service costs	86,096	650,530
Bad debt provision	9,370	(23,876)
Other costs	1,583	4,116
	4,237,660	3,764,916
Share of support and governance costs (see note 9)		
Support	116,996	89,801
	4,354,656	3,854,717
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	1,164,109	839,724
Restricted funds	3,190,547	3,014,993
	4,354,656	3,854,717

9 Support costs allocated to activities

	Charitable activities 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Governance	116,998	89,801

9 Support costs allocated to activities (Continued)

	2024	2023
Governance costs comprise:	£	£
Audit fees	5,989	7,404
Legal and professional	78,666	38,317
Governance costs	1,300	9,214
Recruitment costs	29,436	32,749
Bank and credit card charges	1,607	2,117
	116,998	89,801

10 Net movement in funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	5,989	7,404
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	30,261	27,497

11 Auditor's remuneration

Fees payable to the charity's auditor and associates:	2024	2023
	£	£
For audit services		
Audit of the financial statements of the charity	5,989	7,404

12 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

13 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024	2023
	Number	Number
Refuge and Aftercare	48	16
Community Services	36	33
Social Enterprise and Funding	3	4
Management and Administration	11	9
Total	98	62

13 Employees (Continued)

Employment costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	2,109,304	1,825,253
Social security costs	185,805	170,306
Other pension costs	89,030	77,197
	2,384,139	2,072,756

The average head count of employees during the year was 98.

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000 is as follows:

	2024	2023
	Number	Number
£70,001 - £80,000	1	1

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	289,263	274,482

The key management personnel of the charity have been identified as the CEO, Operations Director, Fundraising and Marketing Director and Projects, Partnerships Director and Finance and Resources Director.

14 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

15 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and equipment	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	141,640	70,600	212,240
Additions	6,225	41,468	47,693
At 31 March 2024	147,865	112,068	259,933
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 April 2023	72,632	61,974	134,606
Depreciation charged in the year	12,773	17,488	30,261
At 31 March 2024	85,405	79,462	164,867
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2024	62,460	32,606	95,066
At 31 March 2023	8,625	69,008	77,633

16 Debtors

	2024	2023
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	124,702	203,724
Other debtors	-	(200)
Prepayments and accrued income	32,266	35,999
	156,968	239,523

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2024	2023
		£	£
Other taxation and social security		43,438	40,880
Deferred income	18	77,824	804,444
Trade creditors		162,313	38,374
Other creditors		13,518	10,784
Accruals		51,327	89,075
		348,420	983,557

18 Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Arising from Deferred income	77,824	804,444

18 Deferred income (Continued)

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	77,824	804,444
Movements in the year:		
Deferred income at 1 April 2023	804,444	1,039,619
Released from previous and current periods	(3,417,302)	(2,414,113)
Resources deferred in the year	2,690,682	2,178,938
Deferred income at 31 March 2024	77,824	804,444

19 Retirement benefit schemes

	2024	2023
Defined contribution schemes	£	£
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	87,654	75,726

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

20 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Bon Iver	11,949	9,942	(361)	-	21,530
Comic Relief	6,672	88,561	(95,232)	-	-
Designated Donations	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Domestic Violence Voices	-	106,528	(92,915)	-	13,613
Donations	43,865	92,182	(43,524)	-	92,523
Donations - Emmeline Play Area	31,301	-	(7,823)	-	23,478
Early Help Hub	-	122,000	(122,000)	-	-
Empowering Systems Change	21,062	255,283	(241,923)	-	34,422
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Refuge	-	248,922	(248,922)	-	-
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	709,339	(811,393)	105,000	2,946
Ministry of Justice - Elevate Fund	-	59,992	(70,489)	10,497	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	12,702	90,608	(87,724)	-	15,586
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	-	341,049	(217,180)	-	123,869
New Burdens Fund - Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	-	463,268	(289,507)	(105,000)	68,761
New Burdens Fund - LDVS Community Based	-	398,488	(328,148)	(10,497)	59,843
New Burdens Fund - Practitioner Support	-	49,861	(37,635)	-	12,226
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support	-	355,929	(339,424)	-	16,505
Northern Training Consortium	-	746	-	-	746
Safer City Centre	-	24,056	(24,056)	-	-
Safer Streets 4	13,604	81,465	(48,894)	-	46,175
Staying Safe	2,940	-	(19)	-	2,921
UKSPF	-	83,377	(83,377)	-	-

20 Restricted funds

(Continued)

	159,338	3,581,596	(3,190,546)	-	550,387

20 **Restricted funds** (Continued)

Previous year:	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Bon Iver	-	11,977	(28)	-	11,949
Children in Need	1,193	25,357	(26,501)	(49)	-
Comic Relief	10,162	114,071	(117,561)	-	6,672
Designated Donations	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Domestic Violence Voices	-	25,403	(25,403)	-	-
Donations	31,278	28,457	(15,870)	-	43,865
Donations - Emmeline Play Area	-	39,126	(7,825)	-	31,301
Early Help Hub	-	120,000	(120,000)	-	-
Empowering Systems Change	3,506	231,126	(213,570)	-	21,062
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Refuge	-	248,922	(248,922)	-	-
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	706,967	(764,371)	57,404	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Womens Aid)	-	266,102	(266,102)	-	-
Ministry of Justice - Elevate Fund	-	66,760	(66,760)	-	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	18,676	90,608	(96,582)	-	12,702
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	-	241,265	(241,265)	-	-
New Burdens Fund - Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	-	381,881	(381,881)	-	-
New Burdens Fund - Practitioner Support	-	18,208	(18,208)	-	-
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support	-	300,507	(300,507)	-	-
Safer Streets 4	-	38,258	(24,654)	-	13,604
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	1,873	20,235	(22,106)	(2)	-
Staying Safe	3,000	-	(60)	-	2,940
VRU Police Control Room	-	56,816	(56,816)	-	-
	84,931	3,032,046	(3,014,992)	57,353	159,338

21 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

Details of our reserve policy and designated funds are included in the financial section of the Trustees Report.

	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Designated funds	433,276	-	-	-	433,276
General funds	389,147	1,210,098	(1,235,365)	-	363,880
	822,423	1,210,098	(1,235,365)	-	797,156

Previous year:	At 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Designated funds	433,276	-	-	-	433,276
General funds	446,052	909,397	(908,949)	(57,353)	389,147
	879,328	909,397	(908,949)	(57,353)	822,423

22 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024
	£	£	£
At 31 March 2024:			
Tangible assets	71,588	23,478	95,066
Current assets/(liabilities)	725,568	526,909	1,252,477
	797,156	550,387	1,347,543

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£
At 31 March 2023:			
Tangible assets	46,332	31,301	77,633
Current assets/(liabilities)	776,091	128,037	904,128
	822,423	159,338	981,761

23 Operating lease commitments

Lessee

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Within one year	40,360	54,049
Between two and five years	11,589	51,950
	51,949	105,999

24 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).

25 Ultimate Controlling Party

The charity is under the control of the board of trustees.

26 Cash generated from operations	2024	2023
	£	£
Surplus for the year	365,782	17,502
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(68,103)	(5,036)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	30,261	27,497
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease in debtors	82,554	376,717
Increase in creditors	91,483	64,702
(Decrease) in deferred income	(726,620)	(235,175)
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	(224,643)	246,207

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1005884

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 02627468 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1005884

Report of the Trustees and

Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31st March 2023

for

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

BK Plus Audit Ltd
Statutory Auditor
52 St Johns Lane
Halifax
West Yorkshire
HX1 2BW

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

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for the Year Ended 31st March 2023

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LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Every woman deserves respect and support

Directors' and Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The Chair's Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the Directors' and Trustees' report for Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) for the year ended 31 March 2023. Whilst the year presented the organisation with some significant challenges, many of which were being faced by others up and down the country, we have much to reflect on positively and to be extremely proud of.

The celebratory event for the 50th anniversary of the provision of LWA's services was a fantastic one, attended by LWA staff, supporters and partners. We were delighted to have both Nicole Jacobs (Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales) and Rachel Reeves, MP (LWA's Patron) in attendance, as well as watching and hearing some extremely moving contributions from staff past and present. The event was a real showcase of the incredible work that the organisation does and the much-needed support that it provides to all those who use its services.

The summer of 2022 saw us launch what turned out to be a very successful recruitment campaign for new trustees; we were very pleased to be able to appoint three new trustees to the Board and to draw on the expertise they bring from their respective professional backgrounds. Trustee recruitment was a major part of our Governance Improvement Plan, which we continued to work on throughout the year. This also saw some additional work on the structure of the organisation, with new appointments being made to both to the Senior Leadership Team and a crucial operational role within the Fundraising and Marketing Team.

As was the case for so many other organisations like ours, the cost of living continued to present a huge challenge both in terms of day to day running costs but also in terms of the impact this had on our clients and the financial support that they required. We have worked hard to mitigate the effects of this as much as possible and at the same time we have looked to support staff throughout this, as investing in staff wellbeing as well as their professional development has been a key element of our strategy as an organisation.

Seemingly in contrast to the cost of living challenges, we saw a significant increase in income on the previous year – an increase of £1.1m from 2022 to £3.4m, a large proportion of which came from donations from supporters. Increasing income from donations is an extremely important part of our fundraising strategy which we are continually working on developing in order to ensure the organisation can continue to be financially stable and viable, and therefore continue to provide the services that we know are so vital for the women and children who need them.

This year saw Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team participate in a successful away day during which we reviewed and updated our strategy for the next three years. We are all too aware of the extremely high level of demand for the services that LWA provides, and it is our mission to continue to provide these services to the highest possible level and in line with our values and culture.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the entire staff team and volunteers, as well as to extend gratitude to each and every one of LWAs supporters and donors. This is a very exciting time for LWA, and we are very much looking forward to seeing the development of the organisation over the coming year and beyond.

Executive Summary

1 Our Provenance

LWA was established 50 years ago in 1972 by committed feminist activists wanting to support women and children experiencing and living with Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV & A). In 1973 we opened the first refuge outside of London and the second in the whole of the UK. LWA is now the largest women's charity in Leeds.

It is an incredible honour to be able to celebrate over 50 years of delivering such amazing lifesaving services. We are very proud of what we have achieved and pleased to outline our future plans.

"The kindness and dignity with which I was treated helped me recover my sense of myself beyond abuse. Thank you".

"I don't think I would have survived had it not been for your support. I had broken away from the relationship with the abuser but of course, that didn't stop the abuse or prevent the escalation in dangerous, unstable stalking.... you restored my self-respect and ability to feel safe and look to the future. The future otherwise would've remained very bleak."

2 What We Do?

We provide a comprehensive and wide range of services to support women and children experiencing and living with DV & A.

Much more detail is included in this report and on our website: www.leedswomensaid.org.uk.

The end of 2022/2023 saw a further increase in funding through the New Burdens Funding, established by the government in response to the Domestic Abuse Act. This meant we could plan to further increase and develop services, but also importantly invest in our current, mainly accommodation based, offer. The funding was also confirmed through to March 2025, giving more stability for the next two years.

3 How We Do It?

We continue to benefit from an increase in staffing, enabling us to deliver more services and reach more women and children. Numbers of significant contacts and support offered has risen again and has for the first time reached over 13,000, including service users and practitioners.

Our people remain our greatest asset and strength, and we support, develop and invest in our teams. Together we deliver lifesaving services that we know are needed and also help to lead the agenda for ending violence against women and girls, and ensuring that women and children's voices are heard across the City.

This year our Board and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) began work to revise our strategy for 2023-2026. We describe in section 1.3 the progress we have made towards our current strategic objectives. We will report on our new objectives in next year's report.

4 Fundraising and Finance

We have continued to deliver services coming out of the pandemic and we have built on and continued to increase our profile. This has helped us to attract additional funding. Our fundraising and marketing team have continued to achieve successes, diversifying funding as per our strategic objectives - see section 5.1.

As to our overall financial position, see section 5.7 for more detail but in summary we:

- Increased our income by over £1 million to £3,941,445.
- Delivered a surplus of £17,502 in 2022/23.
- Maintained our unrestricted reserves at a level of £822,424. This level of unrestricted reserves compares with our revised reserves policy level of between £716,000 and £836,000.
- Concluded our investment in growth and infrastructure, initially identified and designated at a cost of £433,276 over a 2-year period. However, we have managed to maintain our unrestricted reserves despite investing into the structure without the need to use the majority of the designated funds.

5 Governance and risk management

Our governance structures are well defined and work well. This year we have enhanced our committee structure, adding a People & Organisational Development Committee, in line with our strategy of investing in our people.

Our new Finance & Resources Director has introduced a range of new financial and other policies which the Board have approved.

The Board recruited three new trustees with a wealth of strategic, governance, HR, marketing and employment law experience.

The Board ensure that risk management is regularly considered and our risk register is fit for purpose.

6 Our future

LWA's strengths are in delivering excellent services, leading collaborative partnerships, developing new and innovative services and having strategic influence locally, regionally and nationally.

This year, along with previous years, has seen a further increase in demand for LWA's services, and we are working in partnership with the Women & Girls Alliance - Leeds (formerly Women's Lives Leeds {WLL}) and Women Friendly Leeds to introduce new services and improve influence across the City in line with our strategic objective to be a leader of, and a voice for, women-centred support in Leeds and surrounding areas.

In 2023 – 2024 the Board are revising our strategic objectives (see section 6 Future Plans) in order to:

1. Update, refresh and extend our strategy to 2025/26.
2. Work with commissioners on considering ways to ensure that the commissioned services continue in the best way from April 2025.
3. Continue to develop our people, both staff and trustees, ensuring that they are supported, developed and invested in.
4. Continue our work on equity, diversity and inclusion, with our focus this year on neurodiversity and anti-racist practices.
5. Continue to develop an LWA social housing strategy to decide on our medium and long-term approach to social housing.

The Board and SLT are determined to build on the successes illustrated in this report and do even more to deliver on our beliefs that:

- All women and children should live in safety, free from abuse and fear.
- Every woman and child have a voice and should be empowered, inspired and listened to.
- Women centred support is powerful and improves the lives of women, men and children.

These beliefs are the major driver for why we do what we do and the glue that holds together our staff, trustees, volunteers, funders and supporters.

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1 Purpose and Impact

1.1 Summary

LWA was established in 1972 and therefore celebrated its 50th year in operation last year. It was formed by committed feminist activists wanting to support women and children experiencing and living with DV & A.

LWA is the largest women's charity in Leeds and although the scope of our work and activity has developed, supporting women and girls who have multiple and the most complex of needs through our partnership work, and additionally, coordinating some services to men and transmen through our commissioned services, we remain committed to our feminist approach and the client groups with whom we work. We continue to provide a range of the very best services for vulnerable women and families who are victims and survivors of: domestic, sexual & honour-based violence and abuse; forced marriage; trafficking; stalking and harassment.

LWA continues to be the lead agency in the local authority commissioned Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS) Consortium and the W&GA-L National Lottery Community Fund and Comic Relief funded projects. LWA also leads additional partnership work around voice and influence and women and girl's safety.

LWA is in the 6th year of the 8-year LDVS contract, being responsible for the delivery of the commissioned and non-commissioned refuge provision, the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service, the 24/7 helpline, and other community-based services.

In addition, LWA continue to offer community development, police control room consultation and support, on-line live chat support, healthy relationship and staying safe programmes and activities, support for women with multiple and complex needs and has been integral in setting up and delivering new projects such as Ask for Angela and the Women's Night Safe Space.

LWA supports women and children predominantly from Leeds and the Yorkshire and Humber region, but also often works with women from across the UK when safety issues arise.

Additional funding through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has enabled us to continue to lead, develop and expand, the large multi-agency partnership on behalf of LDVS. This includes the Sanctuary Support Team, explained in more detail in section 2.7 as well as the LDVS Voices project, section 2.12, working collaboratively with partners to obtain and share the views of victims-survivors of DV & A across Leeds in from a range of people and communities, including women, men, LGBT+ people and children and young people.

We have been the charity of choice for many individuals and organisations. Last year we succeeded in raising "£50,000 for 50-years" and invested in an ambitious new play area for children, space for young people, and a tranquil getaway for our residents at our oldest refuge.

This year we are launching a fundraising appeal to build a new children and young people's hub at our emergency refuge, Emmeline, for families recovering from domestic violence and abuse.

From April 2022 to March 2023 we supported over 100 children and young people in refuge settings, with almost every adult accessing the refuge service having one or more children who have witnessed or experienced the trauma of domestic violence and abuse.

We want to break the cycle of abuse and ensure children in our refuges can access support to overcome the trauma of abuse. We will report on this in next year's annual report.

From April 2022 to March 2023, the numbers of calls to our helpline continued to increase, surpassing previous peak levels and last year's record. Total calls and short-term work reached almost 7,600 for the year. Requests for our refuges continued to soar, but we can rarely admit more than a fraction of those that make enquiries or referrals due to a lower number of transfers to alternative accommodation.

LWA continues to show leadership and strength in the sector, working hard to increase funding to partners to help influence positive changes. We have ensured that our LDVS partners, and other organisations that we've brought into the large LDVS-led consortia projects, have received further funding. We also continue to show generous leadership with the Women & Girls Alliance – Leeds/Women's Lives Leeds Alliance, for example funding our Projects & Partnership's Director to work one day a month helping their team with funding, project development and sustainability.

1.2 Evidence of Excellence and Impact

We have continued our collaborations with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and Leeds City Council, regarding reducing violence against women and girls, particularly in relation to streets and parks, and the night-time economy and were successful in obtaining funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). This work will begin in our next financial year and we will report in next year's update.

LWA has been instrumental this year in working with partners in the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, Violence Against Women and Girls Board, and Safer Leeds Executive, to raise awareness and action regarding both VAWG and domestic abuse, including increasing the number of victims-survivors voices that are heard and acted on.

Our work leading the Sanctuary Support Team has created national conversations and shows how we can holistically support people from different backgrounds and communities whilst making their properties more safe and secure.

We have made huge advances in working with victims-survivors in our DV&A Voices project, in ensuring that their voices are heard and that they are used to influence real change in the City by stakeholders, commissioners, decision makers and planners.

We are also delighted with the work our expanded children and young people's teams are doing both in refuge and in the community, and have a section dedicated to this work in 2.5 below.

1.3 Progress on strategic objectives

Our strategic objectives remained central to our deployment and impact during this year and we have begun to consider refining our strategic objectives, and extending our strategy to 2026.

We currently have five strategic objectives and our recent progress against each of them is reported on below.

1. **To be a leader of, and a voice for, women-centred support in Leeds and surrounding areas.**

Our key objective focusses our attention on how we can help to lead our sector in improving our combined and collaborative voice and improve the lives of women and girls in Leeds. Like many of our sister organisations, we work with a wide range of individuals and stakeholders in delivering services individually and in partnership, and although that work can include working with all genders, we don't lose our focus on highlighting and prioritising women-centred support and working towards ending violence against women and girls.

We are a 'leader' in two different ways – "Leadership" in relation to being formal leaders of consortia, attending meetings, being an expert and voice of the sector, and "Generous Leadership" which is equally important to us and involves pro-bono work, supporting smaller organisations and using our time and resources for the benefit of others.

Examples of our Leadership this year:

- We created a new Practitioner Quality Support Coordinator (PQSC) who works with housing providers who receive funding through the New Burdens Funding to provide extra domestic abuse support for their residents. We act as experts in the field to support other practitioners to create consistency and high-quality services. The PQSC will also lead on the Practitioner Forum.
- Leading a number of multi-partner consortia including the two local authority commissioned domestic abuse contracts, and a number of partnerships within the Women and Girls Alliance – Leeds. We are particularly proud of the work that we are doing in the Sanctuary Support Team, by leading 9 organisations in an LDVS and wider partners project, expanding this work and bringing other partners on board.
- Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) – this has been a highlight at the end of this financial year, for LWA to lead on the SPF on behalf of the Women and Girls Alliance – Leeds and the Third Sector to shape it to focus on women and girls' outcomes.

Examples of Generous Leadership this year:

- A director and manager worked with a small partner organisation working with women from minoritised communities to bid for Leeds Community Foundation strategic development training, undertake other capacity building work to make them more resilient and to work with them to obtain the Cyber Essentials quality mark.
- Creating partnerships to discuss funding with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and other commissioners regarding women-centred support.
- Sharing current LWA policies with others and working with other women's organisations to create new policies, and obtaining professional advice on behalf of other organisations.

2. To deliver our strategy by investing in our people (staff, volunteers and trustees), with particular regard to training and development, and by putting our values as well as equality and diversity at the centre of the way we do things.

We are delighted that our new Finance and Resources Team continued to develop, including our standalone HR department. We appointed a new Director of Finance and Resources for the first time. This role is bringing together our finance, HR, impact and data and facilities support functions into a dynamic team supporting the organisation.

The Director of Finance and Resources has worked with staff to create a Wellbeing Committee and a Health and Safety committee, both of which are popular and staff at all levels are getting involved. The Wellbeing Committee will be sending regular wellbeing newsletters to all staff and are organising a "Lunch and Learn" event on menopause and pelvic health.

This year we launched our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion priorities, which were to raise awareness of neurodiversity across the organisation, and to introduce and work within anti-racist practices.

The percentage of team leaders and managers from Black and Minoritised communities has increased.

We have started mandatory anti-racism and neurodiversity training for staff and planned our first ever internal staff conference for May 2023 focussing on these two main issues, having external speakers and staff experiences, along with staff awards, to be nominated by staff themselves.

New staff development is seen to be high with many new staff, including managers and directors commenting that they have never previously had as much personal development or relevant training.

We have devised and delivered specialised domestic abuse training for all non-front-line staff that can be rolled out to other partners.

We also run breakfast drop in sessions for staff and trustees revolving at different sites, allowing people to meet and network with team members from across the organisation. We have also started to have SLT and trustee representation at specific refuge residents' meetings.

3. **To have an organisation structure and infrastructure that underpins all our work and is financially sustainable.**

Along with the new structural investment detailed in last year's annual report, we have continued to collaborate and develop our structure, responding to requests for partnerships and support, bringing in new and additional funding for LWA and partners in Leeds, and creating further teams.

This includes the new LDVS-led Voices project, and the women's safety work with W&GA-L, which are discussed later in the report.

Our Board and SLT have confidence that our organisational structure and the infrastructure around it is the best it has been for many years, and enables us to effectively and efficiently continue to develop the excellent work we are doing, allows for investment in the future and the ability to live by our values and be responsive to new areas of work.

4. **To invest in diversifying funding and income streams to increase stability and sustainability.**

We have succeeded in diversifying our funding and income streams, securing longer term funding and working with commissioners to secure future contract work and variations in contracts.

Our funding is becoming more complex and we are less reliant on a specific number of funds. This increases the pressure on the finance team, dealing with numerous funders, external partners and stakeholders, sub-contractors and housing benefit. We are looking at the structure of, and investment in, our internal finance team in the next financial year.

Our ratio of unrestricted income to restricted income is expected to rise from 13%:87% to 27%/73% next year. We have also budgeted for our income to exceed £4 million next year.

5. **To actively explore and decide how we can increase the housing offer in Leeds for women and children experiencing DV & A.**

We had a Board and SLT strategic day, and an in-depth strategic discussion with our Refuge Manager and Housing Management Coordinator regarding potential investment in further properties, and have been researching a number of different options to increase our property portfolio.

We are a leader and participant in housing related work and have improved our profile with the local authority and work in partnership with a number of other providers.

We also had to return two properties to landlords due to them becoming unsafe after safeguarding incidents, but worked hard with other providers to obtain two more replacement properties.

2 Achievements and Performance

LWA continues to grow from strength to strength and our impacts are being felt across the City and the wider UK. Some specific achievements are:

2.1 Staff Engagement and Commitment

Recruitment continues to improve and we have seen some great additions to our staff teams. We are pleased that we continue to recruit, induct, support and invest in new and existing staff.

LWA has a challenging Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to ensure that LWA treats all staff, colleagues in other agencies and service users fairly and in a way that encourages them to feel included in LWA's activities and goals and to encourage all members of staff to achieve and maintain a high standard of conduct, especially in relation to the treatment of colleagues and service users who may not share their ability, age group, ethnicity, gender, marital status, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic as laid down by legislation.

Staff engagement remains high, and we are particularly proud of how we have prioritised working together to put anti-racist practices and neurodiversity firmly on our agenda this year. Discussions around black history, white privilege, racial bias, microaggressions and allyship have started, and training has ranged from formal training, to discussion groups, through to materials in written and visual form, including articles and videos.

2.2 Awards

As part of LDVS we won the Most Supportive Domestic Violence Services 2023 - West Yorkshire in the GHP Mental Health Awards.

Our Chief Executive was nominated for the Standing Together Blooming Strong Awards in November 2022, which recognised the work of strong women on International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

2.3 Business Partnerships

We continue to maintain and develop valuable business and community relationships. Support includes money raised from fundraising activities, business grants and in-kind support.

"John Lewis Leeds has been happy to support Leeds Women's Aid over the past five years. We are proud of the relationship we have with the charity and the work they do in the local community"

- John Lewis and Partners, Leeds

"Leeds Roses are so proud to be supporting Leeds Women's Aid and the fantastic work they do. As a local women's team, it's important to us to be involved with local charities, and LWA is close to our hearts. We look forward to supporting them for years to come and are delighted to wear their heart on our jersey sleeves."

- Leeds Roses Women's Ice Hockey Team

2.4 Our Refuges

We are in our second year of receiving additional investments from Leeds City Council, through the Department of Levelling up and Communities (DHLUC) funding.

This year has seen pockets of high turnovers of residents moving-on from our refuges. Our housekeeping team have been working closely with our contractors to ensure the repair, decoration and cleaning of each unit is completed to a high standard and time efficient.

This has been a challenge for the team as several of the residents moving-on had been long-stayers and therefore the majority of the flats required complete refurbishment. This is additional work to ongoing repairs and maintenance tasks.

We support the local authority and other stakeholders by sending out a daily update that provides information of voids in refuges including our own within Leeds and Yorkshire that Leeds local authority can tap into for clients fleeing domestic violence and abuse.

Our refuges continue to be safe, secure, clean, vibrant and welcoming for families who are having to leave everything behind and flee.

> "I have fled domestic violence before and stayed in another refuge. This place is so much better I just can't believe it. It's so lovely. I like that we had a welcome pack, it was clean and the children had toys on their bed. I do feel it's more like home here."
>
> Client feedback to housekeeper.

The previous changes in the staffing structure allowing us to recruit additional staff have increased the numbers of staff working out of hours shifts, which is helping with additional support and activities and emergency admissions if required. In addition, we recruited a fabulous housekeeper for LWA refuges starting in February 2023, which has significantly reduced the workload for our support workers.

The Out of Hours Team have completed Helpline Partnership Training Level 2/3 and have helped the organisation in actively working towards the Helpline Partnership Quality Mark and have adapted to practice changes well.

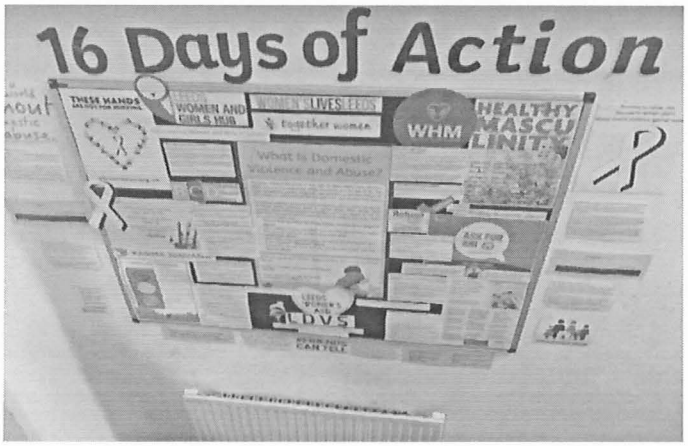
During 2023, our Housing Management Co-ordinator successfully sourced two new dispersed properties to replace two properties that had become unsafe for our clients.

The Housing Management Co-ordinator also attends regular partnership meetings with the local authority to ensure our clients are: registered with housing under Band A priority; are actively bidding; and helped and supported when they move-on from refuge with things such as payments of discretionary housing, provision of white goods & furniture packages.

Our Domestic Violence Support Workers in refuge work hard to make our residences welcoming and normalising, but also engaging with women and children in activities and raising awareness. Activates included:

16 Days of Action Campaign

Each staff member was allocated time to deliver awareness raising of the impacts of domestic violence and abuse. A huge amount of work was undertaken during the 16 days of action campaign, running form 25th November, the International Day to Eliminate Violence Against Women, through to 10th December, International Human Rights Day. Activities were delivered on a face-to-face basis.



Black History Month

Work around raising awareness in October 2022 for Black History Month was undertaken, whereby staff engaged with residents including at board and residents' meetings.



International Women's Day (IWD)

The refuge team celebrated International Women's Day with our families in refuge. To show our unity and celebrate IWD across our sites staff wore the colour purple and coordinated activities with our residents raising awareness of social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

The team additionally conducted workshops with residents raising awareness of the difference between Equality v Equity. Powerful quotes were read out from feminist authors which included a get-together enjoying music, food, refreshments and getting involved in creative art.

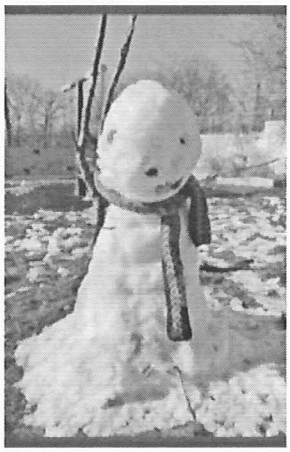
"We very much enjoyed coming together as a community with shared experiences. I feel I have formed really good friendships and feel supported by staff".

Recipes for Life

Our partners in Women Friendly Leeds visited our refuges to facilitate a 'Recipe for Life' workshop whereby our residents took part in creating something for inclusion into the Recipes for Life book they are creating, which aims to be filled with various women's recipes and advice.

Fun in the Snow

During March 2023 the weather changed and we had a little snow fall. Several residents and team enjoyed time together making snow-persons, with plenty of laughter within refuge. As the snow melted, this was a reminder that regardless of the immense trauma and pain women and children experience whilst being victims-survivors of domestic violence and abuse, there is hope that we can all continue to do our very best at making a real difference in ensuring all women and children are safe, protected, basic needs are met. We want to work towards everyone having equality of opportunity with encouragement and guidance for all to thrive, to feel listened to and loved.



Our refuge team have also been celebrating events and creating awareness with our residents on topics such as Chinese New Year, LGBTQ+ month and Autism/Neurodiversity month.

Therapy

We have continued to provide a therapy service working in partnership with Women's Counselling Therapy Service, primarily 1:1 support to clients and family intervention with a 'whole family' led approach. There has been an increase in referrals during the end of the year due to the turnover of clients at refuge i.e. moving in and/or moving on.

Case Study:

Malia* (not her real name) and her child arrived at our refuge seeking safety and solace, having fled from domestic abuse in their hometown. The journey was not easy, but they were supported by social care, who provided invaluable assistance in securing refuge for them and ensuring they could bring their belongings.

With support, Malia opened up about the eight years of abuse at the hands of her husband. She described him as controlling, verbally abusive, and selfish. He neglected their child and isolated Malia from her own family. Financially, he only provided a small allowance to sustain their family home.

As we delved deeper, Malia revealed that despite the restrictions imposed upon her, she managed to maintain some semblance of independence when it came to daily tasks like shopping, eating, and bathing. However, her husband's jealousy flared whenever she interacted with male friends, accusing her of infidelity. Malia showed remarkable resilience and growth by actively participating in programs like the Freedom Program and Own My Life, which she found immensely beneficial.

Malia shared her overwhelming relief upon entering our refuge. She felt as if a tremendous weight had been lifted from her shoulders, the refuge became her sanctuary, and she expressed happiness and relaxation like never before. She spoke of her gratitude for the support system she had in her mother and sister, and she was thankful to be in a City where she felt safe.

Our dedicated team, including the refuge workers and the LWA Children & Young People's team, provided comprehensive support to Malia and her child. We recognised the challenges they faced, especially with the child's fluctuating behaviour. We worked closely together to ensure the family received the assistance they needed. Over time, the family progressed towards achieving their goals and the child settled into a new specialist school with an EHCP (Education, Health, and Care Plan), all thanks to the ongoing support from our children's team.

In the present, Malia continues to build her life anew. She actively participates in counselling therapy services offered within refuge and group support delivered by a partner organisation. Malia is eager to resume the Staying Safe Program and is eager to volunteer and make new friends.

In addition to these endeavours, the family strengthens their network of support by visiting Malia's parents regularly. These connections have been a vital source of strength and encouragement throughout their journey. They have had no contact with the abuser and Malia feels safe, especially since they are now residing out of the area.

Malia eagerly anticipates the coming months when she may find a new home once leaving refuge. Being in the refuge has empowered her to make decisions with confidence.

2.5 Children & Young People's (CYP)Team

We are really fortunate to have a really energetic and passionate CYP team, both in refuge and in the community. This has expanded our team and we are working with more CYP than ever.

Refuge Team:

The CYP Team continue to provide support to every child/parent in refuge in order to ensure they are accessing early years provision, education, training, parenting support and emotional well-being support. Each CYP has a tailor-made support plan to meet their needs throughout their time at refuge.

The team run a Thursday after-school club during term time for reception age and above, which attracts an average of 10 children each week. It offers weekly structured activities which the children and young people have been actively consulted on.

At the beginning of October 2022, the CYP implemented a new Nurture Group which takes place once a week. The group sessions have been very successful with high client engagement. Sessions have been based on confidence building, talking about feelings, living with anxiety, coping mechanisms, confidence building, life skills, online safety and bullying.

In November and December 2022, the team successfully engaged with Hyde Park Source by delivering a variety of activities with our clients i.e. cookery, sports, arts & crafts, focused work sessions about self-esteem and much more. Between the two services and directly with clients we also got together to take part in Christmas activities and share a feast of Christmas food.

Two CYP support workers were trained in the Women's Aid 'You, Me and Mum Programme (YMM)' which started in January 2023. The workers initially completed an introductory session with clients in December 2022 and received very positive feedback/engagement from clients. The programme is being delivered within refuge over 10 weeks. It aims to empower and support victims-survivors in furthering their understanding of their role as mothers and in addressing the needs of children and young people who have lived with domestic abuse. The team aim to also deliver a focused wellbeing session directly after the YMM programme session.

Feedback from a client regarding the CYP team:

> "The team are amazing. I felt really supported by my worker and in the short time I've been at refuge, I've learnt so much. I understand so much more about me and parenting, that has helped me to better support my children".

Feedback from a client regarding a CYP Party:

> "I loved it! We all had a great time and it was good for us Mums to be able to socialise with each other".

The CYP refuge team are supporting nearly 60 children within all of our refuges at any one time.

Community Team:

Two part time workers joined us in November 2022 to provide our Elevate project - one to one and group work support in the community for CYP who have or are experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

The team have worked so hard to establish this project that during March 2023, only four months into the project, they were at caseload capacity and therefore a new waiting list process has been implemented. Both workers are holding a caseload of 12 CYP each and there are four families placed on the waiting list to-date. The waiting list is reviewed on a basis of length of time on waiting list and the level of risk.

2.6 Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS)

LDVS was delighted that the hugely successful commissioned contract has been extended for a further three years, and the first year of that extension has been a good year. We remain grateful to the continued support and investment from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), the Ministry of Justice and DHLUC allowing LDVS to be bigger and better than ever.

Our partnership with Behind Closed Doors (BCD) and Women's Health Matters (WHM) continues to be strong and respectful, working together to continue to enhance our offer to those experiencing domestic violence and abuse in Leeds. This relationship has continued and evolved this year with our increasing partnerships, including the DV&A Voices and Sanctuary Support Team.

LWA delivers a large part of the LDVS community services. We offer the 24/7 helpline through our Access and Assessment Team (AAT), along
with assessment, drop-ins, coordinating the Daily Risk Assessment Meeting (DRAM) contacts and a caseworker dealing with high risk cases on a short-term basis, balancing needs and risk whilst other parts of the service are at capacity. We also deliver the IDVA service, which involves a team leader, lead IDVA, two senior IDVAs working with adults with complex needs, children and young people, together with IDVAs specialising in the domestic violence court, IDSVAs working with women and girls experiencing sexual and domestic abuse, and requiring mental health support. Most of our IDVAs and all of our IDSVAs are accredited either by SafeLives or WAFE, and our team leader is SafeLives trained and accredited. 51% of all of our referrals come through DRAM and MARAC.

Domestic violence and abuse continues to be a gendered issue: in the LDVS-wide community services 92% of people supported were female with 93% of the perpetrators were male; in the wider LWA only services 98% of people supported were female, 96% perpetrators were male. Across all services 86% of the perpetrators were current or ex-partners.

The cost of living crisis following the legacy of the lockdowns continues to impact on service users' isolation, mental health, separation from family and friends, parental stresses, financial problems, furlough and job losses, so the IDVA role has changed to include a lot more emotional support alongside the practical help.

IDVA

IDVAs regularly are over capacity and often we have to make the decision that we can only accept referrals from DRAM and MARAC, or those where there is a criminal case that has been charged. Despite the increase in funding, the demand is relentless and capacity can't keep up.

IDVAs, on top of high caseloads, are attending MARAC meetings twice a week, DRAM meetings every day and fortnightly Clare's Law meetings.

The beginning of the year saw non-fatal Strangulation become a crime as part of the Domestic Abuse Act. The legislation carries a higher sentence and reflects the gravity of the offence. This comes after years of campaigning and IDVAs discussing how inequitable it was when someone was strangled but not killed, the perpetrator ended up being charged with a low-level common assault.

More cases are being discussed in the DRAM and MARAC processes where suspects have been arrested (and charged) for this new crime.

The Lead IDVA has presented to the Domestic Abuse Voice and Accountability (DAVA) Forum about the specialist complex needs for IDVA posts, and as a result a ground breaking impact report was produced. The interest and engagement from this has led the third sector agencies involved to recognise a need to improve complex needs experiences in the City. We are now helping to improve experiences of complex needs adults, in order to present the case to the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DALPB). The DALPB is working towards developing a holistic domestic violence and abuse strategy over the next 12 months. By using this partnership, we can mobilise the resources of many different services to provide a response to victims-survivors that is needs-led, trauma-informed and reflects the compassionate City ethos.

One IDVA, together with the IDVA Team Leader, attended a training session at Leeds Magistrates Court to deliver information to six newly appointed Magistrates regarding domestic violence, abuse, power and control. This was extremely well received and they have been invited to attend at future sessions.

> "The Magistrates' found your professional input really valuable, they learned so much about your vital role and how it fits into the judicial process. You were able to give real life examples that brought the training to life. The number of questions they had for you demonstrated how interested and engaged they were. You were both able to answer questions that the legal training team would have found difficult to answer. You both received excellent feedback, thank you."
>
> "Your attendance at this training was very valuable. I must say most of the information was not known by the group today. Therefore, please keep attending and enlighten other magistrates about the important and informative work you do in the region thereby making the job of magistrates easier when dealing with domestic abuse cases".

Access & Assessment Team (AAT)

AAT are the heart of our service and operate the first point of contact for many service users. They have been contacting all MARAC referrals and DRAM referrals before they are heard at meetings. This has meant that individuals have been able to access LDVS support sooner and have their voices heard earlier.

Drop-ins continue to improve and grow in demand since re-opening following the pandemic. These remain key for women to access whenever they need, particularly for those who aren't confident in accessing mainstream services.

The team are going through the Helplines Partnership Quality Mark Assessment and have had positive feedback at each stage.

The AAT have also been leading the way within LWA for wellbeing and support, with the Team Leader being a beacon for supporting, nurturing and developing her team, and sharing that passion with the whole organisation.

Case study:

Cindy* (not her real name) experienced a challenging period in her life as she found herself in a six-month relationship with an abusive partner, who subjected her to emotional coercion, harassment, and physical assault. They lived together during this tumultuous time. Additionally, Cindy was also coping with the profound loss of a close family member.

Having never shared her experience with any support services, it was when the Police became involved that she first realised the extent of her abuse. She recognised that her grief had clouded her judgment when she initially met her abuser, as he portrayed concern and care towards her. Despite early doubts, she made excuses for his behaviour, believing he could provide the support she needed in her vulnerable state.

Cindy was referred to our IDVA Team for support by the Police, via the DRAM. With the support of her IDVA Cindy began to identify the abusive patterns and control her partner exerted over her life. The IDVA team helped Cindy to navigate the complexities of the criminal justice system and keeping her updated with the progress of the case and the court hearings, ensuring she understood the legal proceedings and offering their expertise along the way. The IDVA accompanied her to the trial to support her on the day and while giving evidence.

Recognizing the importance of her safety and comfort, the IDVA team also advocated for special measures to be implemented at the trial and requested that a Restraining Order be granted on completion of the criminal case.

The assistance provided by her IDVA played a fundamental role in helping Cindy regain control over her life. Through their support, she successfully obtained a five-year Restraining Order, granting her the much-needed protection and peace of mind she deserved.

At one point, Cindy contemplated uprooting her life by moving to a new home to escape the abusive situation. However, with the steadfast support of her IDVA, she realized that such drastic measures were unnecessary. The IDVA's continuous updates and unwavering presence made her feel safer and more empowered, allowing her to make the decision to remain in her current environment.

Cindy recognizes that her journey towards healing and reclaiming her life would not have been possible without the support and guidance of her IDVA. Their dedication and advocacy empowered her to overcome the challenges she faced and take back control of her life. She now stands as a testament to the strength and resilience of survivors of domestic violence, and how it can be difficult to realise what is happening when it begins but that with support you can take back control and rebuild your life.

2.7 Sanctuary Support Team (SST)

Funding has continued and developed for the SST through the local authority as part of the government's New Burdens Funding. This is an innovative concept of working to make victims-survivor's homes into safe accommodation without them having to leave, by obtaining target hardening and safety measures and providing a holistic package of support to protect and support families to remain independent.

Target hardening comes from Leeds Housing Options (LHO) and the scheme is currently in place to make individuals in fear of crime feel safer in their homes and to potentially prevent homelessness.

LDVS and partners offer emotional, practical and advocacy support focusing on, but not limited to, their experience of domestic abuse. Since last year the project has created additional pathways for survivors of honour-based violence and abuse and for those who are seeking asylum.

All the initial roles have been appointed, so the full complement of the team is now in place. In the last year we extended the Karma Nirvana post to 28hrs and applied flex to the service to better reach and provide the specific support this community needs.

The SST staff are managed by a line manager in their employing organisation and are also matrix managed by the SST Leader - a system we spearheaded within Women's Lives Leeds and want to extend to other collaborative working situations.
The Sanctuary Team Leader has embedded systems and procedures to support the hosting arrangements of the front-line delivery team. Regular team meetings and one to one catch ups are offered to staff.

While the team's support centres around safe housing and domestic violence and abuse support, they are able to be person-centred in their approach. Some clients have suffered with isolation, and the team have assisted in helping them feel more included in the local community.

Examples of this include: learning new skills in a group setting; mental health groups; language classes and family groups. Feedback from a service user who does not currently have recourse to public funds stated that she was so thankful for her support worker who assisted her with accessing a local group. Through the work done, both the service user and their child were able to go on a group trip within the school holidays to the seaside – she said the trip gave herself and her son such a boost to their wellbeing, she explained it was lovely to see him playing in the sea for hours and a day out like this would not have been possible otherwise.

In the next financial year, the individual organisational leaders will be meeting together with the aim to facilitate the development of this partnership, to learn from each other and to discuss additional opportunities that they, as a partnership, could develop.

The first impact report has been published and since the project started 212 referrals have been accepted, with 68 of those having children to be considered. To date 92% of those referrals say they feel safer; 88% said they felt more confident and 80% said they feel better about themselves. In addition, 3 out of 5 service users have said that their health has improved too.

LHO has fed back to us that they are getting referrals from places they never have before such as schools and foodbanks, which is really positive news.

We continue to be very adaptive in the way that we accept referrals, as moving from taking referrals from LHO only to developing a pathway from the internal organisations to make the process more streamlined for the support workers and for the individuals accessing support.

Future development will see the team being able to take higher risk cases, which will improve the pathways from MARAC and DRAM, that again will work for the staff and service users, but also wider LDVS teams such as the IDVAs and AAT.

2.8 Labyrinth Project

This year saw the conclusion of the Labyrinth Project which was a national partnership project that LWA was involved in, led by Solace Women's Aid, which focussed on women's: safety; rights; employability & law; and legal rights. The outcomes of the project were celebrated in a national event, and learning has been shared widely, which was both on-line and in person, with the LWA Projects and Partnerships Director being invited to be a speaker and panellist for the occasion.

Despite being operational for only 18 months and working within the context of Covid-19, Labyrinth succeeded in exceeding all its original delivery targets. Collectively the project reached 33,463 women of which LWA specifically engaged 161 female professionals and supported 1,070 women.

The partnership was strong and continues to develop with the Projects and Partnerships Director maintaining the relationship between LWA and Solace with the view to working together in the future.

2.9 Practitioner Quality Support Coordinator (PQSC)

This new post was created during this year and is aimed at supporting newly created specialist domestic violence and abuse workers in four other supported housing organisations. Initial meetings took place with each agency within the first two weeks of the service starting. Peer support was the main issue that was identified.

Now the practitioners meet four-weekly with the Coordinator to look at training needs, support and good practice. We have also provided training on DASH risk assessments and a briefing on the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme Briefing (Clare's Law).

The worker is already working alongside Safer Stronger Leeds communities in order to act as a practitioner in the domestic violence and abuse sector in offering joint training to practitioners across Leeds.

The PQSC is main point of contact for practitioners attending the Practitioner Forum and an offer has been made to agencies across Leeds to act as a point of contact if practitioners are working with service users/cases and would like specialist support or advice. A report is being prepared which will capture the outcomes from the agencies and give a picture of the impact that that the practitioner roles make across Leeds.

2.10 DRAMs

Daily Risk Assessment Meetings were introduced in July 2021 in order to reduce the burden on agencies of the daily MARAC meetings, and to facilitate quicker and safer responses to victims-survivors in Leeds. The three core agencies are the Police, LDVS and Children Social Care. Since the DRAM was introduced, over 3,700 cases were discussed with LWA's staff attempting to contact every single victim-survivor.

The arrangements are now established and they work by triaging the high-risk Police incidents, allowing more of the appropriate cases to be discussed at MARAC. The DRAM has reduced pressure on all of the other MARAC agencies who now only need to attend two meetings per week, apart from LDVS (as Police and Children's Social Care meet daily anyway to discuss families reported to the Police).

LDVS has to attempt contact with every single victim-survivor before the DRAM meeting at 1pm each day. This has been an incredible feat with the IDVA and AAT teams working closely and cleverly in a fast paced and pressurised environment, to process the referrals that begin to arrive from 7.30 am through to the contacting of victims-survivors and having the meeting later in the day.

These arrangements continue to have a profoundly positive affect on victims-survivors as their views are integral to the meetings, and appropriate referrals and support can be targeted immediately, whereas the previous MARAC system wasn't able to do that. The effects on LDVS however remain a significant challenge.

After undertaking a detailed review of the DRAM process from the point of view of LWA delivered parts of the LDVS service, for each DRAM meeting (1½ hours) it takes 19 staff hours. This is phenomenal and really shows how invested we are in the process. This is equivalent to 2½ days of staff time per 1½ hour DRAM meeting.

2.11 Clare's Law

The DVDS (Clare's Law) was introduced across all Police Forces in England and Wales in 2014, and our IDVAs have been involved since then, attending panel meetings, sharing decisions for what should be disclosed and how, and often undertaking joint disclosure meetings with the Police and victims-survivors. Under the scheme, members of the public can ask the Police for information on their partner's criminal history and therefore know if their partner poses a risk to them, under a "Right to Ask" provision. Additionally, the Police can approach someone, unsolicited, under a "Right to Know" provision, when information held by them or any other agency shows concerning or safeguarding related information about another person whom they are in a relationship with.

The anticipated increase in demand has meant that Clare's Law meetings, often chaired by LWA, take place three times a month.

2.12 Domestic Violence & Abuse (DV&A) Voices

This really exciting new project is focussing on the victims-survivors and has been incorporated into LWA's Projects and Partnerships Team this year. Following on from the successful foundations developed through the Labyrinth Project, this project aims to facilitate a range of victims-survivors to contribute to and influence conversations and decisions in the Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.

With a key focus being on: women's; men's; children's; and the LGBT* Communities' voices, a multi-disciplinary team, facilitated by LWA on behalf of LDVS, and hosted with partner organisations, has been established.

The team are currently working on a collaborative podcast, that can be included in statutory training. The "You Don't Know What You Don't Know" podcast will be played during the training to inform attendees about personal challenges and experiences of victims-survivors around accessing their services and what changes they would like to see.

This work is being keenly followed by the Domestic Abuse Commissioners Office, who are prioritising victim-survivor voices.

2.13 Women & Girls Alliance – Women's Lives Leeds

Women's Lives Leeds partnership has changed its name to the W&GA-L. Some of the Alliance's funded projects retain the WLL brand name, including the WLL Empowering Systems Change project. This work aims to: embed the Complex Needs Service and its learning; develop the partnership of the Alliance itself, including strategic development; and include women and girls from their respective organisations in those conversations. The "Women's Speak Group" is proving to be successful in facilitating voice and opinion by those who attend.

The name change is one milestone in the Alliance's development, along with the re-development of the existing website, a restructured purpose, new values and an exciting emerging strategy to drive the Alliance forward.

The WLL VOICES project funded by the Comic Relief Power Up Fund continues to lead the Women Friendly Leeds (WFL) movement and provide opportunities for women and girls to influence and shape conversations around their safety, health and wellbeing. Highlights include a Q&A Session with Detective Superintendent Vanessa Rolfe; A Menstruation to Menopause event as part of the Women of West Yorkshire (WOW) festival. Being chosen as the project to receive funds from an American group called Bon Iver and an incredible programme called Arts to Activism in partnership with Leeds Met, which delivered workshops across the City.

However, parts of the project will be drawing to a close during the next financial year, but due to a successful partnership application to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the project will continue for a further 18 months.

The Women's Safe Parks consultation and "Reclaim the Parks" activities have been the springboard for future involvement to inform the development of national guidance, which aims to influence local authorities when developing parks and public spaces.

LWA's Projects and Partnerships Director was invited to be a speaker and panellist at the event hosted by Leeds University to launch the guidance.

The value and impact of our work on influencing safe spaces, public areas and parks is demonstrated by an invite from Bristol University for LWA to be involved as a steering group member for a similar initiative in Bristol.

The Women's Night-time Safe Space (WNSS), which initially took the form of a Health Bus on Dortmund Square in Leeds City centre, has been funded and continues to successfully support women in the night-time economy. Evidence is continually being collected which will be pulled together and consulted on before developing a business case for the sustainability of this initiative in the next financial year. The WNSS has already supported some very vulnerable women, with on average 30 women accessing it each night, demonstrating its value and necessity as a service.

3 Support provided

3.1 The numbers from April 2022 to March 2023:

There has been an increased demand for both our accommodation and community-based services, higher even than the dramatic increases that we saw last year.

Most referrals and requests for refuge and emergency accommodation cannot be accepted due to capacity constraints, however the total number of women and children supported in refuge accommodation was 220.

The 24-hour telephone helpline calls and one-off work reached just under 7,600 calls for the first time. This is an increase again on last year, which was our previous record year.

Our community-based services, including helpline, IDVA and drop-ins continued to support more clients.

Support was provided to adults aged between 16 and 85, 31 different languages spoken, including BSL, 11% of people supported required an interpreter and 55% had mental health vulnerabilities.

3.2 Types of Abuse

The average length of the abuse our service users have experienced is 5 years. Controlling and coercive behaviour and harassment and stalking has increased this year:

- 70% (up from 55%) have experienced controlling and coercive behaviour
- 41% have experienced financial abuse
- 55% (up from 48%) have experienced harassment/stalking/surveillance
- 46% (up from 39%) have experienced threats to kill

3.3 Impact and Service User Feedback

Service user feedback included:

100% said

- I was listened to and believed by staff here
- I was supported to talk about my experiences of violence and abuse
- The service I accessed was non-judgemental

96% said

- I feel that my privacy was respected
- I was supported to make my own choices
- Staff here have been knowledgeable and competent
- I'd come back to the service again if I needed to

Service users said:

Q: If using this service made a difference in your life, please tell us how – what's changed for you?

"I felt supported and empowered to understand that what I had experienced was in fact, abuse, despite no physical violence occurring."

"I found myself in a difficult and dangerous situation and was referred to the services by the Police. My case worker, warm and friendly, was supportive, non-judgemental and knowledgeable. She did not tell me what to do or what is the best solution to my problem. Instead, she provided information on my rights and options, while reassuring me that I would be supported whatever my decision is. She was easy to talk to, approachable and professional."

"It made me understand I'm not alone and can reach out and speak to people about what's happening, that gave me great advice on all matters not just the abuse I suffered"

"The kindness and dignity with which I was treated helped me recover my sense of myself beyond abuse. Thank you"

"The service has been there every step of the way and not feeling alone or 'in the dark'"

Q: How would things be different for you if you'd not received support here?
"I don't think I would have survived. I had broken away from the relationship with the abuser but of course, that didn't stop the abuse or prevent the escalation in dangerous, unstable stalking....the service restored my self-respect and ability to feel safe and look to the future. The future otherwise would've remained very bleak."

"I would not have known what was happening with the charges. It felt good to have support from someone away from the situation"

"I would still be in an abusive marriage because I would not have had anywhere safe to go to."

Q: What was missing from the support you received from us? How can we improve?

"I am grateful for the fact that the services exist. For me personally, the service provided was what I needed. Thank you!"

"I don't think the service has any improvements to make, the commitment, professional competence and integrity of the staff really is quite wonderful. I think more resource needs to be invested in the service rather than victims of domestic abuse going round in circles with the Police. I really don't believe the majority of Police Officers have a clue when it comes to domestic violence, perhaps officers should be seconded to LDVS for a while as part of their CPD."

"Services were brilliant overall and also staff members were knowledgeable and experienced but hiring more staff will be helpful for clients in the meantime."

4 Values and Culture

At LWA, our behaviours support our purpose and create our culture, which in turn drives innovation and growth.

We do what we do because we believe:

- All women and children should live in safety, free from abuse and fear.
- Every woman and child have a voice and should be empowered, inspired and listened to.
- Women centred support is powerful and improves the lives of women, men and children.

Our Values reflect our organisation's views; they are the principles, standards & qualities that tell the story about the way in which we conduct our work.

Be Exceptional
We are experts in our field and proud of having a women-centred approach. We are pioneers and leaders, striving to perform and innovate.

Be Courageous
We are honest, inventive and have the integrity to challenge perceptions and practice.
We are encouraging and empowering of each other to be courageous and brave.

Be Inclusive
We are diverse, welcoming, approachable and inclusive as employers, service providers and people.
We promote unity, fairness and respect.

Be Inspirational
We are proud of our creativity and how we motivate, listen, empower and support each other.
We are encouraging and lead by example to achieve the best.
.

Be Responsive
We are collaborative, aware, compassionate and sensitive.
We adapt our approach to meet changing needs.

4.1 The Behaviours that create our Culture

Our Culture is a set of basic assumptions that we all share, these are 'norms' that guide the way people interact with each other and others or put in a different way, 'the way we do things here'.

These behaviours apply to everyone, irrespective of position or seniority. Structural hierarchy represents the division of work and skills, not the division of people.

We not only agree to uphold professional ethical standards but will go further in our commitment to hold ourselves accountable to maintaining behaviours that seek to create a safe and respectful culture and prevent incidences of workplace bullying.

Our key principles are:

- To challenge and support each other to be exceptional by being curious about different ways of doing things, thinking beyond our roles, and embracing learning and development in all its forms.
- To be courageous enough to demonstrate humility and vulnerability, and to approach failure with curiosity rather than criticism.
- We welcome, accept and include everyone based on inherent worth and value, enabling divergent thinking in an inclusive environment.
- We believe that everyone has the potential to be inspirational both in what they do, and the way they do it.
- Through our compassionate lens, we find solutions by being responsive, agile and adaptable.

Our Conduct agreement is now an every day part of our working lives.

4.2 Staff feedback

What is the best thing about working for LWA?

We have had a number of staff leave for promotions and strategic roles outside of the organisation - for example, the Domestic Abuse Commissioners Office and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. This is a great testament to the expertise that our staff develop and how they can share with a wider audience to improve the way people experiencing domestic abuse are dealt with.

Comments from staff who have recently left:

> "What makes Leeds Women's Aid is all the fantastic and passionate women that work here and I will miss working with a team that shows that commitment! I look forward to see what you all get up to next on the socials".
>
> "I have loved working at Leeds Women's Aid and it is a very sad day for me, and whilst a new adventure awaits, I will miss everyone greatly."

5 Operating model and risks

5.1 Fundraising

We are regulated by the Fundraising Regulator and all our fundraising practices are ethical and considerate. We have an in-house Fundraising and Marketing Director, and do not employ fundraising companies or consultants. All our fundraising and marketing is done to further the organisations charitable activities.

We fund our work with income from a wide range of restricted and unrestricted funds. Our restricted funds include our commissioned services by which we are contracted after an open tender to deliver and report back on specific service delivery. Our largest contract is from Leeds City Council, delivering the LDVS Consortium. Other restricted income includes additional grants from Leeds City Council, along with grants from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, the Ministry of Justice, the Department of Levelling Up and Communities, the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF), Children in Need and Comic Relief.

Our unrestricted income gives us the flexibility to fund a range of things directly for our service users and for our infrastructure. It also allows us to invest in reserves (see section 5.6 of this report), which can be designated for specific charitable purposes.

Our fundraising and marketing team have continued to be creative and effective in raising funds for both restricted and unrestricted income streams. In celebration of our 50-year anniversary a target of £50,000 was raised to fund a new playground for Emmeline refuge. The money was raised through a variety of income streams which included a public appeal, grant making trusts, business and community support. The team were able to work with key stakeholders to promote the appeal effectively and reach the target within the set timescale.

Work on the playground was completed in Autumn 2022.

Our strategy of increasing individual giving and supporter base is continuing, and we have a range of regular givers, one off donations, people doing fundraising events and developing our legacy strategy. Fundraising events have included supporters doing the Three Peaks challenge, six runs round the clock and an Inflatable run. Our amazing supporters raised just over £40,000 last year.

To celebrate Leeds Women's Aid 50th anniversary we hosted an event which was a huge success. It was a great opportunity to invite our supporters and key stakeholders to meet LWA staff and give them an opportunity to hear about what we have achieved and what our future plans are.

5.2 Charity Shop

Our charity continues to have a positive presence within the local community and has a strong and loyal customer base and receive high quality donations which we are very grateful and sincerely thank them for. The Retail Manager has been resourceful in raising a diverse range of income through the shop such as RAG's, eBay, we buy books scheme, vintage cash cow and recycle for charity. We also participated in the local community late night Christmas shopping event hosted by local arts and crafts people.

The Retail Manager continues to arrange special shopping events for groups of residents from our refuges to come to the shop and choose whatever they like from the shop for free. These events are very well received by both residents and staff alike as it really helps families.

5.3 Donations and volunteers

We have received grants, donations and gifts in kind from hundreds of individuals and organisations, and would particularly like to thank the following donors and funders:
Aecom, Asda, Beaverbrooks, Bevan Brittan, Burberry, Caval Foundation, Coca Cola, Elizabeth & Prince Zaiger Charitable Trust, Eversheds Sutherland, Gledhow Sports and Social Club, Golden Acre Foods, Graham Stowe Bateson Solicitors, Headrow House, HSBC, John Lewis, Leeds Women's Ice Hockey Team, Limehouse, Master of Craft, Marshall Mill, Michael Page, Morrisons Foundation, Oakwood Solicitors, Punch Creative, Ritter Sport, Sir George Martin Trust, Ten percent Foundation, The Charles and Elsie Sykes Trust, Travlaw Legal Services, Smallwood Trust, Supply Chain NHS, Yorkshire Building Society, Wade Charity, Water Lane Boathouse, Zedex Ltd, Zurich Community Trust.

In addition, LWA values its individual supporters and fundraisers for their dedication and hard work, some of whom have been tirelessly fundraising for the organisation for over 21 years. Some reasons why people support LWA:

"You helped a good friend of mine through a terrible event and I can't thank you enough. Just a small token of appreciation."

"I hope this contributes to your brilliant efforts in helping women and their families during difficult times".

We are proud to work with volunteers of all ages from teenagers working on their Duke of Edinburgh Award to people wanting to support LWA and help their community. Due to their hard work and dedication we have a thriving and well-established shop and without them the shop would not be the success it is today.

We currently have on average 13 regular volunteers assisting in the day to day running of the shop, which equates to around 1,764 hours. This is equivalent to an in-kind investment of around £400 per week, using the real living wage hourly rate.

Without our volunteers the shop would not be what it is today, a well-established charity shop offering a unique and friendly shopping experience.

Why people volunteer:

> "I appreciate the hard work LWA do supporting women in Leeds I know how much of a difference you make. I really wanted the opportunity to join the team and help out by volunteering."
>
> "I volunteer with LWA because a lovely lady I knew was abused and eventually killed by her partner. I wanted to do something in her memory which included helping those like her."

5.4 Investments

As reported in last year's report, work has progressed with regards to LWA's investment policy and strategy. A deposit account was opened with CCLA, which has enabled interest to be earnt on funds held whilst increasing the level of protection to LWA's financial resources. The non-interest-bearing current account is now only being used for immediate working capital requirements. Within the year Bank of England interest rates have risen from 0.75% to 4.25%, and this has provided much needed additional funds, and other things being equal, should continue to do so in at least the short term. Work continues to be done on the appropriateness and value to be invested in ethical investment portfolio funds, and we will report on this next year.

5.5 Reserves Policy

The Board review our reserves policy at least annually, and the policy is risk-based and considers good practice in the charity sector and is therefore:

- Based on a detailed understanding of the actual and predicted cash inflows and outflows of the charity.
- Not based upon holding a set number of months cover on expenditure.
- Integrated with the risk assessment and strategic plans of the charity.
- Not based upon a closure scenario unless this is considered likely.
- Regularly reported to and reviewed by the Trustee Board.

It was agreed that our reserves policy should provide:

- A level of working capital that protects the continuity of our core work, allowing for funding we receive for restricted funded projects.

- A level of security against the financial risks identified in our risk assessment, including cover for unforeseen expenditure or unanticipated loss or deferral of income.
- A level of funding for possible opportunities (Designated Funds).
- A level of funding following the unexpected and unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 to plan for any future similar occurrences.
- A level of funding for infrastructure investments.

Arising from a review of our risk-based reserves policy, the Board approved an updated reserves policy in August 2023, increasing the required levels of reserves to a range between £716,000 and £836,000. Our new unrestricted reserves total falls comfortably at the higher end of this range.

5.6 Financial Review

Principal funding sources continue to be Local Authority contracts and rental income including Housing Benefit. We are very grateful for the respectful partnership that we continue to enjoy with Leeds City Council. This year they have provided us robust and considerate contract management and worked with us to secure additional funding for our much-needed services.

This year we have received funding through government sources from both the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Ministry of Justice. We are exceedingly grateful to all support that has been provided and the additional funding in year to support our services.

Voids (empty refuge spaces) at 15.8% were much higher than the previous last 2 year's levels (21/22 - 7.5%, 20/21 - 8.5%), and bad debt written off remained at 1%. Although voids are much higher than usual, we are pleased at how the services have been managed, as the target for voids in normal circumstances is 8% and bad debts is 4%. The continued reduction in the level of bad debts is testament to the hard work of the refuge teams in managing the clients' financial situations both when the clients are in refuge and when they are able to move on, and the skill and expertise of our finance team in making and reviewing appropriate provisions.

Planned voids mainly cover the period when units are empty due to cleaning and maintenance or occasionally for the reservation of a unit for a woman urgently needing to flee to safety.

The voids for our non-commissioned refuges at 15.8%were negatively impacted by remedial building works that were required in one of our refuges which resulted in 2 properties being unusable with no income being received for approximately 10 weeks. Our commissioned refuge voids increased to 10.6% (compared to 6.8% last year). The two dispersed properties became unsuitable due to significant safeguarding risks and were handed back to the Housing Association within the final quarter of this financial year. A period of 3 months elapsed between this issue arising and the two new properties being fit for use. We therefore anticipate that voids will reduce in 2023/24.

The trustees submit the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. The net income for the year amounts to a surplus of £17,502. This compares to a surplus in 2022 of £42,681, and the reduction is largely due to the level of voids as detailed above. Reserves carried forward are £981,762 of which £159,338 are restricted and £822,424 are unrestricted funds.

Within the 2021 accounts we reported that we had £250,000 in designated funds for our second year of our 2-year period for investment in our growth and infrastructure to meet the continuing need and demand for what we do. This investment has now been completed at a cost of £57,000 versus the £250,000 provided for.

Our unrestricted reserves at £822,424 fall comfortably at the higher end of the new reserves range. We had expected that the investment could take us below the lower level of our unrestricted reserves but excellent financial management has allowed us to protect our unrestricted reserves and not require full use of the designation for investment.

6 Future plans

LWA's strengths are in delivering excellent services, leading collaborative partnerships, developing new and innovative services and having strategic influence locally, regionally and nationally.

Demand for our services continues to increase and we are proactively looking at ways in which we can develop, improve and increase our services to support more women and children. We do this by playing to our strengths for development and working within our partnerships.

We have built on and revised our strategic objectives for 2023 – 2026, they are:

1. To be a leader of, and a voice for, women-centred support in Leeds and surrounding areas.
2. To be a great place to work where people can develop and grow and our values, including equity and diversity, underpin what we do and how we do it.
3. To be an organisation that innovates by identifying and investing in opportunities ensuring long term sustainability and stability.
4. To reflect on and assess how our accommodation offer impacts clients in Leeds and to explore opportunities to enhance high quality accommodation provision.

7 Governance and decision-making

LWA operates as a charitable company and registered its purpose and objectives with the Charity Commission on 12 November 1991. It is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association which set out clearly the purpose of the charity together with rules about how it conducts its business, including its governance.

Following a regular assessment of the trustee skills and experience we need to deliver our strategy, trustees are recruited by external advertisement in the same way that employees and workers are recruited, and there are role profiles and an application form.

Our growing reputation and profile mean that we also receive unsolicited approaches from time to time.

Applicants are interviewed by the Chair/Deputy Chair and Chief Executive, and the final decision is made by the Trustee Board. All new Trustees receive an induction, and training is planned, commissioned and delivered regularly.

The organisation employs a Chief Executive who takes decisions on the day to day running of the charity. The Chief Executive manages staff, ensures proper financial management,

follows policies agreed by the Trustees, and complies with legal obligations and those directed by funders, the Charity Commission, Companies House and other regulatory bodies. Trustees ensure adherence to legal requirements, i.e. maintaining correct policies: Health and Safety at Work; Fire Safety; Risk Assessments; recruitment and selection; and other policies such as grievance and disciplinary.

LWA is an independent organisation - however, it benefits from being part of the wider Women's Aid network across the UK.

All Trustees give of their time freely and no Trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Chair of Trustees and in accordance with the charity's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest could arise.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations: none of our Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a Trustee or senior manager of the charity with a client or other stakeholder must be disclosed to the full Board of Trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

We are also keeping abreast of the developments in the Charity Act 2022, Some provisions have been introduced in this financial year, with the second tranche in the next financial year.

7.1 Risk management

The Trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- A fully updated Risk Register, comprising of an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces.
- The establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual reviews.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.
- A review of our committee structure, with two separate committees focussing on risk, governance, finance, people and organisational development, in addition to our Fundraising and Marketing Committee. These committees has=ve trustee and senior management representation along with a commissioned external and independent Health & Safety consultant and the organisation's Data Protection Lead when required.

The Risk Register focuses attention on the areas of: Governance and Management; Operational Risks regarding People and Activities/Premises; Financial; Environmental and External. We identified further risks following an incident of someone being housed in refuge who was unbeknown to us a serious offender, which was duly reported to the Charity Commission. This incident has been successfully closed by the Commission.

Other risks regularly identified include that of our service users being at risk of injury or even death. There are also ongoing, daily risk assessments on service delivery, and at regular intervals in respect of premises.

Attention has also been focused on other non-financial risks including those arising from fire, flood, terrorist attack, technology, reputation and health and safety of staff. These risks are managed by having robust policies and procedures in place, and through regular awareness training for staff.

Financial sustainability is one of the risks identified by the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of LWA's financial position through management reports including available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, liaison with the bank when necessary, and active management of debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital. LWA continues to be dynamic and strategic in its use of unrestricted and designated reserves.

7.2 Data Security and Protection

Data security and protection is of paramount importance to LWA. We deal with very sensitive personal data relating to the people we support, our staff and our supporters so it is vital that we process this information securely and in accordance with data protection law.

The organisation continues to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. As data controllers, LWA continues to monitor and review our statutory due diligence. LWA has a named Data Protection Lead (DPL), who is a qualified Data Protection Practitioner.

She continues to report to the CEO and the Resources and Governance Committee of the Board regarding Subject Access Requests, Data Breaches and areas of consideration and improvement. This is reviewed both internally within LWA, and also as consortium lead for our LDVS and W&GA-L partnerships.

All LWA staff receive data protection training, which was updated this year and continues to be rolled out. Briefings and regular updates are circulated to all staff to ensure that they remain up to date.

There have been no breaches of data which have needed to be reported to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

7.3 Information, Communications, Technology (ICT)

Our ICT strategy evolves depending on environmental and staffing changes. Next year we are conducting an organisational wide IT refresh, to enable better hybrid working and hot desking for staff and for partners in other organisations.

8 Statutory information

8.1 Public Benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, the Trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit in the Charities Act 2011 in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance on the advancement of health and saving of lives.

8.2 Auditors

A resolution to re-appoint BK Plus Audit Ltd (successor firm to Riley & Co Limited), Chartered Certified Accountants & Registered Auditors as auditors for this financial year was proposed and agreed at the Annual General Meeting.

8.3 Trustees of the charity

The Directors of the charitable company are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law. The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year end are as follows:

Ms C Clapham (appointed 21 September 2022)
Ms M Clarke
Ms HL Daniels
Ms JM Ezard (appointed 21 September 2022)
Dr NC Ikeogu
Ms J Mcara
Ms A Norman (resigned 19 April 2023)
Ms R Tredget
Dr L Whewell

8.4 Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that period.

In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to;

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

8.5 Statement of disclosure of information to Auditors

The Trustees of the company who held office at the date of approval of this annual report confirm that so far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each Director has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved on behalf of the Board.

Nneka Ikeogu

Nneka Ikeogu
Director and Chair of the Board

22 November
..... 2023

Opinion
We have audited the financial statements of Leeds Women's Aid (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31st March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:
- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31st March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion
We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and the provisions available for small entities, in the circumstances set out in note 21 to the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern
In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information
The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006
In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:
- the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the industry sector;
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation and data protection, anti-bribery, employment, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- Ensured laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- Making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was a susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- Understanding the design of the company's remuneration policies.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we;

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in note 2 were indicative of potential bias; and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risks of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- Reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- Reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the company's legal advisors.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from the financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

V J Atkinson FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of BK Plus Audit Ltd
52 St Johns Lane
Halifax
West Yorkshire
HX1 2BW

Date: 23 November 2023

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)
for the Year Ended 31st March 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/23 Total funds £	31/3/22 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	43,420	62,817	106,237	70,008
Charitable activities	5				
Charitable activities		797,575	2,969,230	3,766,805	2,707,926
Other trading activities	3	63,366	-	63,366	66,672
Investment income	4	5,036	-	5,036	276
Total		909,397	3,032,047	3,941,444	2,844,882
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	6	69,225	-	69,225	67,618
Charitable activities	7				
Charitable activities		757,166	3,007,750	3,764,916	2,660,916
Governance costs		82,558	7,243	89,801	73,667
Total		908,949	3,014,993	3,923,942	2,802,201
NET INCOME		448	17,054	17,502	42,681
Transfers between funds	19	(57,353)	57,353	-	-
Net movement in funds		(56,905)	74,407	17,502	42,681
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		879,329	84,931	964,260	921,579
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		822,424	159,338	981,762	964,260

The notes form part of these financial statements

Balance Sheet
31st March 2023

	Notes	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	14	77,634	62,467
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	15	239,523	616,240
Cash at bank and in hand		1,648,162	1,439,583
		1,887,685	2,055,823
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	16	(983,557)	(1,154,030)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		904,128	901,793
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		981,762	964,260
NET ASSETS		981,762	964,260
FUNDS	19		
Unrestricted funds:			
General fund		389,148	446,053
Designated funds		433,276	433,276
		822,424	879,329
Restricted funds		159,338	84,931
TOTAL FUNDS		981,762	964,260

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on ....22..November..2023..... and were signed on its behalf by:

Nneka Ikeogu

.....

N C Ikeogu - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Cash Flow Statement
for the Year Ended 31st March 2023

	Notes	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	246,207	416,656
Net cash provided by operating activities		246,207	416,656
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(42,664)	(41,994)
Interest received		5,036	276
Net cash used in investing activities		(37,628)	(41,718)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		208,579	374,938
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		1,439,583	1,064,645
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		1,648,162	1,439,583

The notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Cash Flow Statement for the Year Ended 31st March 2023

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	17,502	42,681
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	27,497	13,371
Interest received	(5,036)	(276)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	376,717	(331,930)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(170,473)	692,810
Net cash provided by operations	246,207	416,656

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1/4/22 £	Cash flow £	At 31/3/23 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	1,439,583	208,579	1,648,162
	1,439,583	208,579	1,648,162
Total	1,439,583	208,579	1,648,162

The notes form part of these financial statements

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements
The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income
For donations to be recognised in the financial statements, the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing before the year end. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be confirmed, then this income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity, and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Donated facilities and donated professional services are recognised in income at their fair value when their economic benefit is probable, it can be measured reliably, and the charity has control over the item. Fair value is determined on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity. For example, the amount the charity would be willing to pay in the open market for such facilities and services, a corresponding amount is recognised in expenditure.

No amount Is including in the financial statements in relation to volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102). Further detail is given In the Trustees' Annual Report.

Gifts in kind, donated for resale, are recognised within 'Income from other trading activities' at the net realisable value in the financial year in which they are sold.

Fixed asset gifts in kind are recognised when receivable and are included at fair value. These gifts are not deferred over the life of the asset.

For legacies, entitlement is the earlier of the charity being notified of an impending distribution or the legacy being received, at that point income is recognised. On occasion legacies will be notified to the charity where it is not possible to reliably measure the amount expected to be distributed, on these occasions, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and the details disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

Income from trading activities, includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity. Income is received in exchange for supplying goods and services in order to raise funds and is recognised when entitlement has occurred, income from the charity shop is included in the financial year in which it is received.

The charity receives government grants in respect of its charitable activities, income from government and other grants are recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement to them and after any performance conditions have been met, when it is probable that the income will be received and when the amount can be measured reliably. If these entitlement conditions are not met the income is treated as deferred income.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

continued...

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as an expense against the activity for which the expenditure arose.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Plant and machinery	-	Straight line over 4 years
Fixtures and fittings	-	Straight line over 4 years

Taxation
The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of any restricted fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits
The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Donated goods
Donated goods received by the charity shop network have not been valued in these accounts, as it has not proved practical or possible to reliably measure the value of the stock at the year end.

The charity operates a retail gift aid scheme to reclaim gift aid on the value of donated goods sold for those donors registered with the scheme.

continued...

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Donations	106,237	70,008

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Shop income	63,366	66,672

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Deposit account interest	5,036	276

continued...

5. TOTAL INCOME BY ACTIVITY TYPE

	2023		2022	
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds
Bon Iver	-	11,977	-	-
Children in Need	-	25,357	-	42,887
Comic Relief	-	114,071	-	122,242
Comic Relief - Covid 19	-	-	-	-
Donations	-	62,583	-	20,915
Domestic Violence Voices	-	25,403	-	-
Early Help Hub	-	120,000	-	120,000
Empowering Systems Change	-	231,126	-	61,263
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	470,162	248,922	486,731	248,922
GP Pilot	-	-	-	34,281
Household Support Fund	-	5,000	-	-
Independent Refuge	324,947	-	335,958	-
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	706,967	-	693,979
Management and Administration	45,016	-	50,245	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19	-	266,102	-	76,340
Ministry of Justice - Elevate Fund	-	66,760	-	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	-	90,608	-	86,766
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support	-	300,507	-	70,388
New Burdens Fund - LDVS Refuge	-	381,881	-	101,557
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	-	241,265	-	59,632
Online Chat	5,000	-	-	9,826
Practitioner Support	-	18,208	-	-
Safer Streets	-	38,258	-	46,163
Shop	64,272	-	66,672	-
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth	-	20,236	-	45,000
VRU Police Control Room	-	56,816	-	50,754
Womens Lives Leeds	-	-	-	14,361
	909,397	3,032,047	939,606	1,905,276
Total		3,941,444		2,844,882

continued...

6. RAISING FUNDS

Other trading activities

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Staff costs	36,081	33,806
Rent and Service Charges	21,270	20,844
Insurance	800	819
Repairs and Maintenance	400	293
Cleaning and Hygiene	1,012	1,109
Telephone	536	718
Personnel and Welfare Costs	103	174
ICT, Database and Website	57	123
Training	-	95
Postage and Stationery	2,465	2,366
Marketing and Publicity	96	97
Equipment Rentals	302	302
Bank Charges	2,067	2,208
Travel Costs	51	69
Recruitment Costs	-	347
Health and Safety	49	217
Miscellaneous	344	439
Depreciation	3,592	3,592
	69,225	67,618

continued...

7. TOTAL COSTS BY ACTIVITY TYPE

	2023		2022	
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds
Bon Iver	-	28	-	-
Children in Need	-	26,501	-	44,129
Comic Relief	-	117,561	-	148,885
Comic Relief - Covid 19	-	-	-	893
Donations	-	18,695	-	3,116
Domestic Violence Voices	-	25,403	-	-
Early Help Hub	-	120,000	-	120,000
Empowering Systems Change	-	213,570	-	56,993
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	438,186	248,922	563,833	248,922
Governance	82,558	-	50,913	22,754
GP Pilot	-	-	-	34,281
Household Support Fund	-	5,000	-	-
Independent Refuge	255,958	-	269,373	-
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	764,371	-	722,168
Management and Administration	50,377	-	(125,113)	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19	-	266,101	-	72,535
Ministry of Justice - Elevate Fund	-	66,761	-	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	-	96,582	-	63,950
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support	-	300,507	-	69,956
New Burdens Fund - LDVS Refuge	-	381,881	-	101,422
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	-	241,265	-	59,498
Online Chat	12,645	-	-	15,378
Practitioner Support	-	18,208	-	-
Safer Streets	-	24,654	-	41,627
Shop	69,225	-	67,618	-
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth	-	22,107	-	43,127
Staying Safe	-	60	-	-
VRU Police Control Room	-	56,816	-	50,651
Womens Lives Leeds	-	-	-	55,292
	908,949	3,014,993	826,624	1,975,577
Total		3,923,942		2,802.201

continued...

8. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Staff costs	2,033,285	1,501,625
Rates and water	43,633	28,599
Insurance	14,580	12,592
Light and heat	115,074	80,069
Telephone	30,318	33,472
Postage and stationery	7,630	6,322
Advertising	11,300	10,567
Sundries	4,116	-
Rent	203,470	186,344
Repairs and maintenance	98,071	121,339
Cleaning and Hygiene	9,314	5,566
Computer repairs and maintenance	40,037	34,573
Agency staff	3,388	24,465
Subscriptions	7,161	6,060
Training, Coaching and Conferences	47,287	11,591
Interpreting Fees	9,532	9,249
Motor and travel expenses	9,325	3,092
Personnal and Welfare Costs	10,288	4,565
Actvities Costs	17,946	23,873
Subcontract - Partners	413,897	101,812
Service Costs	632,584	479,796
Bad Debt Provision	(23,876)	(36,987)
Health and Safety	2,651	2,553
	3,741,011	2,651,137

9. SUPPORT COSTS

	Governance costs
	£
Charitable activities	23,905
Governance costs	89,801
	113,706

continued...

9. SUPPORT COSTS - continued

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

	Charitable activities	Governance costs	31/3/23 Total activities	31/3/22 Total activities
	£	£	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	-	7,404	7,404	6,840
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	-	-	-	2,039
Legal, professional and HR	-	38,317	38,317	36,359
Recruitment Costs	-	32,749	32,749	16,653
Bank charges	-	2,117	2,117	1,507
Governance Costs	-	9,214	9,214	10,269
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	23,905	-	23,905	9,779
	23,905	89,801	113,706	83,446

10. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration - Bohorun's	-	1,200
Auditors remuneration - Riley and Co	7,404	5,640
Other non-audit services	-	2,039
Depreciation - owned assets	27,497	13,372

11. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31st March 2023 nor for the year ended 31st March 2022.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31st March 2023 nor for the year ended 31st March 2022.

continued...

12. STAFF COSTS

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,821,863	1,353,546
Social security costs	170,306	123,195
Other pension costs	77,197	58,690
	2,069,366	1,535,431

Staff costs noted above exclude costs for relief staff.

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31/3/23	31/3/22
Refuge and Aftercare	16	16
Community Services	33	26
Social Enterprise and Funding	4	4
Management and Administration	9	8
	62	54

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	31/3/23	31/3/22
£60,001 - £70,000	-	1
£70,001 - £80,000	1	-
	1	1

The average head count of employees during the year was 75.

The key management personnel of the charity have been identified as the CEO, Operations Director, Fundraising and Marketing Director and Projects and Partnerships Director. Also included for 2022/23 is the Finance and Resources Director who started working for the charity on 2 August 2022.

The aggregate employment benefits, including employers national insurance and pension contributions, for these key management personnel for the year was £274,482 (2022: £216,852).

continued...

13. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	48,492	21,516	70,008
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	824,166	1,883,760	2,707,926
Other trading activities	66,672	-	66,672
Investment income	276	-	276
Total	939,606	1,905,276	2,844,882
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	67,618	-	67,618
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	685,339	1,975,577	2,660,916
Governance costs	73,667	-	73,667
Total	826,624	1,975,577	2,802,201
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	112,982	(70,301)	42,681
Transfers between funds	(29,439)	29,439	-
Net movement in funds	83,543	(40,862)	42,681
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	795,787	125,792	921,579
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	879,330	84,930	964,260

continued...

14. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant and machinery £	Fixtures and fittings £	Totals £
COST			
At 1st April 2022	67,758	101,818	169,576
Additions	2,842	39,822	42,664
At 31st March 2023	70,600	141,640	212,240
DEPRECIATION			
At 1st April 2022	55,833	51,276	107,109
Charge for year	6,141	21,356	27,497
At 31st March 2023	61,974	72,632	134,606
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31st March 2023	8,626	69,008	77,634
At 31st March 2022	11,925	50,542	62,467

15. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
Trade debtors	203,724	491,366
Other debtors	(200)	2,000
Prepayments	35,999	78,278
Accrued income	-	44,596
	239,523	616,240

continued...

16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Trade creditors	38,374	10,131
Social security and other taxes	40,880	29,887
Other creditors	95	54
Pension control account	10,925	8,598
Net salaries control	(236)	(281)
Accruals	89,075	66,022
Deferred income	804,444	1,039,619
	983,557	1,154,030

Deferred income

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
At 1 April 2022	1,039,619	289,289
Deferred income received during the year	2,178,938	1,898,371
Deferred income released during the year	(2,414,113)	(1,148,041)
	804,444	1,039,619

17. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Within one year	54,049	51,899
Between one and five years	51,950	105,999
	105,999	157,898

18. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	31/3/23 Total funds	31/3/22 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	46,333	31,301	77,634	62,467
Current assets	1,759,648	128,037	1,887,685	2,055,823
Current liabilities	(983,557)	-	(983,557)	(1,154,030)
	822,424	159,338	981,762	964,260

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/22 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	446,053	448	(57,353)	389,148
Designated funds	433,276	-	-	433,276
	879,329	448	(57,353)	822,424
Restricted funds				
Bon Iver	-	11,949	-	11,949
Children in Need	1,193	(1,144)	(49)	-
Comic Relief	10,162	(3,490)	-	6,672
Designated Donations	10,000	-	-	10,000
Donations	31,278	12,587	-	43,865
Donations - Emmeline Play Area	-	31,301	-	31,301
Empowering Systems Change	3,506	17,556	-	21,062
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	(57,404)	57,404	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	18,676	(5,974)	-	12,702
Safer Streets 4	-	13,604	-	13,604
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	1,873	(1,871)	(2)	-
Staying Safe	3,000	(60)	-	2,940
	84,931	17,054	57,353	159,338
TOTAL FUNDS	964,260	17,502	-	981,762

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	909,398	(908,950)	448
Restricted funds			
Bon Iver	11,977	(28)	11,949
Children in Need	25,357	(26,501)	(1,144)
Comic Relief	114,071	(117,561)	(3,490)
Domestic Violence Voices	25,403	(25,403)	-
Donations	28,457	(15,870)	12,587
Donations - Emmeline Play Area	39,126	(7,825)	31,301
Early Help Hub	120,000	(120,000)	-
Empowering Systems Change	231,126	(213,570)	17,556
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	248,922	(248,922)	-
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	706,967	(764,371)	(57,404)
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	266,102	(266,102)	-
Ministry of Justice - Elevate Fund	66,760	(66,760)	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	90,608	(96,582)	(5,974)
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	241,265	(241,265)	-
New Burdens Fund - Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	381,881	(381,881)	-
New Burdens Fund - Practitioner Support	18,208	(18,208)	-
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support Team	300,507	(300,507)	-
Safer Streets 4	38,258	(24,654)	13,604
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	20,235	(22,106)	(1,871)
Staying Safe	-	(60)	(60)
VRU Police Control Room	56,816	(56,816)	-
	3,032,046	(3,014,992)	17,054
TOTAL FUNDS	3,941,444	(3,923,942)	17,502

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	362,511	112,981	(29,439)	446,053
Designated funds	433,276	-	-	433,276
	795,787	112,981	(29,439)	879,329
Restricted funds				
Children in Need	2,479	(1,286)	-	1,193
Comic Relief	43,637	(33,475)	-	10,162
Comic Relief - Covid 19	893	(893)	-	-
Designated Donations	10,000	-	-	10,000
Donations	13,479	17,799	-	31,278
Empowering Systems Change	-	3,506	-	3,506
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	(29,437)	29,437	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	-	(2)	2	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	-	18,676	-	18,676
Online Chat	5,552	(5,552)	-	-
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	-	1,873	-	1,873
Staying Safe	3,000	-	-	3,000
VRU Police Control Room	1	(3)	2	-
Women's Lives Leeds	41,508	(41,506)	(2)	-
	125,792	(70,300)	29,439	84,931
TOTAL FUNDS	921,579	42,681	-	964,260

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	939,606	(826,625)	112,981
Restricted funds			
Children in Need	42,887	(44,173)	(1,286)
Comic Relief	122,242	(155,717)	(33,475)
Comic Relief - Covid 19	-	(893)	(893)
Donations	20,915	(3,116)	17,799
Early Help Hub	120,000	(120,000)	-
Empowering Systems Change	61,263	(57,757)	3,506
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	248,922	(248,922)	-
GP Pilot	34,281	(34,281)	-
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	693,979	(723,416)	(29,437)
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	76,340	(76,342)	(2)
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	86,766	(68,090)	18,676
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	59,632	(59,632)	-
New Burdens Fund - Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	101,557	(101,557)	-
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support Team	70,388	(70,388)	-
Online Chat	9,826	(15,378)	(5,552)
Safer Streets 1	30,349	(30,349)	-
Safer Streets 2	15,814	(15,814)	-
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	45,000	(43,127)	1,873
VRU Police Control Room	50,754	(50,757)	(3)
Women's Lives Leeds	14,361	(55,867)	(41,506)
	1,905,276	(1,975,576)	(70,300)
TOTAL FUNDS	2,844,882	(2,802,201)	42,681

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	362,511	113,429	(86,792)	389,148
Designated funds	433,276	-	-	433,276
	795,787	113,429	(86,792)	822,424
Restricted funds				
Bon Iver	-	11,949	-	11,949
Children in Need	2,479	(2,430)	(49)	-
Comic Relief	43,637	(36,965)	-	6,672
Comic Relief - Covid 19	893	(893)	-	-
Designated Donations	10,000	-	-	10,000
Donations	13,479	30,386	-	43,865
Donations - Emmeline Play Area	-	31,301	-	31,301
Empowering Systems Change	-	21,062	-	21,062
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	(86,841)	86,841	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	-	(2)	2	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	-	12,702	-	12,702
Online Chat	5,552	(5,552)	-	-
Safer Streets 4	-	13,604	-	13,604
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	-	2	(2)	-
Staying Safe	3,000	(60)	-	2,940
VRU Police Control Room	1	(3)	2	-
Women's Lives Leeds	41,508	(41,506)	(2)	-
	125,792	(53,246)	86,792	159,338
TOTAL FUNDS	921,579	60,183	-	981,762

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,849,004	(1,735,575)	113,429
Restricted funds			
Bon Iver	11,977	(28)	11,949
Children in Need	68,244	(70,674)	(2,430)
Comic Relief	236,313	(273,278)	(36,965)
Comic Relief - Covid 19	-	(893)	(893)
Domestic Violence Voices	25,403	(25,403)	-
Donations	49,372	(18,986)	30,386
Donations - Emmeline Play Area	39,126	(7,825)	31,301
Early Help Hub	240,000	(240,000)	-
Empowering Systems Change	292,389	(271,327)	21,062
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	497,844	(497,844)	-
GP Pilot	34,281	(34,281)	-
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	1,400,946	(1,487,787)	(86,841)
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	342,442	(342,444)	(2)
Ministry of Justice - Elevate Fund	66,760	(66,760)	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	177,374	(164,672)	12,702
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	300,897	(300,897)	-
New Burdens Fund - Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	483,438	(483,438)	-
New Burdens Fund - Practitioner Support	18,208	(18,208)	-
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support Team	370,895	(370,895)	-
Online Chat	9,826	(15,378)	(5,552)
Safer Streets 1	30,349	(30,349)	-
Safer Streets 2	15,814	(15,814)	-
Safer Streets 4	38,258	(24,654)	13,604
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	65,235	(65,233)	2
Staying Safe	-	(60)	(60)
VRU Police Control Room	107,570	(107,573)	(3)
Women's Lives Leeds	14,361	(55,867)	(41,506)
	4,937,322	(4,990,568)	(53,246)
TOTAL FUNDS	6,786,326	(6,726,143)	60,183

continued...

20. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31st March 2023.

21. FRC ETHICAL STANDARD - PROVISIONS AVAILABLE FOR SMALL ENTITIES

In common with many other businesses of our size and nature we use our auditors to prepare and submit returns to the tax authorities and assist with the preparation of the financial statements.

22. ULTIMATE CONTROLLING PARTY

The charity is under the control of the board of trustees.

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1005884

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 02627468 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1005884

Report of the Trustees and

Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31st March 2022

for

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Riley & Co Limited
Statutory Auditor Chartered Accountants
52 St Johns Lane
Halifax
West Yorkshire
HX1 2BW

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Contents of the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31st March 2022

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Reference and Administrative Details for the Year Ended 31st March 2022

Registered Company number
02627468 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number
1005884

Registered office
52 St Johns Lane
Halifax
West Yorkshire
HX1 2BW

Trustees
Ms M Clarke
Ms H L Daniels
Dr N C Ikeogu
Ms J Mcara
Ms A Norman
Dr L Whewell

Auditors
Riley & Co Limited
Statutory Auditor Chartered Accountants
52 St Johns Lane
Halifax
West Yorkshire
HX1 2BW

Solicitors
Wrigleys Solicitors LLP
19 Cookridge Street
Leeds
LS2 3AG

Bankers
Unity Trust Bank Plc
4 Brindleyplace
4 Oozells Square
Birmingham
B1 2HB

Triodos Bank
Deanery Road
Bristol
BS1 5AS

Every woman deserves
respect and support

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2022. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

The Chair's Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the Directors' and Trustees' report for Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) for the year ended 31 March 2022. It goes without saying that the year from April 2021 to March 2022 continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and, as a result, continued to present LWA with challenges and hurdles to face and overcome. I, along with my fellow Trustees, are incredibly proud of the immense amount of hard work that our colleagues within the organisation have put in to keep the organisation going – and growing.

This year marked the start of LWA's 50-year anniversary, which is a huge milestone for the organisation and one that is being celebrated in a variety of ways. As ever, the needs of those who require the services of LWA are front and centre of all that we do, and one of the projects that has been embarked upon to commemorate the anniversary is a £50,000 fundraiser to fund a new play area for the children of the women who are supported by LWA. This is just one of many ideas that the talented Fundraising and Marketing Team are working on and is a part of their drive towards achieving our strategic objective in relation to ensuring the stability and sustainability of the organisation.

Other highlights include the fact that LWA's financial position has continued to be incredibly strong this year – the increase in and excellent management of incoming funds from a variety of sources has led to the growth of a healthy reserve pot and has enabled the development of an investment policy and investment strategy which will be a strong focus for the organisation for the next financial year.

With respect to Leadership and Governance, we have continued to make progress on the work that was started last year on getting the organisational infrastructure right and ensuring that it is fit for purpose for such a rapidly growing organisation. Plans for the expansion of the Senior Leadership Team were put in motion, with a current member of staff being promoted internally to the newly created post of Project and Partnerships Director. In addition to this, the continuation of close working with an external consultant has enabled us to continue working on our Governance Improvement Plan, with a view to ensuring that the governance and strategic oversight of the organisation is of the highest quality, enabling it to fulfil its strategic objectives and, most importantly, the people who seek its support.

As ever, the Board of Trustees would like to acknowledge the immensely hard work of the entire staff team, who are ably led by the Chief Executive and the rest of the Senior Leadership Team. Their passion and commitment for their work is unwavering and the organisation simply wouldn't be what it is without them. Additionally, we are incredibly grateful to each and every one of our supporters for all that they do, and for the support of our Patron, Rachel Reeves, MP.

We look forward to receiving the continued support of everyone connected to LWA in this our 50th year and beyond.

Executive Summary

1 Our Provenance

LWA was established 50 years ago in 1972 by committed feminist activists wanting to support women and children experiencing and living with Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV & A) and in 1973 we opened the first refuge outside of London, the second in the whole of the UK. LWA is now the largest women's charity in Leeds.

LWA's 50th anniversary year began this year. It is an incredible honour to be able to celebrate how we have managed to deliver such amazing lifesaving services for half a century. We are very proud of what we have achieved and to outline our future plans.

> "The time I spent in refuge changed my life. Gave me breathing space. And growing space. And a safe space. Life changing." Former resident circa 1991
>
> "I was supported from the moment I called 999. I feel like you had my back. I felt held. From start to finish. You gave me strength. For an entire year you supported me and helped me to safety." Recent resident 2021



2 What We Do?

We provide a comprehensive and wide range of services to support women and children experiencing and living with DV & A.

Much more detail is included in this report and on our website: www.leedswomensaid.org.uk. Particular services and their location in this report are:

Section		Page Number
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2.5	GP Surgeries	13
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The end of 2021/2022 saw an increase in funding through the New Burdens Funding, established by the government in response to the Domestic Abuse Act. This meant we could plan to further increase and develop services, but also importantly invest in our current, mainly accommodation based, offer.

3 How We Do It?

We have seen an increase in staffing, enabling us to deliver more and reach more women and children. Numbers of significant contacts and support offered has in turn risen, for the first time, to over 12,300, including service users and practitioners.

We have continued to invest in our infrastructure and structure and have begun a process of reviewing remuneration and gradings throughout the organisation in order to have the best, most fulfilled and valued workforce.

Irrespective of how wise our strategy is and/or how strong we are financially, the leadership, management and delivery of our staff will make the greatest contribution to how we do it - successfully.

4 Fundraising and Finance

Delivering services through the second year of the pandemic, we have built on and continued to increase our profile and this has helped us to attract additional funding. Our fundraising and marketing team have continued to achieve successes, diversifying funding as per our strategic objectives - see section 5.1.

As to our overall financial position, see section 5.7 for more detail but in summary we:

- Made a surplus of £41,278 in 2021/22.
- Built our unrestricted reserves to £879,330, including £250,000 for ongoing investment in our infrastructure. The 'net' unrestricted reserves of £629,330 compares with our draft reserves policy level of between £445,000 and £520,000.
- Began our first year of our investment in growth and infrastructure, initially identified and designated at a cost of £433,276 over a 2-year period. However, we have managed to increase our unrestricted reserves despite investing £183,000 into the structure, without the need to use designated funds.

5 Governance and risk management

We have completed the actions arising from an external review of our governance arrangements, which is reported on in section 7.

We have reviewed and implemented a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and undertaken a self-assessment against the Charity Governance Code for EDI and are beginning to develop and adopt an EDI strategy.

6 Our future

LWA's strengths are in delivering excellent services, leading collaborative partnerships, developing new and innovative services and having strategic influence locally, regionally and nationally.

This year has seen a further increase in demand for LWA's services, along with new services being developed within partnerships supported and led by LWA.

We aim to concentrate on the following strategic objectives in 2022 - 2023:

1. Update, refresh and extend our strategy to 2025/26.
2. Focus on our people's development, both staff and trustees, including implementing our HR strategy and devising a challenging and ambitious Learning and Development Strategy.
3. Continue to work on implementing our EDI policy, listening to the experiences of our people and fully implementing inclusive strategies.
4. Consult on and develop an LWA social housing strategy to decide on our medium- and long-term approach to social housing.

The Board and SLT are determined to build on the successes illustrated in this report and do even more to deliver on our beliefs that:

- All women and children should live in safety, free from abuse and fear.
- Every woman and child have a voice and should be empowered, inspired and listened to.
- Women centred support is powerful and improves the lives of women, men and children.

These beliefs are the major driver for why we do what we do and the glue that holds together our staff, trustees, volunteers, funders and supporters.

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1 Purpose and Impact

1.1 Summary

Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) is starting to celebrate its 50th year, as it was established in 1972 by committed feminist activists wanting to support women and children experiencing and living with Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV & A) and in 1973 we opened the first refuge outside of London, the second in the whole of the UK.

LWA is the largest women's charity in Leeds and although the scope of our work and activity has developed, supporting women and girls who have multiple and the most complex of needs through our partnership work, and additionally, coordinating some services to men and transmen through our commissioned services, we remain committed to our feminist approach and the client groups we whom we work. We continue to provide a range of the very best services for vulnerable women and families who are victims and survivors of: domestic, sexual & honour-based violence and abuse; forced marriage; trafficking; stalking and harassment.

LWA continues to be the lead agency in the local authority commissioned Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS) Consortium and the Women's Lives Leeds (WLL) National Lottery Community Fund and Comic Relief funded projects.

LWA is responsible for the delivery of the commissioned and non-commissioned refuge provision, the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service, the 24/7 helpline, and other services such as community development, GP and health surgery support, police control room consultation and support, on-line live chat support, healthy relationship and staying safe programmes and activities and support for women with multiple and complex needs.

LWA supports women and children predominantly from Leeds and the Yorkshire and Humber region, but also often works with women from across the UK when safety issues arise.

More information about LWA can be found on our website: www.leedswomensaid.org.uk.

The second year of the pandemic has seen us continue to respond to challenges, increasing demand and opportunities.

New funding has enabled us to lead, and bring together, a new, large multi-agency partnership on behalf of LDVS, which is the Sanctuary Support Team, explained in more detail in section 2.9.

We have been the charity of choice for many individuals and organisations. As we embark on our 50th year, our challenge for 2022 is to fundraise £50,000 in order to invest in an ambitious new play area for children, space for young people, and a tranquil getaway for our residents at our oldest refuge. The pandemic and the numerous lockdowns have shown us the benefits of outside space, for individuals and families, to be together, or alone, to enjoy, work or play. This is our commitment to our residents and staff within our refuges.

From April 2021 to March 2022, the numbers of calls to our helpline continued to stay at peak levels, only seen after the initial lockdown. Total calls and short-term work topped almost 7,400 for the year, which again was record breaking for our organisation and the LDVS service. Requests for our refuges continued to soar, but we admitted fewer families than the year before due to a lower number of transfers to alternative accommodation.

Our new Housing Management Coordinator has enabled us to expand and improve our links with various parts of the housing sector and with different housing providers and has been working on increasing the offers of move on properties to our residents. The main reason for the reduced throughput is the lack of suitable affordable accommodation in Leeds, which is a UK-wide trend.

This year has amplified the feelings of isolation, mental health struggles and increasing numbers of disclosures and reports to the police.

Despite that the people we support tell us:

"The time I spent in refuge changed my life. Gave me breathing space. And growing space. And a safe space. Life changing." Former resident circa 1991

"I was supported from the moment I called 999. I feel like you had my back. I felt held. From start to finish. You gave me strength. For an entire year you supported me and helped me to safety." Recent resident 2021

LWA continues to show leadership and strength in the sector, working hard to increase funding to partners to help influence positive changes. This year we have carried out an immense amount of work that has been generated through successful partnership working over the last year. Some of this includes repeat funding of existing projects, additional grants that have added value to current projects and new partnerships developing.

Hybrid working across most teams became the norm, utilising the lessons that we learned and became skilled at during the more challenging times, channelling the benefits into new positive working arrangements. This way of working has been a challenge across teams but the overall impact on staff wellbeing to be able to work a couple of days from home is enormous. This has provided flexibility for staff and has had a big impact on wellbeing, school runs, family life and so on.

1.2 Evidence of Excellence and Impact

With the appointment of Tracy Brabin as the Mayor for West Yorkshire and with Alison Lowe taking the position of Deputy Mayor for Policing, we have taken this opportunity to strengthen LWA's relationship with them and projects led and managed by LWA staff have provided the foundation to build an exciting but challenging relationship going forward.

In addition to the management and delivery of the projects detailed in section 2.12 and with the emerging relationship with the Mayor's West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), our leadership across the sector has led to added investment in Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) initiatives, including two collaborations with the WYCA regarding women and girls in streets and parks, and the night-time economy, bringing in around £50,000 to add value to the existing activity, which we hope will increase next year.

We took a collective decision to grow our leadership within our sector, to ensure that the policy makers locally and nationally listen to the voices of women and girls and that systems start to change. We supported our partners, in particular smaller organisations often led by and for women from marginalised and culturally diverse backgrounds.

LWA has been instrumental this year in revitalising the renamed domestic violence forum, which is now the Domestic Abuse Voice and Accountability Forum, which holds the statutory Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board to account and facilitates the sharing of victims-survivors voices. LWA has funded and facilitated a women's victims-survivors group this year, enabling a number of women to influence and meet with statutory services such as the Deputy Mayor of Policing, the police and housing directly, by using their voices and experiences.

We have secured investments into our children and young people's services for the next two years, creating a larger and more dynamic team, offering dedicated and individually targeted support for our families across refuge and the community.

We have also taken huge strides in recognising the quality of our services, with our ambition to achieve numerous accreditations and quality performance frameworks. We are delighted that we achieved the Women's Aid Federation England quality standards on our first attempt, generating comments such as:

"The panel was impressed by the long history of feminist activism undertaken by LWA over a period of 49 years. They noted the wide range of services provided, the track record of service delivery, the partnership working and strategic influence that LWA has had in the City."



Award being presented by WAFE Head of Membership & Chair of Quality Assessment Panel along with two LWA staff members at the national conference.

We were seen as particularly impressive with our Service User Charter, our expertise offering advocacy for victims-survivors with No Recourse to Public Funds and the fact we had numerous staff able to speak several community languages in addition to a Gypsy, Traveller and Roma Worker working with the community to engage with this under-represented group.

1.3 Progress on strategic objectives

Our strategic objectives remained key for our deployment and impact during this year and next year will see us refine, consolidate and extend our 2022-2025 strategy.

We have five strategic objectives and our recent progress against each of them is reported on below.

1. **To be a leader of, and a voice for, women-centred support in Leeds and surrounding areas.**

Examples of how we have increased our influence as a leader and a voice for women-centred support can be found in numerous parts of this report due to the importance that we place on this first strategic objective. Whether it be as part of our formal consortia, LDVS and WLL, influencing regionally with our work with the West Yorkshire Mayor, or whether it's developing other partnerships, such as the Labyrinth project, sharing expertise and knowledge and influencing at a national level. We have also coordinated meetings in the women and girls' sectors, with politicians nationally looking to Leeds for examples of excellent practice.

Our proactive leadership approach has continued this year with us negotiating increased funding for our partnership services and LDVS partners. Additionally, in leading the new and innovative Sanctuary Support Team it opens the door to us working with other partners, outside of the LDVS and WLL partnerships, including PAFRAS, Karma Nirvana and Touchstone Support. This work sees a team leader employed by LWA coordinating a team of eight Domestic Abuse practitioners, specialising in working with people from various diverse communities with a number of protected characteristics, such as refugees and asylum seekers, those who have experienced honour-based abuse and forced marriage, disabled women and those from culturally diverse communities. The project has been a huge undertaking in terms of development, recruitment and awareness raising from October 2021. Most posts were fully operational from January 2022 when the service began taking referrals.

We were also keen as part of further investment into our refuges, to deliver additional services in partnership with Women's Counselling and Therapy Service (WCTS). This project started in January 2022 and offers therapy to our residents and their children in all of our refuges and dispersed properties, dealing with immediate trauma support, encouraging family, art and group therapy, plus direct one to one support for children and young people. We are also able to offer childcare to our mums whilst they obtain one to one therapy. By the end of the first six months the project will conduct a learning review to see how we can develop and improve the offer.

2. **To deliver our strategy by investing in our people (staff, volunteers and trustees), with particular regard to training and development, and by putting our values as well as equality and diversity at the centre of the way we do things.**

We have created an innovative new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and have been working with all staff and trustees to develop a Conduct Agreement which will define the behaviours we want to see in living our values. The Board has begun the process of assessment against the Charity Governance Code in relation to EDI and work will take place in the next financial year to train and develop staff in terms of improving inclusion.

There has been a lot of recruitment to a variety of new and existing roles, leading to an increase in staffing numbers to a total of around 90 (including relief workers) from under 50 around three years ago. It is particularly gratifying to note that several members of staff have successfully applied for promotions, and we continue to encourage staff to aspire to develop their careers with LWA. We have made a concerted effort to improve the diversity of line management appointments and we have significantly improved representation of women from culturally diverse communities, and now our representation is slightly higher than the local community average. Additionally, our board of trustees are aware that according to latest Charity Commission research, fewer than one in ten (8%) of trustees are people of colour, compared to 14% of the UK population and less than a third are women. All of LWA's board members are women and 33% are women of colour.

Work has started to develop the HR function and create a new Finance and Resources Team to support the organisation. A new Director will be appointed in the next financial year, and we will report on that in the 2022 – 23 annual report. Learning and Development is at the forefront of our priorities for the next year.

3. To have an organisation structure and infrastructure that underpins all our work and is financially sustainable.

Our new organisation structure development began in April 2021, and in July the HR function was brought in-house when we appointed our first HR Manager. The function was strengthened in November by the appointment of an HR Assistant through the Government's Kickstart scheme. Her Kickstart placement ended in May 2022 and LWA has increased her hours and she is undertaking an apprenticeship which will result in her applying for Foundation membership of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). She will then be eligible to continue her training with CIPD to gain her full CIPD membership.

We also expanded and formalised our partnerships and projects team by creating a new Projects and Partnerships Director post, sitting within the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The successful applicant was promoted within LWA and brings a wealth of strategic and innovative partnership working. We immediately managed to secure a place in a national partnership, led by Solace Women's Aid, called the Labyrinth Project, more about this in section 2.6.

Additional new roles include: Operations Manager (Community); Specialist senior IDVAs; Lead IDVA and AAT Worker roles; Relief and Volunteer Co-ordinator; Communications, Website and Social Media Coordinator; and we created a standalone Out of Hours Team Refuge Leader role.

In addition, a detailed piece of work regarding benchmarking for the SLT was undertaken, with independent consultants, resulting in a new grading and salary-band system and the re-titling of 'Heads of' to 'Directors'. An organisation-wide Remuneration Policy was developed, which will be extended into a large benchmarking and grading review for all posts in the next financial year, in line with our Learning and Development Strategy.

4. To invest in diversifying funding and income streams to increase stability and sustainability.

Our funding streams continue to diversify, with a wider range of funding sources than ever, from local and national statutory funders, through to smaller organisational and individual donors. The focus for us is to have a dynamic fundraising and marketing team, along with senior managers having skills and expertise regarding income generation and bid writing.

We are developing new partnerships and considering wider funding streams in order to increase our reach and become more sustainable.

5. To actively explore and decide how we can increase the housing offer in Leeds for women and children experiencing DV & A.

Our exploration of our housing offer has started with us investing in a new Housing Management Coordinator post as part of our new structure and developing links within the housing and investment sector. We aim to have this as a high priority in the next financial year.

1.4 COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic, of course, continued to affect us during this year, as it did the country, with recovery from lockdowns, new restrictions, the huge COVID-19 vaccination process and the easing of restrictions, ending the financial year with no formal, legal restrictions.

DV & A services and refuges were classed as essential health and care front line services and as such, front-line and staff essential to the running of our organisation qualified for priority vaccinations.

We also introduced a supportive and encouraging vaccination programme for residents and led the Women's Lives Leeds work with partner agencies to create women-only vaccination clinics, held at various locations, including partner agency premises.

Overall and like the year before, recruiting additional staff across all services has been equally challenging and rewarding. The recruitment challenge is part of a national picture, and the work on strategic objectives 1 and 2 has certainly contributed to us having a good measure of success in expanding our operations and increasing staff numbers.

2 Achievements and Performance

LWA continues to grow from strength to strength and our impacts are being felt across the City and the wider UK. Some specific achievements are:

2.1 Staff Engagement and Commitment

Staff engagement and communication remains high, and we are pleased that despite all of the challenges of the pandemic and sickness, staff have worked around the clock to keep all services operational. All staff including team leaders and managers mucked-in, going above and beyond and demonstrating many of LWA's values by doing extra shifts including overnight ones to ensure all services were kept open.

We have continued our full organisational staff meetings, and individual team meetings, in person, virtually or as hybrid meetings throughout the last two years.

We have been dedicated to ensuring that staff are engaged as much as possible with all aspects of our work, both strategic and operational. We engage staff in recruitment and selection, policy writing and review, service design, monitoring and evaluation and strategic planning and implementation.

A full-time post of Relief and Volunteer Co-ordinator was developed to recruit and train relief workers and develop a volunteer programme. Due to staff leaving, staff sickness and the national problems of recruitment, this was a fast paced and exhausting time.

Recruitment was very slow, despite widespread advertising and attendance at recruitment fairs and events. As it was a struggle to recruit substantive roles, it was an even bigger struggle to recruit for relief workers to cover the usual needs, so we started to look for agency workers.

There was a point when the Co-ordinator post along with others was covering shifts themselves. It was a challenge but for the last couple of months of 2021, all the shifts were covered in one way or another.

Part of the Coordinator role has been to provide emotional support as a variety of stresses were taking a toll on relief workers This was really appreciated and we have retained staff throughout. As well as induction training for relief and new staff, the post also provided refresher training to staff in other parts of the organisation such as training on the database and call handling.

The volunteer programme has been developed and will be accredited to national standards.

2.2 Awards

Our partnership with LDVS was nominated for the Leeds City Council partnership of the year award, nominated by our contract managers, which showed how well we work together to deliver first class services to the people of Leeds.

Our Chief Executive was shortlisted in the highly esteemed and competitive Charity Leader of the Year category in the Charity Times UK Awards 2021.

2.3 Business Partnerships

A strong focus for us is developing business partnerships and we are delighted to continue to develop our partnership with Leeds women's ice hockey team, Leeds Roses.



In addition, we have been developing work with global organisations such as EY, Asda and Burberry that share our values of inclusivity whilst being socially aware. We will report on these initiatives next year.

2.4 Police Control Room

Our innovative Police Control Room (PCR) service has developed from a small pilot service 18 months ago into a well-respected and funded service. This is an example of excellent partnership working, funded by the Victim Reduction Unit, in partnership with West Yorkshire Police. Our specialist DV & A support workers are offering immediate and direct support to police officers and control room staff at the point of initial callout and follow up, sharing our expertise regarding assessment of risk and life saving services. Additionally, we are on hand to offer immediate advocacy and support to victims-survivors when they report abuse. We have secured funding until at least March 2023 and are working with partners to mainstream the funding.

2.5 GP Surgeries

For just over two years, we delivered a dedicated and specialist DV & A health worker service, working across specific GP services, funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group and the NHS. Funding for us to deliver this ended on 31 January 2022 with the worker being subject to TUPE to the Social Prescribing Service (SPS). We are delighted that this service is continuing, and it makes sense to develop and further extend this as part of the existing SPS.

2.6 Labyrinth Project

LWA is part of a national project which is led by Solace Women's Aid, focussing on women's: safety; rights and voices; employability & law; and legal rights. We have been delivering activities based on initial research and the mapping of gaps, and as a result supported and enabled a group to continue where they would otherwise have had to cease. This group was one that supported women who have had their children removed or taken into care.

We are planning two events in the next financial year covering both employability and women's safety for culturally diverse communities in partnership with the Women's Hub and the Culturally Diverse Women's Hub, along with a series of "Legal Light Bites" which will be held over lunchtimes and offer legal presentations and information to women and professionals.

This project has supported 510 women to date.

2.7 Our Refuges

We are receiving significant funding to improve the range of services in all of our refuge accommodation and safe housing over the next two years. We continued to work within COVID restrictions, protecting staff and service users.

Some of the challenges in refuge have been significant such as the difficulty finding settled accommodation for those wanting and needing to move on, resulting in some families being accommodated by us for years as opposed to an average of around six months.

There have been differences in the approach to working with people in refuge depending on the rules in place, but staff have remained working in refuge, including our 24/7 accommodation, throughout the COVID restrictions and changes, continuing to provide safe and supportive environments.

There have been changes in the staffing structure allowing us to recruit additional staff, which along with funding from the local authority has led to a significant increase of staff. We have doubled the staff numbers working out of hours shifts, which is helping with additional support and activities and emergency admissions if required. This has helped us respond better to people who cannot access services within normal office hours, and we are also now able to answer the increasing numbers of calls to the helpline in evenings and weekends and responding to webchat and emails.

We have seen the numbers of women contacting us on our live webchat increase, along with those leaving messages out of the webchat opening hours. We hope that we will soon be able to provide these serves at weekends and evenings.

We are particularly proud of the excellent support we have given to service users who have no recourse to public funds, with staff going the additional mile to get the funding and to support residents and potential residents with changing requirements around bio-metrics.

Other great achievements have been building good partnerships with outside agencies to ensure that all of our residents are supported culturally, for example working with mosques who are providing prayer mats, Holy Books and food parcels if needed. Our Gypsy, Traveller, Roma worker has been working hard to support women from those communities in a way that meets their needs.

The turnaround period for properties has been kept at a minimum despite delays in deliveries – our resourceful staff turned to click and collect services to expedite turnaround. Ongoing maintenance, refurbishment and redecoration are all kept on top of to ensure a high standard for welcoming new residents. This includes a welcome pack for all new residents and their children.

LWA supported our residents to attend our WLL Safer Streets Park launch. Creative banners were made by the residents and used on the day.

Case Study:

'J' was supported by our Refuge team in safe accommodation and the IDVA team in relation to criminal court proceedings. She was also supported by our LDVS partners in the LDVS Support Group.

'J' had formed a trusting relationship with her support worker from the LDVS Support Group while attending one-to-one sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic, and disclosed escalating abuse, including stalking, physical & sexual assaults. At this time, 'J' was also pregnant. The Support Group key worker supported 'J' to report the abuse to police. Following this, 'J' accepted a place in our refuge accommodation and her case was discussed at the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

A referral was made to our IDVA team to support 'J' with the criminal case proceedings. The refuge and IDVA teams worked together in conjunction with 'J' continuing to attend the LDVS Support Group to provide support and information to 'J' while respecting her personal boundaries and avoiding overwhelming her with calls.

'J' had previously had children removed from her care due to risks of being exposed to domestic abuse, so we were especially conscious to support 'J' however possible to enable her to keep the new baby in her care. This included her Refuge support worker liaising with and attending meetings with Children's Social Work Service and advocating for the client's capability and responsibility as a prospective parent. The IDVA team also advocated for her by ensuring that 'J' and her solicitor were aware of the criminal justice outcomes and 'J's willingness to support prosecution.

'J' was supported to give evidence against the perpetrator at trial and this built her confidence and self-esteem. Although all charges against the perpetrator were ultimately dismissed, 'J' and her LDVS key workers felt that her attendance at trial was a personal victory. Despite several years of high-risk abuse, she had never supported a prosecution previously, so this event marked a turning point for her.

With the support of our service, 'J' was able to obtain a civil injunction to protect her from further abuse. 'J' was able to move out of the area and into a supported mother-and-baby residential placement and felt proud to be safer and more independent than she had been for many years.

2.8 Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS)

LDVS entered its final year of its five-year commissioned service. Due to our incredible achievements, we are delighted the contract has been extended for a further three years, plus further investment has been secured through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Levelling up and Communities, allowing LDVS to be bigger and better than ever.

It is not an overstatement to say that the journey LDVS has been on has been huge and our achievements likewise. Our partnership with Behind Closed Doors (BCD) and Women's Health Matters (WHM) is strong and respectful, working together to continue to enhance our offer to those experiencing DV & A in Leeds.

DV & A continues to be a gendered issue, with 97% of people supported by LDVS in the community being female, with 95% of the perpetrators being male. 84% of the perpetrators are current or ex-partners of the people we supported.

LWA delivers a large part of the LDVS community services, with 73% of all referrals accepting support being admitted into LWA delivered services. We offer the 24/7 helpline through our Access and Assessment Team (AAT), along with assessment, drop-ins, coordinating the Daily Risk Assessment Meeting (DRAM) contacts and a caseworker dealing with high risk cases on a short-term basis, balancing needs and risk whilst other parts of the service are at capacity. We also deliver the IDVA service, which contains a team leader, lead IDVA, two senior IDVAs working with adults with complex needs, and children and young people, along with IDVAs specialising in the domestic violence court, IDSVAs working with women and girls experiencing sexual and domestic abuse, along with mental health support. Most of our IDVAs and all of our IDSVAs, are accredited either by SafeLives or WAFE, and our team leader is SafeLives trained and accredited.

The legacy of the lockdowns continues to impact on service users' isolation, mental health, separation from family, friends, parental stresses, financial problems, furlough and job losses and so the IDVA role has changed to include a lot more emotional support alongside the practical help.

At the same time, IDVAs have on several occasions not been able to attend court to support clients at trial. We have experienced lengthy court adjournments, police delays, poor sentencing outcomes, bail where there should have been remands, and a variety of other challenges for IDVA clients. Some clients gave up and withdrew their support as a result.

Within LDVS we have been working in partnership with Leeds City Council and the MARAC to proactively support people who are experiencing complex and multiple needs by creating two new Senior IDVA posts (adults and young people). Launching and developing this service has involved a lot of inter-agency working, liaison and promotion with other services, and devising creative solutions for clients to improve pathways and reduce repeat presentation at MARAC.

In setting up the service, the Lead IDVA and two Senior IDVAs have forged new links and built on existing relationships, with a number of City-wide services, including: Youth Offending Service; Care Leavers Service; Forward Leeds YP service; Integrated Offender Management; CGL; Basis and Our Way Leeds. The Adults post involves engaging complex or more difficult to engage or harder to reach clients via eg Homeless Services at York Street Health Practice, GPs, Social Workers etc.

There is a challenge and frustration by practitioners in the City because this is a more vulnerable service user "group" and joint visits and appointments can be cancelled or not attended on the day more frequently. The senior IDVAs are able to negotiate this with services to help them understand the additional pressures on this service user group and build on existing relationships.

We have seen positive outcomes including a young person for example not being flagged at MARAC as a suspect, as the IDVA was able to identify and advocate for the true victim.

Case study:

We have received multiple referrals for 'P' with two different suspects and she has been flagged as a MARAC victim multiple times. 'P' experienced sexual and physical abuse, as well as a high level of coercive control and threats to kill.

'P' has 4 young children and E is the father of the two youngest children. The children were on a child protection plan due to domestic abuse as well as concern around E's and P's alcohol use. Following an incident where E attempted to set 'P' on fire, the children were removed from their care and cared for by other family members.

'P' has several complex needs that make it more difficult for her to engage with support and also cope with everyday life. She struggles with mental health issues due to the abuse experienced and she also uses alcohol and drugs as a coping mechanism.

Historically, we have struggled to meaningfully engage with 'P' through 'traditional' methods of offering support. However, due to the flexibility of the specialist Complex Needs IDVA role in terms of capacity, it was possible to do more intensive work with 'P'. The Complex Needs IDVA contacted 'P' weekly to keep building rapport and trust. 'P' would sometimes go quiet for weeks at a time, but then call us again stating that she was going through a difficult time and had relapsed but was ready to pick up support again. 'P' often expressed how safe it made her feel knowing that she could turn to her IDVA when needed. She often felt as though her IDVA was the only person who did not judge her behaviour or decisions.

At the beginning of support, 'P' expressed a distrust towards the police and the criminal justice system. She would not report incidents or support prosecution as she did not think that the police could keep her safe, she also felt that they did not take appropriate action as they had not efficiently communicated the next steps to her and how long these could take. Through support from the Complex Needs IDVA service, 'P' increased her understanding of the criminal justice system and slowly regained trust in the police. Towards the end of support, 'P' would routinely report to the police any contact from the suspect. The Complex Needs IDVA also provided 'P' with practical support, sanctuary was completed for increased home security, a grant application was completed and awarded for new home furnishings.

'P' has now separated from the suspect and there has not been any contact or issues between them for several months. 'P' is now sober, and on her own initiative, she has also accessed group support for her alcohol usage should she require additional support to stay abstinent in the future.

Through support from the Complex Needs IDVA, 'P' has developed positive coping strategies and she is now able to better recover and cope with difficult aspects of everyday life. She has reported having improved relationships with friends and family, but also feels able to set healthy boundaries when needed.

2.9 Sanctuary Support Team (SST)

Funding for the new SST came through the local authority as part of the government's New Burdens Funding. This is an innovative concept of working to make victims-survivor's homes into safe accommodation without them having to leave, by obtaining target hardening and safety measures and providing a holistic package of support to protect and support families to remain independent.

Target hardening comes from Leeds Housing Options and the scheme is currently in place to make individuals in fear of crime feel safer in their homes and to potentially prevent homelessness.

LDVS and partners offer emotional, practical and advocacy support focusing on, but not limited to, their experience of domestic abuse. This project aims to create additional pathways for survivors from marginalised groups to access support.

We received the funding in October 2021 and immediately recruited a new Team Leader who started in November 2021. She started to work with the partner organisations to facilitate the recruitment into the front-line staff roles. Seven out of the eight roles were appointed to begin in January 2022, with the eighth role, support for victims-survivors of LGBT+ communities, starting early in the next financial year.

The SST staff are managed by a line manager in their employing organisation and are also matrix managed by the SST Leader - a system we spearheaded within Women's Lives Leeds and want to extend to other collaborative working situations.

After inductions within their host organisations, the front line staff undertook training with LWA to undertake specialist DV & A training including types of DV & A, Sanctuary Measures, Daily Risk Assessment Meetings (DRAM), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs), Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs), Domestic Abuse Stalking & Harassment (DASH) Risk Indicator Checklists, police action, Criminal and Civil Justice Systems, Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) also known as 'Clare's Law', safety planning, our case management system and the tools that we use, such as POWER Forms, Safety Plans and Exit Forms. In addition, the team have undertaken lone working training along with other specific training for the role.

The team then began to make a concerted effort to publicise and promote the service, this has included visiting organisations, attending meetings, making initial contact by email and phone. There are 65 organisations that have been contacted about the team and Sanctuary in general.

Leeds Housing Options have fed back to us that they are getting referrals from places they never have before such as schools and foodbanks, which is really positive news.

Furthermore, our referrals are starting to increase which is really encouraging. We have been very adaptive in the way that we accept referrals, as moving from taking referrals from LHO only to developing a pathway from the internal organisations to make the process more streamlined for the support workers and for the individuals accessing support.

Future development will see the team being able to take higher risk cases, which will improve the pathways from MARAC and DRAM, that again will work for the staff and service users, but also wider LDVS teams such as the IDVAs and the Access and Assessment Team (AAT).

2.10 DRAMs

Daily Risk Assessment Meetings were introduced in July 2021 in order to reduce the burden on agencies of the daily MARAC meetings, and to facilitate quicker and safer responses to victims-survivors in Leeds. The three core agencies are the police, LDVS and children's social care. Since the DRAM was introduced, almost 3,000 cases were discussed with LWA's staff attempting to contact every single victim-survivor.

When the DRAM first started in July 2021, there were around 12-14 cases daily. The model was based on the set up in Bradford, where a meeting is extremely short, and discussions were over on all cases within around 20 minutes. This was the aim for Leeds. However, although Leeds was always expecting to have a significantly higher number of cases than Bradford the numbers of daily cases has topped 26.

The new arrangements work by triaging the high-risk police incidents, allowing more of the appropriate cases to be discussed at MARAC. The DRAM has reduced pressure on all of the other MARAC agencies who now only need to attend two meetings per week, apart from LDVS (as police and children's social care meet daily anyway to discuss families reported to the police).

LDVS has to attempt contact with every single victim-survivor before the DRAM meeting at 1pm each day. This has been an incredible feat with the IDVA and AAT teams working closely and cleverly in a fast paced and pressurised environment, to process the referrals that begin to arrive from 7.30 am through to the contacting of victims-survivors and having the meeting later in the day.

This process is having a profoundly positive affect on victims-survivors as their views are integral in the meetings and appropriate referrals and support can be targeted immediately, whereas the previous MARAC system wasn't able to do that. The affects on LDVS however remain a significant challenge, and this will need detailed review in the next financial year.

2.11 Clare's Law

The DVDS (Clare's Law) was introduced across all police forces in England and Wales in 2014, and our IDVAs have been involved since then, attending panel meetings, sharing decisions for what should be disclosed and how, and often undertaking joint disclosure meetings with the police and victims-survivors. Under the scheme, members of the public can ask the police for information on their partner's criminal history and therefore know if their partner poses a risk to them, under a "Right to Ask" provision. Additionally, the police can approach someone, unsolicited, under a "Right to Know" provision, when information held by them or any other agency shows concerning or safeguarding information about another person whom they are in a relationship with.

Clare's Law meetings, often chaired by LWA, take place every two weeks. New Home Office guidance states that the amount of time the police have to disclose the information will reduce from 35 to 28 days. Therefore, a West Yorkshire Police Force-wide Clare's Law review is likely to recommend that the frequency of meetings be changed in the next year in order to speed up the process and the expected increased demand.

2.12 Women's Lives Leeds

Women's Lives Leeds were successful in obtaining a further three years funding from the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF), enabling us to launch our "Empowering Systems Change" project starting in January 2022. Strengthening the Alliance and embedding the Complex Needs Service, were the parts that the NLCF agreed to fund.

The WLL VOICES project funded by the Comic Relief Power Up Fund has been really successful over the last year with a Leeds Women's Safety Survey and report being developed that was based on over 1,300 responses. This has driven a huge safety campaign that has included partnership working to develop, launch and embed a Leeds flavoured "Ask for Angela" scheme, 4ft x 7ft adverts on bin trucks across 30 wards in the city and additional award of funds from the Home Office.

This was used to deliver the Women's Safe Parks consultation and "reclaim the Parks" activities; a Women's Night-time safe space, which took the form of a Health Bus on Dortmund Square for three weekends and continuous partnership working to fund and develop a bid to create a business case for this initiative going forward.

Our response to the pandemic saw the first Women's only vaccine clinics in Harehills, Beeston and Chapeltown, that resulted in a legacy "Women's Vaccination Principles" in every GP Surgery in Leeds.

We will continue to lead the project in developing initiatives around women's safety, but we will shift its focus slightly to Employability with the development of a Women Friendly Recruiters checklist and in partnership with the Labyrinth Project, a Women's Employability event.

3 Support provided

3.1 The numbers from April 2021 to March 2022:

There has been an increased demand for both our accommodation and community-based services, higher even than the dramatic increases that we saw last year.

Support to women in emergency refuges were as follows:

- The two LWA non-commissioned (independent) refuges supported 84 women this year.
- The commissioned local authority contracted self-contained hostel & dispersed properties (LDVS) supported 152 women this year.

The total number of women and children supported in refuge accommodation was 236 adults.

The 24-hour telephone helpline calls and one-off work topped just under 7,400 calls, with helpline calls showing a 13% increase on last year, which is the most we've ever received.

Our community-based services supported more clients than the year before, with referrals being 42% higher to all LDVS services.

Our Drop-in services started to operate again at some of our previous sites, including at Together Women's premises, and we established some new partnerships, which are proving successful, including with Forward Leeds.

Support was provided to adults aged between 16 and 88, and this was given in 32 different languages, with 9% of people requiring an interpreter. 45% of people supported had mental health support needs or vulnerabilities.

2,052 DASH Risk Assessments were completed for people in support, 587 Safety Plans were undertaken, and 832 Support Plans were actioned. – needs checking.

3.2 Types of Abuse

The average length of the abuse our service users have experienced is 5½ years.

- 64% have experienced jealous/controlling behaviour
- 57% of women in refuge had experienced financial abuse
- 48% have experienced harassment/stalking/surveillance
- 39% have experienced threats to kill
- 13% experienced physical injury requiring hospital treatment

3.3 Impact

Service users feedback tells us:

100% said

- Coming to this service has made a positive difference to my life
- I was listened to and believed by staff here
- I was supported to talk about my experiences of violence and abuse
- I'd come back to the service again if I needed to
- I'd recommend this service to family and friends if they needed help
- Staff here have been knowledgeable and competent
- The service met my needs effectively
- I feel more confident to ask for help when I need it

95% said

- I feel that my privacy was respected
- I was able to access the services quickly
- The service I accessed was non-judgemental
- The service understood and respected my particular needs

Service users said:

"I was made to feel I am not alone and by myself. The understanding and support when I was at my lowest was invaluable."

"My IDVA has helped me gain insight and helped build my confidence. I am now back in work full time thanks to her help and support and making me feel much safer leaving my house. I now understand a lot more about domestic abuse and violence."

"I'm not sure I would have been here and I would definitely not have known the procedures of court and all it entails. My understanding and recovery would not be what it is now."

4 Values and Culture

At LWA, our behaviours support our purpose and create our culture, which in turn drives innovation and growth.

We do what we do because we believe:

- All women and children should live in safety, free from abuse and fear.
- Every woman and child have a voice and should be empowered, inspired and listened to.
- Women centred support is powerful and improves the lives of women, men and children.

Our Values reflect our organisation's views; they are the principles, standards & qualities that tell the story about the way in which we conduct our work.

Be Exceptional
We are experts in our field and proud of having a women-centred approach. We are pioneers and leaders, striving to perform and innovate.

Be Courageous
We are honest, inventive and have the integrity to challenge perceptions and practice.
We are encouraging and empowering of each other to be courageous and brave.

Be Inclusive
We are diverse, welcoming, approachable and inclusive as employers, service providers and people.
We promote unity, fairness and respect.

Be Inspirational
We are proud of our creativity and how we motivate, listen, empower and support each other.
We are encouraging and lead by example to achieve the best.

Be Responsive
We are collaborative, aware, compassionate and sensitive.
We adapt our approach to meet changing needs.

4.1 The Behaviours that create our Culture

Our Culture is a set of basic assumptions that we all share, these are 'norms' that guide the way people interact with each other and others or put in a different way, 'the way we do things here'.

These behaviours apply to everyone, irrespective of position or seniority. Structural hierarchy represents the division of work and skills, not the division of people.

We not only agree to uphold professional ethical standards but will go further in our commitment to hold ourselves accountable to maintaining behaviours that seek to create a safe and respectful culture and prevent incidences of workplace bullying.

Our key principles are:

- To challenge and support each other to be exceptional by being curious about different ways of doing things, thinking beyond our roles, and embracing learning and development in all its forms.
- To be courageous enough to demonstrate humility and vulnerability, and to approach failure with curiosity rather than criticism.
- We welcome, accept and include everyone based on inherent worth and value, enabling divergent thinking in an inclusive environment.
- We believe that everyone has the potential to be inspirational both in what they do, and the way they do it.
- Through our compassionate lens, we find solutions by being responsive, agile and adaptable.

As reported in our last annual report the Senior Leadership Team began a process of creating a conduct agreement that would be coproduced by all staff within LWA.

A 6-month process was undertaken involving staff at all levels, along with trustees, to develop the conduct agreement, which is being shared and publicised on LWA's website and given to applicants for paid employment and trusteeship.

The Conduct Agreement states our Commitment to our values, the behaviours we need to put this into practice, giving examples, and the skills needed to do this. For example, in Being Exceptional our commitment is *Challenge and support each other to* ***be exceptional*** *by being curious about different ways of doing things, thinking beyond our roles, and embracing learning and development in all its forms.*

An example of a behaviour is *"offer high challenge and high support to each other, and to our clients.*

A skill required is *"model behaviours of integrity, both inside and outside work, ensuring that our behaviours match our values at all times."*

4.2 Staff feedback

What is the best thing about working for LWA?

"Enjoying going to work and given the opportunity to be innovative."

"The staff team, including my manager and feeling like you are making an important difference."

"The people we work with are all passionate, here to support and achieve the best outcomes for victim-survivors. We all have that common goal."

"It is a female friendly organisation so tries to support family commitments."

"I have been given the opportunities and support to develop personally and professionally but most importantly, I feel happy at LWA. I feel being happy at work is the most important aspect for me when looking at how long I have worked for a service. I would not have been at LWA for this long if I was not happy. I feel I get along with everyone and thoroughly enjoy my role."

5 Operating model and risks

5.1 Fundraising

We are regulated by the Fundraising Regulator and all our fundraising practices are ethical and considerate. We have an in-house Fundraising and Marketing Director, and do not employ fundraising companies or consultants. All our fundraising and marketing is done to further the organisations charitable activities.

We fund our work with income from a wide range of restricted and unrestricted funds. Our restricted funds include our commissioned services by which we are contracted after an
open tender to deliver and report back on specific service delivery. Our largest contract is from Leeds City Council, delivering the LDVS consortium. Other restricted income includes additional grants from Leeds City Council, along with grants from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, the Ministry of Justice, the Department of Levelling Up and Communities, the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF), Children in Need and Comic Relief.

Our unrestricted income gives us the flexibility to fund a range of things directly for our service users and for our infrastructure. It also allows us to invest in reserves (see section 5.6 of this report), which can be designated for specific charitable purposes.

We have received refunding from the NLCF as discussed in section 2.12 above as lead agency of the successful WLL partnership.

Our fundraising and marketing team have continued to be resourceful and have started an ambitious campaign of raising '£50,000 for 50 years', in celebration of our 50-year anniversary.

We have managed to invest in the team and create a new position of Communications, Website and Social Media Coordinator, which has allowed us to increase our reach into the community and beyond.

Our strategy of increasing our individual giving and supporter base is continuing, and we have a range of monthly givers and people doing fundraising events for us. We have seen double the number of people donating, over 1,540, through on-line giving platforms, 12 people have done fundraisers, including a Christmas Burpee Bonanza, Peloton Cycling Challenge, triathlon, and a number of running events. Our fabulous supporters raised just under £35,000 last year.

Our star Local Giving supporter was Geraint Pinches who raised a huge £2,093.75 by walking 100 miles between 1 and 24 December 2021.

5.2 Charity Shop

The pandemic affected our charity shop in many ways. We were affected this year by closing and re-opening and having members of the public grow in confidence again about shopping with us. Our loyal customers are incredible, and we do thank them so sincerely for their continued support to keep us going.

We continue to run our eBay page and have continued sharing our world on Instagram and Depop.

We have undertaken a really special event whereby groups of residents from our refuges were taken to our charity shop and allowed an hour's free shop for whatever they and their children wanted and needed. This was so well received by residents and staff alike, giving something additional to the valued and life saving support our refuges offer.

5.3 Donations

We have received grants, donations and gifts in kind from hundreds of individuals and organisations, and would particularly like to thank the following donors and funders:

The Mayor's Office – West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Elizabeth & Prince Zaiger Charitable Trust, Asda, Children in Need, Leeds Community Foundation, GlobalGiving, PayPal Giving Fund, Deeva, Graham Stowe Bateson & Oakwood Solicitors from Make-a-Will-Month donations, BNY Mellon, SR & DE Lloyd, BUPE Foundation, Black Shire Villains, Total Gas & Power, Sky, Irwin Mitchell, Inner Wheel, Soroptimists International (Leeds), PIB Risk Services, Terracycle, and Turnaround Foundation, Beaverbrooks, Golden Acre Foods, OddFellows, Aecom Ltd, BHP Charity and Morrisons Foundation.

In addition, LWA values its individual donors for their dedication and hard work, some of whom have been tirelessly fundraising for the organisation for over 20 years.

5.4 Volunteers

We are proud to work with volunteers of all ages from teenagers working on their Duke of Edinburgh Award to people wanting to support LWA and help their community.

We currently have a total of 15 volunteers assisting with the day to day running of our charity shop, which equates to around 2,000 hours. Without our volunteers the shop would not be what it is today, a well-established charity shop offering a unique and friendly shopping experience.

5.5 Investments

As the size of the organisation and our financial reserves have increased, we have in mid-2022 formulated an investment policy and investment strategy, which will be reported on in next year's report.

5.6 Reserves Policy

The Board review our reserves policy twice yearly, and the policy is based on good practice in the charity sector and is therefore:

- Based on a detailed understanding of the actual and predicted cash inflows and outflows of the charity.
- Not based upon holding a set number of months cover on expenditure.
- Integrated with the risk assessment and strategic plans of the charity.
- Not based upon a closure scenario unless this is considered likely.
- Regularly reported to and reviewed by the Trustee Board.

It was agreed that our reserves policy should provide:

- A level of working capital that protects the continuity of our core work, allowing for funding we receive for restricted funded projects.
- A level of security against the financial risks identified in our risk assessment, including cover for unforeseen expenditure or unanticipated loss or deferral of income.
- A level of funding for possible opportunities (Designated Funds).
- A level of funding following the unexpected and unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 to plan for any future similar occurrences.
- A level of funding for infrastructure investments.

The Reserves Policy was updated in July 2022 with the Trustee Board concluding that an adequate range of our unrestricted reserves should be between £445,000 and £520,000.

5.7 Financial Review

Principal funding sources remain as Local Authority contracts and rental income including Housing Benefit. We are very grateful for the respectful partnership that we continue to enjoy with Leeds City Council. This year they have provided us robust and considerate contract management and worked with us to secure emergency COVID funding for our much-needed services.

This year we have received funding through government sources from both the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (previously Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) and the Ministry of Justice (through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority). In addition, we continued our multi-regional and multi-national partnership which secured Tampon Tax funding, via the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), led by Solace Women's Aid.

Voids (empty refuge spaces) were lower than last year's higher amount (7.5% compared to 2021 figure of 8.45%) and bad debt written off in the year being 1% (compared to 1.25% last year). We are pleased at how the services have been managed, as the target for voids in normal circumstances are 8% and bad debts is 4%. The continued reduction in the level of bad debts is testament to the hard work of the refuge teams in managing the clients' financial situations both when the clients are in refuge and when they are able to move on, and the skill and expertise of our finance team in making and reviewing appropriate provisions.

Planned voids mainly cover the period when units are empty due to cleaning and maintenance or occasionally for the reservation of a unit for a woman urgently needing to flee to safety. Systematic management of turnaround times and housing management have resulted in the first reduction in voids for some time.

Our non-commissioned refuges were badly affected by voids during 2020/2021 due to the pandemic, but they have significantly reduced this year (8.8% compared to a previous 14.5%). Our commissioned refuge voids have raised slightly to 6.8% (compared to 4.5% last year), still below our target. Voids were higher in our non-commissioned refuges due to them all being shared houses, however there is less of a variance this year to last. During various COVID lockdowns it was impossible to move new residents into shared houses, due to the need to keep current residents safe.

The trustees submit the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022. The net income for the year amounts to a surplus of £42,681. This is in part due to careful strategic management of reserves this year, how we account for the management of our services and continued fundraising success. This compares to a net income in 2021 of
£199,587. Reserves carried forward are £964,260 of which £84,930 are restricted and £879,330 are unrestricted funds.

Of the £879,330 of unrestricted funds, we have £250,000 in designated funds for our second year of our 2-year period for investment in our growth and infrastructure to meet the continuing need and demand for what we do. The level of unrestricted reserves without this designation is £629,330, which is in excess of the range of £445,000 and £520,000 in our reserves policy. Last year, we expected that the first year of our investment could take us below the lower level of our unrestricted reserves but excellent financial management has allowed us to increase our unrestricted reserves and not require full use of the designation for investment.

We recognise that we have a surplus in reserves and we are having a strategic review about how our reserves may fit in with our beneficiaries needs, the social housing crisis and our charitable objectives going forward.

6 Future plans

LWA's strengths are in delivering excellent services, leading collaborative partnerships, developing new and innovative services and having strategic influence locally, regionally and nationally.

Demand for our services continues to increase and we are proactively looking at ways in which we can develop, improve and increase our services to support more women and children. We do this by playing to our strengths for development and working within our partnerships.

We aim to concentrate on the following strategic objectives in 2022 - 2023:

1. Update, refresh and extend our strategy to 2025/26.
2. Focus on our people's development, both staff and trustees, including implementing our HR strategy and devising a challenging and ambitious Learning and Development Strategy.
3. Continue to develop work implementing our EDI policy, listening to the experiences of our people and fully implementing inclusive strategies.
4. Consult on and develop an LWA social housing strategy to consider our medium- and long-term approach to social housing.

7 Governance and decision-making

LWA operates as a charitable company and registered its purpose and objectives with the Charity Commission on 12 November 1991. It is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association which set out clearly the purpose of the charity together with rules about how it conducts its business, including governance.

Trustees are recruited by external advertisement in the same way that employees and workers are recruited, and there are role profiles and an application form. People may also approach, or be approached if specific skills are required, at any time.

Applicants are interviewed by the Chair/Deputy Chair and Chief Executive, and the final decision is made by the Trustee Board. All new Trustees receive an induction, and training is planned, commissioned and delivered regularly.

The organisation employs a Chief Executive who takes decisions on the day to day running of the charity. The Chief Executive manages staff, ensures proper financial management, follows policies as agreed by the Trustees, and complies with legal obligations and those directed by funders, the Charity Commission, Companies House and other regulatory bodies. Trustees ensure adherence to legal requirements, i.e. maintaining correct policies: Health and Safety at Work; Fire Safety; Risk Assessments; recruitment and selection; and other policies such as grievance and disciplinary.

LWA is an independent organisation - however, it benefits from being part of the wider Women's Aid network across the UK.

All Trustees give of their time freely and no Trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Chair of Trustees and in accordance with the charity's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest could arise.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations: none of our Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a Trustee or senior manager of the charity with a client or other stakeholder must be disclosed to the full Board of Trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

During this year we worked with an external consultant to develop a governance improvement plan further to our previous self-assessment against the Charity Governance Code. We implemented a number of improvements, including: reviewing time commitments and role profiles of trustees; statement of matters reserved for the Board and the scheme of delegation reviewed and updated; benchmarking used in a review of organisation structure; a remuneration policy developed; and a new recruitment and induction procedure was required for new trustees and a programme of recruitment devised.

All have been completed and a quality performance framework has been developed to be worked through in the next year, including assessing the performance of the Board, CEO and the Chair.

7.1 Risk management

The Trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- A fully updated Risk Register, comprising of an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces.
- The establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual reviews.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.
- A Resources and Governance Committee, having Trustee and senior management representation along with a commissioned external and independent Health & Safety consultant and, when required, the named organisation's Data Protection Lead.

The Risk Register focuses attention on the areas of: Governance and Management; Operational Risks regarding People and Activities/Premises; Financial; Environmental and External.

Other risks regularly identified include that of our service users being at risk of injury or even death. There are also ongoing, daily risk assessments on service delivery, and at regular intervals in respect of premises.

Attention has also been focused on other non-financial risks including those arising from fire, flood, terrorist attack, technology, reputation and health and safety of staff. These risks are managed by having robust policies and procedures in place, and through regular awareness training for staff.

Financial sustainability is one of the risks identified by the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of LWA's financial position through management reports including available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, liaison with the bank when necessary, and active management of debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital. LWA has been dynamic and strategic this year in its use of unrestricted reserves.

7.2 Data Security and Protection

Data security and protection is of paramount importance to LWA. We deal with very sensitive personal data relating to the people we support, our staff and our supporters so it is vital that we process this information securely and in accordance with data protection law.

The organisation continues to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. As data controllers, LWA continues to monitor and review our statutory due diligence. LWA hasa named Data Protection Lead (DPL), who is a qualified Data Protection Practitioner.

She continues to report to the CEO and the Resources and Governance Committee of the Board regarding Subject Access Requests, Data Breaches and areas of consideration and improvement. This is reviewed both internally within LWA, and also as consortium lead for our LDVS and WLL partnerships.

All LWA staff have received data protection training. Briefings and regular updates are circulated to all staff to ensure that they remain up to date.

LWA remains vigilant to the threat of cyber-attack. The DPL has attended various data protection training sessions and seminars during the last year looking in particular at cyber security. This has been discussed at staff meetings and detailed briefings have been circulated. Staff are vigilant to suspicious emails, and these are raised and reported to the DPL for appropriate action to be taken.

There have been no breaches of data which have needed to be reported to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

7.3 Information, Communications, Technology (ICT)

Our ICT strategy changed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with us ensuring that every member of staff who required one had access to a work laptop, access to our server and a mobile phone. We successfully fundraised to cover the costs of these as well as ensuring that staff that were working remotely had access to the most appropriate equipment for their health, safety and wellbeing.

Additionally, most of our families in refuge had children who could continue to attend school due to being classed as vulnerable, and they required internet access. For the last two years we have provided internet access to all 43 families in our emergency accommodation units where needed and continue to fundraise to keep this going.

This not only ensures that children have the opportunity to continue to learn and do their studies, but they can also play and connect with others, and it gives a lifeline to the mums who can connect and speak with family and friends in other parts of the country.

8 Statutory information

8.1 Auditors

A resolution to appoint Riley & Co Ltd, Chartered Certified Accountants & Registered Auditors as auditors for this financial year was proposed and agreed at the Annual General Meeting, following an open and transparent invitation to tender process.

8.2 Trustees of the charity

The Directors of the charitable company are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law. The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year end are listed on page 1 of the financial statements.

8.3 Public Benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, the Trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit in the Charities Act 2011 in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance on the advancement of health and saving of lives.

8.4 Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The trustees (who are also the directors of Leeds Women's Aid for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP.
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

8.5 Statement of disclosure of information to Auditors

The Trustees of the company who held office at the date of approval of this annual report confirm that:

So far as the Directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each Director has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

8.6 Statement of disclosure of information to Auditors

The auditors, Riley & Co Limited, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 21/09/22 and signed on its behalf by:

Nneka Ikeogu
Director and Chair of the Board 21 September 2022

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Leeds Women's Aid (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31st March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31st March 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the industry sector;
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation and data protection, anti-bribery, employment, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- Ensured laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- Making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was a susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- Understanding the design of the company's remuneration policies.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we;

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- Tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in note 2 were indicative of potential bias; and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risks of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- Reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- Reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the company's legal advisors.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from the financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

V J ATKINSON FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Riley & Co Limited
Statutory Auditor Chartered Accountants
52 St Johns Lane
Halifax
West Yorkshire
HX1 2BW

Date: 5 October 2022

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)
for the Year Ended 31st March 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/22 Total funds £	31/3/21 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	48,492	21,516	70,008	119,412
Charitable activities					
Charitable activities		824,166	1,883,760	2,707,926	2,715,881
Other trading activities	3	66,672	-	66,672	60,457
Investment income	4	276	-	276	948
Total		939,606	1,905,276	2,844,882	2,896,698
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	6	67,618	-	67,618	47,165
Charitable activities	7				
Charitable activities		685,339	1,975,577	2,660,916	2,585,659
Governance costs		73,667	-	73,667	64,287
Total		826,624	1,975,577	2,802,201	2,697,111
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		112,982	(70,301)	42,681	199,587
Transfers between funds	19	(29,439)	29,439	-	-
Net movement in funds		83,543	(40,862)	42,681	199,587
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		795,787	125,792	921,579	721,992
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		879,330	84,930	964,260	921,579

The notes form part of these financial statements

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Balance Sheet
31st March 2022

	Notes	31/3/22 £	31/3/21 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	14	62,467	33,845
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	15	616,240	284,309
Cash at bank and in hand		1,439,583	1,064,645
		2,055,823	1,348,954
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	16	(1,154,030)	(461,220)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		901,793	887,734
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		964,260	921,579
NET ASSETS		964,260	921,579
FUNDS	19		
Unrestricted funds:			
General fund		446,053	362,511
Designated funds		433,276	433,276
		879,329	795,787
Restricted funds		84,931	125,792
TOTAL FUNDS		964,260	921,579

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 21/09/22 and were signed on its behalf by:

N C Ikeogu - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

Cash Flow Statement
for the Year Ended 31st March 2022

	Notes	31/3/22 £	31/3/21 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	416,656	108,282
Net cash provided by operating activities		416,656	108,282
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(41,994)	(23,152)
Interest received		276	948
Net cash used in investing activities		(41,718)	(22,204)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		374,938	86,078
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		1,064,645	978,567
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		1,439,583	1,064,645

The notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Cash Flow Statement for the Year Ended 31st March 2022

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	31/3/22 £	31/3/21 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	42,681	199,587
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	13,371	13,522
Interest received	(276)	(948)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(331,930)	39,178
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	692,810	(143,057)
Net cash provided by operations	416,656	108,282

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1/4/21 £	Cash flow £	At 31/3/22 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	1,064,645	374,938	1,439,583
	1,064,645	374,938	1,439,583
Total	1,064,645	374,938	1,439,583

The notes form part of these financial statements

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

For donations to be recognised in the financial statements, the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing before the year end. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be confirmed, then this income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity, and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Donated facilities and donated professional services are recognised in income at their fair value when their economic benefit is probable, it can be measured reliably, and the charity has control over the item. Fair value is determined on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity. For example, the amount the charity would be willing to pay in the open market for such facilities and services, a corresponding amount is recognised in expenditure.

No amount Is including in the financial statements in relation to volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102). Further detail is given In the Trustees' Annual Report.

Gifts in kind, donated for resale, are recognised within 'Income from other trading activities' at the net realisable value in the financial year in which they are sold.

Fixed asset gifts in kind are recognised when receivable and are included at fair value. These gifts are not deferred over the life of the asset.

For legacies, entitlement is the earlier of the charity being notified of an impending distribution or the legacy being received, at that point income is recognised. On occasion legacies will be notified to the charity where it is not possible to reliably measure the amount expected to be distributed, on these occasions, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and the details disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

Income from trading activities, includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity. Income is received in exchange for supplying goods and services in order to raise funds and is recognised when entitlement has occurred, income from the charity shop is included in the financial year in which it is received.

The charity receives government grants in respect of its charitable activities., income from government and other grants are recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement to them and after any performance conditions have been met, when it is probable that the income will be received and when the amount can be measured reliably. If these entitlement conditions are not met the income is treated as deferred income.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

continued...

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as an expense against the activity for which the expenditure arose.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Plant and machinery	-	Straight line over 4 years
Fixtures and fittings	-	Straight line over 4 years

Taxation
The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of any restricted fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits
The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Donated goods
Donated goods received by the charity shop network have not been valued in these accounts, as it has not proved practical or possible to reliably measure the value of the stock at the year end.

The charity operates a retail gift aid scheme to reclaim gift aid on the value of donated goods sold for those donors registered with the scheme.

continued...

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Donations	70,008	119,412

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Shop income	66,672	60,457

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Deposit account interest	276	948

continued...

5. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2022		2021	
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds
A P Funding	-	-	-	9,894
Children in Need	-	42,887	-	39,843
Comic Relief	-	122.242	-	120,000
Comic Relief - Covid 19	-	-	-	38,116
Designated Donations	-	20,915	-	10,000
Donations	-	-	-	12,695
Early Help Hub	-	120,000	-	120,000
Empowering Systems Change	-	61,263	-	-
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	486,731	248,922	474,676	248,922
GP Pilot	-	34,281	-	38,899
Independent Refuge	335,958	-	309,845	-
Leeds Covid Plan LDVS	-	-	-	56,400
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	693,979	-	661,979
Management and Administration	50,245	-	84,548	-
MHCLG	-	-	-	72,771
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19	-	76,340	-	39,411
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	-	86,766	-	75,455
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support	-	70,388	-	-
New Burdens Fund - LDVS Refuge	-	101,557	-	-
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	-	59,632	-	-
Online Chat	-	9,826	-	26,041
Safer Streets	-	46,163	-	-
Shop	66,672	-	60,457	-
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth	-	45,000	-	11,250
VRU Police Control Room	-	50,754	-	67,617
Womens Lives Leeds	-	14,361	-	317,879
	939,606	1,905,276	929,526	1,967,172
Total		2,844,882		2,896,698

continued...

6. RAISING FUNDS

Other trading activities

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Staff costs	33,806	22,174
Rent and Service Charges	20,844	14,500
Insurance	819	995
Repairs and Maintenance	293	1,342
Cleaning and Hygiene	1,109	1,222
Telephone	718	637
Personnel and Welfare Costs	174	8
ICT, Database and Website	123	48
Training	95	318
Activities	-	20
Postage and Stationery	2,366	933
Marketing and Publicity	97	345
Subscriptions	-	694
Equipment Rentals	302	302
Bank Charges	2,208	1,529
Gift Aid Charges	-	926
Travel Costs	69	-
Recruitment Costs	347	-
Health and Safety	217	-
Miscellaneous	439	-
Depreciation	3,592	1,172
	67,618	47,165

continued...

7. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	2022		2021	
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds
A P Funding	-	-	-	17,433
Children in Need	-	44,129	-	41,358
Comic Relief	-	148,885	-	110,404
Comic Relief - Covid 19	-	893	-	37,223
Designated Donations	-	-	-	-
Donations	-	3,116	-	52,104
Early Help Hub	-	120,000	-	120,000
Empowering Systems Change	-	56,993	-	-
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	563,833	248,922	336,321	248,922
Governance	50,913	22,754	48,999	15,289
GP Pilot	-	34,281	-	38,899
Independent Refuge	269,373	-	188,926	-
Leeds Covid Plan LDVS	-	-	-	56,400
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	722,168	-	710,828
Management and Administration	(125,113)	-	11,142	-
MHCLG	-	-	-	72,771
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19	-	72,535	-	39,411
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	-	63,950	-	75,455
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support	-	69,956	-	-
New Burdens Fund - LDVS Refuge	-	101,422	-	-
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	-	59,498	-	-
Online Chat	-	15,378	-	20,489
Safer Streets	-	41,627	-	-
Shop	67,618	-	47,165	-
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth	-	43,127	-	11,536
VRU Police Control Room	-	50,651	-	67,615
Womens Lives Leeds	-	55,292	-	328,421
	826,624	1,975,577	632,553	2,064,558
Total		2,802,201		2,697,111

continued...

8. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Staff costs	1,501,625	1,301,259
Rates and water	28,599	23,203
Insurance	12,592	12,610
Light and heat	80,069	44,011
Telephone	33,472	32,165
Postage and stationery	6,322	10,965
Advertising	10,568	3,545
Sundries	(1)	(1,500)
Rent	186,344	180,120
Repairs and maintenance	121,339	113,419
Cleaning and Hygiene	5,566	6,088
Computer repairs and maintenance	34,573	64,933
Agency staff	24,465	40,635
Subscriptions	6,060	5,770
Training, Coaching and Conferences	11,591	11,795
Interpreting Fees	9,249	6,836
Motor and travel expenses	3,092	2,286
Personnel and Welfare Costs	4,565	1,689
Activities Costs	23,873	9,612
Subcontract - Partners	101,812	258,460
Service Costs	479,796	423,489
Bad Debt Provision	(36,987)	31,381
Health and Safety	2,553	2,888
	2,651,137	2,585,659

9. SUPPORT COSTS

	Governance costs
	£
Charitable activities	9,779
Governance costs	73,667
	83,446

continued...

9. SUPPORT COSTS - continued

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

	Charitable activities	Governance costs	31/3/22 Total activities	31/3/21 Total activities
	£	£	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	-	6,840	6,840	4,500
Auditors' remuneration for non-audit work	-	2,039	2,039	1,500
Legal, professional and HR	-	36,359	36,359	30,663
Recruitment Costs	-	16,653	16,653	3,564
Bank charges	-	1,507	1,507	1,578
Governance Costs	-	10,269	10,269	10,132
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	9,779	-	9,779	12,350
	9,779	73,667	83,446	64,287

10. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration - Bohorun's	1,200	4,500
Auditors' remuneration - Riley and Co	5,640	-
Auditors' remuneration for non-audit work	-	1,500
Other non-audit services	2,039	-
Depreciation - owned assets	13,372	-

11. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31st March 2022 nor for the year ended 31st March 2021.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31st March 2022 nor for the year ended 31st March 2021.

continued...

12. STAFF COSTS

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,353,546	1,179,281
Social security costs	123,195	94,405
Other pension costs	58,690	49,747
	1,535,431	1,323,433

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31/3/22	31/3/21
Refuge and Aftercare	16	14
Community Services	26	22
Social Enterprise and Funding	4	2
Management and Administration	8	5
	54	43

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	31/3/22	31/3/21
£60,001 - £70,000	1	1

The average head count of employees during the year was 75.

The key management personnel of the charity have been identified as the CEO, operations director, fundraising and marketing director and projects and partnerships director.

The aggregate employment benefits, including employers' national insurance and pension contributions, for these key management personnel for the year was £216,852 (2021: £216,645).

13. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	119,412	-	119,412
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	748,709	1,967,172	2,715,881
Other trading activities	60,457	-	60,457
Investment income	948	-	948
Total	929,526	1,967,172	2,896,698

continued...

13. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	47,165	-	47,165
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	536,390	2,049,269	2,585,659
Governance costs	48,998	15,289	64,287
Total	632,553	2,064,558	2,697,111
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	296,973	(97,386)	199,587
Transfers between funds	(52,754)	52,754	-
Net movement in funds	244,219	(44,632)	199,587
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	551,568	170,424	721,992
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	795,787	125,792	921,579

continued...

14. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant and machinery £	Fixtures and fittings £	Totals £
COST			
At 1st April 2021	62,669	64,913	127,582
Additions	5,089	36,905	41,994
At 31st March 2022	67,758	101,818	169,576
DEPRECIATION			
At 1st April 2021	49,594	44,143	93,737
Charge for year	6,239	7,133	13,372
At 31st March 2022	55,833	51,276	107,109
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31st March 2022	11,925	50,542	62,467
At 31st March 2021	13,075	20,770	33,845

15. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/22 £	31/3/21 £
Trade debtors	491,366	228,716
Other debtors	2,000	2,000
Prepayments	78,278	38,583
Accrued income	44,596	15,010
	616,240	284,309

continued...

16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Trade creditors	10,131	22,266
Social security and other taxes	29,887	25,338
Other creditors	54	-
Pension control account	8,598	6,395
Attachment of earnings	-	214
Net salaries control	(281)	(932)
Accruals	66,022	118,650
Deferred income	1,039,619	289,289
	1,154,030	461,220

Deferred income

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
At 1 April 2021	289,289	456,829
Deferred income received during the year	1,898,371	1,050,678
Deferred income released during the year	(1,148,041)	(1,218,218)
	1,039,619	289,289

17. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Within one year	51,899	25,650
Between one and five years	105,999	157,899
In more than five years	-	21,384
	157,898	204,933

continued...

18. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/22 Total funds £	31/3/21 Total funds £
Fixed assets	62,467	-	62,467	33,845
Current assets	1,970,892	84,931	2,055,823	1,348,954
Current liabilities	(1,154,030)	-	(1,154,030)	(461,220)
	879,329	84,931	964,260	921,579

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	362,511	112,981	(29,439)	446,053
Designated funds	433,276	-	-	433,276
	795,787	112,981	(29,439)	879,329
Restricted funds				
Children in Need	2,479	(1,286)	-	1,193
Comic Relief	43,637	(33,475)	-	10,162
Comic Relief - Covid 19	893	(893)	-	-
Designated Donations	10,000	-	-	10,000
Donations	13,479	17,799	-	31,278
Empowering Systems Change	-	3,506	-	3,506
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	(29,437)	29,437	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	-	(2)	2	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	-	18,676	-	18,676
Online Chat	5,552	(5,552)	-	-
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	-	1,873	-	1,873
Staying Safe	3,000	-	-	3,000
VRU Police Control Room	1	(3)	2	-
Women's Lives Leeds	41,508	(41,506)	(2)	-
	125,792	(70,300)	29,439	84,931
TOTAL FUNDS	921,579	42,681	-	964,260

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	939,606	(826,625)	112,981
Restricted funds			
Children in Need	42,887	(44,173)	(1,286)
Comic Relief	122,242	(155,717)	(33,475)
Comic Relief - Covid 19	-	(893)	(893)
Donations	20,915	(3,116)	17,799
Early Help Hub	120,000	(120,000)	-
Empowering Systems Change	61,263	(57,757)	3,506
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	248,922	(248,922)	-
GP Pilot	34,281	(34,281)	-
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	693,979	(723,416)	(29,437)
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	76,340	(76,340)	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	86,766	(68,090)	18,676
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	59,632	(59,632)	-
New Burdens Fund - Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	101,557	(101,557)	-
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support Team	70,388	(70,388)	-
Online Chat	9,826	(15,378)	(5,552)
Safer Streets 1	30,349	(30,349)	-
Safer Streets 2	15,814	(15,814)	-
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	45,000	(43,127)	1,873
VRU Police Control Room	50,754	(50,757)	(3)
Women's Lives Leeds	14,361	(55,867)	(41,506)
	1,905,276	(1,975,576)	(70,300)
TOTAL FUNDS	2,844,882	(2,802,201)	42,681

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/20 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/21 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	223,006	296,973	(157,468)	362,511
Designated funds	328,562	-	104,714	433,276
	551,568	296,973	(52,754)	795,787
Restricted funds				
A P Funding	7,540	(7,539)	(1)	-
Children in Need	4,039	(1,560)	-	2,479
Comic Relief	34,198	9,439	-	43,637
Comic Relief - Covid 19	-	893	-	893
Designated Donations	-	10,000	-	10,000
Donations	52,888	(39,409)	-	13,479
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	(52,469)	52,469	-
Online Chat	-	5,552	-	5,552
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	-	(286)	286	-
Staying Safe	3,000	-	-	3,000
VRU Police Control Room	-	1	-	1
Women's Lives Leeds	63,516	(22,008)	-	41,508
	170,424	(97,386)	52,754	125,792
TOTAL FUNDS	721,992	199,587	-	921,579

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	929,526	(632,553)	296,973
Restricted funds			
A P Funding	9,894	(17,433)	(7,539)
Children in Need	39,843	(41,403)	(1,560)
Comic Relief	120,000	(110,561)	9,439
Comic Relief - Covid 19	38,116	(37,223)	893
Designated Donations	10,000	-	10,000
Donations	12,695	(52,104)	(39,409)
Early Help Hub	120,000	(120,000)	-
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	248,922	(248,922)	-
GP Pilot	38,899	(38,899)	-
Leeds Covid Plan - Leeds Domestic Violence Service	56,400	(56,400)	-
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	661,979	(714,448)	(52,469)
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	72,771	(72,771)	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	39,411	(39,411)	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Partnership)	75,455	(75,455)	-
Online Chat	26,041	(20,489)	5,552
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	11,250	(11,536)	(286)
VRU Police Control Room	67,617	(67,617)	-
Women's Lives Leeds	317,879	(339,887)	(22,008)
	1,967,172	(2,064,558)	(97,386)
TOTAL FUNDS	2,896,698	(2,697,111)	199,587

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/20 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	223,006	409,954	(186,907)	446,053
Designated funds	328,562	-	104,714	433,276
	551,568	409,954	(82,193)	879,329
Restricted funds				
A P Funding	7,540	(7,539)	(1)	-
Children in Need	4,039	(2,846)	-	1,193
Comic Relief	34,198	(24,036)	-	10,162
Designated Donations	-	10,000	-	10,000
Donations	52,888	(21,610)	-	31,278
Empowering Systems Change	-	3,506	-	3,506
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	5,243
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	-	(81,906)	81,906	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	-	(2)	2	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	-	18,676	-	18,676
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	-	1,587	286	1,873
Staying Safe	3,000	-	-	3,000
VRU Police Control Room	-	(2)	2	-
Women's Lives Leeds	63,516	(63,514)	(2)	-
	170,424	(167,686)	82,193	84,931
TOTAL FUNDS	721,992	242,268	-	964,260

continued...

19. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,869,132	(1,459,178)	409,954
Restricted funds			
A P Funding	9,894	(17,433)	(7,539)
Children in Need	82,730	(85,576)	(2,846)
Comic Relief	242,242	(266,278)	(24,036)
Comic Relief - Covid 19	38,116	(38,116)	-
Designated Donations	10,000	-	10,000
Donations	33,610	(55,220)	(21,610)
Early Help Hub	240,000	(240,000)	-
Empowering Systems Change	61,263	(57,757)	3,506
Funded Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	497,844	(497,844)	-
GP Pilot	73,180	(73,180)	-
Leeds Covid Plan - Leeds Domestic Violence Service	56,400	(56,400)	-
Leeds Domestic Violence Service	1,355,958	(1,437,864)	(81,906)
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	72,771	(72,771)	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Leeds Women's Aid)	115,751	(115,751)	-
Ministry of Justice - Covid 19 (Partnership)	75,455	(75,455)	-
Ministry of Justice - FDSH IDVA	86,766	(68,090)	18,676
New Burdens Fund - Independent Refuge	59,632	(59,632)	-
New Burdens Fund - Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	101,557	(101,557)	-
New Burdens Fund - Sanctuary Support Team	70,388	(70,388)	-
Online Chat	35,867	(35,867)	-
Safer Streets 1	30,349	(30,349)	-
Safer Streets 2	15,814	(15,814)	-
Solace Women's Aid - Labyrinth Project	56,250	(54,663)	1,587
VRU Police Control Room	118,371	(118,373)	(2)
Women's Lives Leeds	332,240	(395,754)	(63,514)
	3,872,448	(4,040,134)	(167,686)
TOTAL FUNDS	5,741,580	(5,499,312)	242,268

continued...

20. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31st March 2022.

21. ULTIMATE CONTROLLING PARTY

The charity is under the control of the board of trustees.

LEEDS WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1005884

Accounts

Leeds Women's Aid
(A company limited by guarantee)

Financial Statements and trustees' report
For the year ended 31 March 2021

Leeds Women's Aid
(A company limited by guarantee)

Financial statements and trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2021

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Leeds Women's Aid
(A company limited by guarantee)

Charity Reference and Administrative Details

Year Ended 31 March 2021

Charity registration number	1005884
Company registration number	02627468
Trustees	N Ikeogu (Chair) J McAra (Vice-chair) H Daniels (Treasurer) M Clarke A Norman L Whewell
Chief executive officer	N Peasgood
Registered office	6 Howley Park Business Village Pullan Way Leeds LS27 0BZ
Auditor	Bohorun & Co Ltd 6 Howley Park Business Village Pullan Way Leeds LS27 0BZ
Bankers	Unity Bank plc 9 Brindley Place 4 Oozells Square Birmingham B1 2HB Tridos Bank Deanery Road Bristol BS1 5AS

Every woman deserves respect and support

Directors' and Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2021

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The Chair's Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the Directors' and Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2021. Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) provides a comprehensive range of services to support women and children who are living with or who have experienced Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV & A). Our passion for the work we do, coupled with our unrelenting desire to be a leading voice within the city of Leeds for women-centred support, has been the driver for the work that we have continued to undertake this year, both strategically and operationally.

The year from April 2020 to March 2021 has, without doubt, been the most challenging year we have experienced since LWA's inception. We have, however, managed to find our way through the enormous trials brought about as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that the continued delivery of our vital services remained a top priority. An organisation that provides the kind of service that LWA provides would never have considered the notion of 'remote working' if not for the pandemic, however those members of the team who were able to work remotely have done so with the utmost professionalism, and those who have needed to continue supporting our beneficiaries face-to-face have done a commendable job.

We have continued to make progress against our strategic objectives which, along with the development of a new HR strategy, will undoubtedly see LWA go from strength to strength over the next financial year and beyond. Additionally, we are now in a position to complete our review of governance which will ensure that strategic oversight of the running of the organisation is as robust and as effective as it can be.

Despite the challenges that came with COVID-19, we have had a fantastic year financially and we are pleased to be able to report an extremely strong set of financial results. We have been particularly heartened by the donations that we have received from both private individuals as well as corporate sponsors in response to our increased presence and campaigning on social media throughout the pandemic. Donations form a crucial aspect of our fundraising strategy, and we will continue to focus heavily on developing an income stream through personal giving. We have also been able to place ourselves in positions to receive emergency funding from both central and local government, provided due to the pandemic, which has greatly enabled the continuation of service delivery. During 2021/22 we will be looking to assess the long-term impact of COVID-19 and ensuring that our budgets and overall financial outlook supports the long-term sustainability of LWA.

The Board of Trustees has been immensely grateful to the CEO, her colleagues on the Senior Leadership team and each and every member of staff and volunteer who have worked unbelievably hard throughout what has been an incredibly difficult year. We are also thankful for the continued backing of all of our supporters, including our patron, Rachel Reeves, MP. Whilst we cannot predict what the year ahead will bring, we do know that the need for LWA's services will continue, and we also know that we will strive to do all that we can to ensure we meet that need.

Executive Summary

1 Our Provenance

LWA was established in 1972 by committed feminist activists wanting to support women and children experiencing and living with Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV & A) and in 1973 we opened the first refuge outside of London, the 2nd in the whole of the UK. LWA is now the largest women's charity in Leeds.

Next year is LWA's 50th year and we will use this milestone to celebrate, increase awareness and fundraising income to promote what we have achieved and to undertake more of our lifesaving service delivery.

> "You saved a sad woman's life and made me feel worth something again. God bless you. You always said I would feel different once I was safe that is so true..."
>
> "It really felt good to know that someone was looking out for me and cared enough to check that I was safe. It gave me hope that at least there are some good people out there."

2 What We Do

We provide a comprehensive and wide range of services to support women and children experiencing and living with DV & A.

Much more detail is included in this report and on our website: www.leedswomensaid.org.uk. Particular services and their location in this report are:

Section	Service
1.5	On-line chat service
2.4	Police Control Room
2.5	GP Surgeries
2.6	Advanced Practitioners
2.7	Additional emergency accommodation
2.8	Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS)
2.9	Clare's Law
2.10	Women's Live Leeds (WLL)
3.1	Our Refuges
3.1	24-hour Helpline

In 2020/21, despite the pandemic, we managed to deliver more of our traditional services, develop some new and very well received ones – and all of this to very demanding high standards.

3 How We Do It

In the last year to 18 months, we have developed a new strategy that has crystallised our thinking, revitalised our beliefs, values and culture and brought trustees and staff together.

Based upon a new risk-based reserves policy, we are investing in our infrastructure and fully recognise that our success and sustainability is rooted in well trained and supported, high-performing and highly motivated staff (see sections 4.2 and 4.3).

Irrespective of how wise our strategy is and/or how strong we are financially, the leadership, management and delivery of our staff will make the greatest contribution to how we do it - successfully.

4 Fundraising and Finance

There is no question that the pandemic has increased our profile and helped us to attract additional funding. Our fundraising team have had a highly successful year, see section 5.1.

As to our overall financial position, see section 5.4 for more detail but in summary we:

- Made a surplus of £199,586 in 2020/21.
- Built our unrestricted reserves to £795,788, compared with our reserves policy level of between £400,000 and £470,000.
- Identified and designated £433,276 over a 2-year period for investment in growth and infrastructure.

5 Governance and risk management

We have nearly completed the actions arising from an external review of our governance arrangements, which will be reported on in next year's annual report.

Our previous year's investment in improving our risk management processes has proved to be a wise investment and we were well placed to ramp-up and further embed the processes for the pandemic.

6 Our future

LWA's strengths are in delivering excellent services, leading collaborative partnerships, developing new and innovative services and having strategic influence locally, regionally and nationally.

We predicted last year that demand for all LWA's services was highly likely to increase, and this is clearly evidenced within this report.

Within our strategic objectives we aim to concentrate on:

1. Reorganising the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to fit the business needs and new strategic priorities and objectives of LWA more closely. Bring more clarity to our core infrastructure and bring stability in leadership.
2. Being future ready and sustainable.
3. Reflecting the changing nature of funding sources.
4. Releasing the CEO from operational tasks to focus on strategic leadership and business development.
5. Elevating responsibilities and accountabilities to a level commensurate with our organisational size and maturity.
6. Creating a more complementary fit between the SLT and our governance structure.
7. Enhancing the wellbeing of our staff.
8. Creating a better fit with client focus and women centred voices as our priority.
9. Increasing and develop services, including widening our health based and house support.

The Board and SLT are determined to build on the successes illustrated in this report and do even more to deliver on our beliefs that:

- All women and children should live in safety, free from abuse and fear.
- Every woman and child have a voice and should be empowered, inspired and listened to.
- Women centred support is powerful and improves the lives of women, men and children.

These beliefs are the major driver for why we do what we do and the glue that holds together our staff, trustees, volunteers, funders and supporters.

Leeds Women's Aid

Trustees' Annual Report (Including Directors' Report)

For the year ended 31 March 2021

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1 Purpose and Impact

1.1 Summary

Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) was established in 1972 by committed feminist activists wanting to support women and children experiencing and living with Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV & A) and in 1973 we opened the first refuge outside of London, the 2nd in the whole of the UK.

Next year is LWA's 50th year and we will use this milestone to celebrate, increase awareness and fundraising income to promote what we have achieved and to undertake more of our lifesaving service delivery.

LWA is the largest women's charity in Leeds and although the scope of our work and activity has developed; supporting women and girls who have multiple and the most complex of needs through our partnership work, and additionally, coordinating some services to men and transmen through our commissioned services, we remain committed to our feminist approach and the client groups we work with. We continue to provide a range of the very best services for vulnerable women and families who are victims and survivors of: domestic, sexual & honour-based violence and abuse, forced marriage, trafficking, stalking and harassment.

LWA is the lead agency in the local authority commissioned Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS) Consortium and the Women's Lives Leeds (WLL) National Lottery Community Fund and Comic Relief funded projects.

LWA is responsible for the delivery of the commissioned and its non-commissioned refuge provision, the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service, the 24/7 helpline, and other services such as community development, GP and health surgery support, police control room consultation and support, on-line live chat support, healthy relationship and staying safe programmes and activities and support for women with multiple and complex needs.

LWA supports women and children predominantly from Leeds and the Yorkshire and Humber region, but also often works with women from across the UK when safety issues arise. All our support services are open to Lesbian, Bisexual & Trans women.

More information about LWA can be found on our website: www.leedswomensaid.org.uk.

This year has been the most challenging that LWA has known since its inception. The COVID pandemic began challenging us at the end of last financial year, and the whole of this year has seen us face three lockdowns, regional and local restrictions, and changes to our service delivery.

We have however had an incredible year, we have pulled together as a courageous and exceptional organisation, from trustees, leaders, managers, staff teams, volunteers, service users and the public.

The response we have had from the public and supporters has been overwhelming; we have won the hearts of many, shown how important our life saving services are, found new supporters and followers, rejoiced in our talented and committed staff and raised huge amounts of awareness for what we do.

This year we have increased: our social media presence; visitors to our website; and income generation, in particular from our public appeals.

Demand has grown hugely, DV & A was recognised as a national crisis during the pandemic, even quoted by the Prime Minister in a COVID briefing. From May 2020 to April 2021, numbers of calls to our helpline quadrupled at their peak and requests for refuge accommodation outstripped demand by a factor of 30. We supported over 7,000 women and families.

Our working patterns have changed and our priorities have shifted, challenging aspects of our work regarding critical workers and 24/7 services, to remote working. Safety of staff, adequately supporting our service users and the never-ending fundraising and risk assessing is the norm.

Our beneficiaries have told us they are more isolated since the outbreak: emotional abuse; controlling behaviour; stalking and physical violence have increased; many were unable to access mental health support; and 5% have needed support to access foodbanks for the first time.

Despite that they tell us:

"You saved a sad woman's life and made me feel worth something again. God bless you. You always said I would feel different once I was safe that is so true..."

"It really felt good to know that someone was looking out for me and cared enough to check that I was safe. It gave me hope that at least there are some good people out there."

One of LWA's greatest strengths is in leading collaborative partnerships with sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of partner organisations. During this year we applied for emergency COVID funding through both of our consortiums, raising over £100,000. Our stakeholders and peers support us and value our work and generous leadership.

1.2 Evidence of Excellence and Impact

We took a collective decision to grow our leadership within our sector, to ensure that the policy makers locally and nationally listen to the voices of women and girls and that systems start to change. We supported our partners, in particular smaller organisations often led by and for women from marginalised and culturally diverse backgrounds.

A recent report confirms that the UK government 'failed to consider gender' in its response to the COVID pandemic, and the Leeds COVID survey that our Women's Lives Leeds team conducted indicated that women have shouldered much of the burden within the pandemic including caring & educational responsibilities, lack of furlough, and job losses and we are striving to ensure policy makers are aware of this.

There has also been a national outcry about women's safety following the tragic murder of Sarah Everard and other women. Since 1st January 2021 and 3 March 2021 (when Sarah Everard was killed), 27 other women were killed. Between Sarah Everard's murder and Julia James's murder, 20 more women were killed. There have been allegations of male sexual violence to girls in schools, and women in the film and media industry and elsewhere.

An investigation by UN Women UK found that 97% of women aged 18-24 have been sexually harassed, and 80% of women of all ages. 96% of women saying they would not report situations because they do not think it would change anything. It seems endemic and we are committed to stopping it and ending the acceptance of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). We led a campaign to highlight women's safety and worked with the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Leader of Leeds City Council, on a series of meetings and actions to keep women's safety in high profile.

We are also strong advocates for a VAWG strategy; enlisting support of local cross-party MPs and councillors and lobbying the government and the opposition. This year saw the debates in the Houses of Commons and Lords regarding the Domestic Abuse Act (given Royal Assent on 29 April 2021), which was a once in a lifetime piece of legislation, highlighting a huge step forwards in the way DV & A is considered and treated. This Act will hopefully transform national funding arrangements regarding safe accommodation for victims-survivors of DV & A; however, there are serious concerns that pushing a separate Domestic Abuse (DA) strategy as part of the Act will continue the dangerous and problematic

trend towards gender-neutral responses to DA and negatively impact our local commissioning and funding arrangements. All victims-survivors must be able to access support but treating people equally does not mean treating them the same – and gender specific services should be essentially for meeting the differing needs of both male and female survivors.

We have also been innovative and developed successful digital inclusion projects, launched an on-line live chat service in two weeks and enabled women and girls to have new and innovative ways to contact services for support.

1.3 Strategy

LWA has expanded and developed hugely over the last few years, and we have taken the time to consolidate and stabilise our organisation, aiming to strengthen its infrastructure, making it more robust and ready to deliver our future strategy.

We want to deliver the answers to our 'Why we do what we do' question.

Whilst our 'Why' and 'Values' define why and how we do things, our strategic objectives determine what and where we will concentrate our efforts and resources over our strategic planning timeframe.

1.4 Progress on strategic objectives

The organisation is very proud of the fact that the Senior Leadership Team and the Board continued to make progress on our strategic objectives, despite the incredible pressures on everyone to respond to the pandemic and continue to develop and deliver excellent services.

We commenced the development of a new strategy in 2020 and are continuing to refine and deliver against the following strategic objectives:

1. To be a leader of, and a voice for, women-centred support in Leeds and surrounding areas.
2. To deliver our strategy by investing in our people (staff, volunteers and trustees), with particular regard to training and development, and by putting our values as well as equality and diversity at the centre of the way we do things.
3. To have an organisation structure and infrastructure that underpins all our work and is financially sustainable.
4. To invest in diversifying funding and income streams to increase stability and sustainability.
5. To actively explore and decide how we can increase the housing offer in Leeds for women and children experiencing DV & A.

Each member of the Senior Leadership Team has been allocated tasks and activities that will build the foundations on which the strategic objectives can be delivered.

We have made strides already in our strategic approach, being the leader in two consortia and investing more time and resources into these already established partnerships, fundraising and developing our services.

The Board approved our new HR Strategy in February 2021 to ensure that the organisation has the resources and processes available to achieve its strategic objectives. In particular, the correct number of employees, with the right skills and attitudes and at the right cost.

Additionally, the Board approved our new organisation structure in March 2021. Recruitment started to develop our first ever in-house HR function which would lead the implementation of the new structure. The Board has designated some unrestricted reserves over the next two years to invest in our development in order to ensure that efficiency and effectiveness are not affected by the demands that external factors will continue to have on the organisation.

We considered the effectiveness of our leadership team and the capacity of its members to work together to maximise the potential of our organisation to achieve our strategic aims. When charities have higher capacity to lead and manage their organisations, they are more likely to achieve their missions.

We are excited to see the development of this new structure which we will report on next year.

1.5 COVID-19 Pandemic

Although the pandemic has affected every section of this report, it is important to have a separate section to clarify and identify the strategic and practical efforts that the organisation has made during this year.

We created several position statements, detailing our plans and risk assessments in line with the changing information and advice. We created a strategic response to critical services and key workers and had an approach to home working during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our risk assessments included organisation wide, team and individual risk assessments for all staff who continued, or returned, to work at LWA sites.

We communicated both internally and externally what we were doing in relation to all our services, including our consortium work. We continued to operate all our services, taking referrals as usual, but delivered some in a different way.

We stated that:

1. LWA would follow the latest government advice and would actively encourage homeworking wherever possible to safeguard staff members, clients and stakeholders and to reduce the risk of infection to family members and friends.

2. We deliver life-changing and, sometimes life-saving services, some of which cannot be provided effectively through home working.

3. We believe that staff are best supported when they have opportunities to discuss cases, share concerns and access support from their colleagues.

4. Long-term home working may also have harmful impacts on emotional well-being of some staff given the nature of the work we do.

5. The crisis surrounding COVID-19 is likely to continue for many months and therefore we needed a system that will provide resilience in the long as well as the short term.

We engaged and supported all staff and shared 29 staff briefings on a range of topics including risk assessments and advice to staff, COVID-19 symptoms and advice, advice for managers and team leaders, rules regarding masks and easing of restrictions.

We also provided briefings and gave advice, information and support for service users and residents offering support on safety, hygiene and vaccines.

We ensured that any member of staff who was unfortunate enough to be off work isolating or sick due to COVID-19 were paid in full, and all staff who were furloughed received 100% of their salary, with none losing their jobs and all fully returning to work. Luckily, not many staff became ill with COVID-19 and we had just a few isolated cases.

We ensured that relevant PPE was available at all refuges and for any critical workers who needed to travel and be on site for work, and provided masks for all workers and refuge residents when needed.

We increased additional measures in our offices and at refuge sites to reduce the risk of infection and stopped all non-essential business travel. All our premises have been COVID secure.

We reviewed our policies and procedures including our contingency plans and Home Working policy.

We have been in regular contact with commissioners/funders and informed them immediately of matters that potentially impacted individual clients, staff or jeopardised service delivery.

We offer staff an Employee Assistance and Health Plan through Simply Health which offers mental health support and access to GPs.

We equipped our teams with appropriate technology, so they could work remotely.

We also conducted some workplace/working from home surveys, communicating ideas and results, along with our annual staff survey. We held monthly full staff meetings by Zoom and had ways of celebrating and supporting staff, giving praise and kudos to their dedication.

We recognised that DV & A increased significantly and demand soared to record high levels. LWA has been innovative, recognising that during the first lockdown, women were 'trapped' with their abusers and could not access telephone helplines. Our fundraising team raised enough money for us to launch an on-line live chat service, and our Head of Fundraising and Marketing managed to get it up and running in only two weeks (most take around five months to establish). This service has only been running for a year and we have already worked with 357 women, and it is funded until the end of 2021. We are working with commissioners to mainstream this additional and lifesaving service. Our income generation is giving women and girls the ability to access services in new and innovative ways.

2 Achievements and Performance

LWA has had an extraordinary year and continues to make impressive impacts in its service delivery, both as a sole provider, and with partnerships within our award-winning consortia. Some specific achievements are:

2.1 Staff Engagement

We have been dedicated to ensuring that staff are engaged as much as possible with all aspects of our work, both strategic and operational. We engage staff in recruitment and selection, policy writing and reviewing, service design, monitoring and evaluation and strategic planning.

We conducted our 2nd ever annual staff survey this year and were delighted that the top five highest scoring answers were:

1. LWA's HR Intranet enables me easily to find the policies, forms and information I need to do my job.
2. LWA's values, vision and purpose are clear and easy to access.
3. My line manager is available when I have questions or need help.
4. LWA is committed to delivering high quality services for clients.
5. The leadership is focused on the continuous improvement of LWA.

2.2 Awards

One of our trustees was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for her decades of 'hands-on' service to the local community.

Two of our staff were nominated for external awards, one for the Compassionate Leeds "Unsung Hero of the Year" and one for the "Lifetime Achievement Award" at the Yorkshire Awards.

2.3 Business Partnerships

Our team also developed an incredible new partnership with the first Leeds Women's Ice Hockey team, Leeds Roses. They secured the sponsorship to put our logo on their jerseys, donated a custom-made jersey to our silent auction and have been very active in campaigning and fundraising for us. We hope this will be the start of a great partnership.

Our fundraising and marketing team are also in contact with Leeds United Women's Football and Leeds Rhinos Women's Rugby.

2.4 Police Control Room

The police control room pilot has been widely regarded as successful and the funding through the West Yorkshire Mayor's office funded Violence Reduction Unit will continue, offering a 7-day a week service.

2.5 GP Surgeries

Our dedicated and expert DV & A Health Worker, working in GP surgeries, funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS, has been extended. An independent evaluation has concluded that:

> "Since April 2011 there have been 24 domestic violence related deaths in Leeds including five children who were killed alongside their mothers, coercive control has been a key feature in the majority of these cases. Lessons learned from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs), both on a local and national level have often revealed that victims of domestic homicide have had some contact with their GPs in the lead up to their death. A 2016 Analysis of 24 Domestic Homicide Reviews by Standing Together Against Domestic Violence found just over half of interpersonal homicide reports note that the GP missed opportunities to ask the victim about abuse.
>
> It is widely acknowledged that asking individuals about their experiences of domestic violence and abuse is more likely to encourage disclosures, in fact, evidence suggests that victims want to be asked about their experiences of DV & A and equipping GPs with the knowledge and skills to identify domestic abuse victims, risk indicators and referral pathways can mean earlier interventions for victims and their families.
>
> NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) recognises that health services, particularly primary care, are integral to identifying and responding to domestic violence and abuse. The CCG works in partnership with Safer Leeds Domestic Abuse Team, to ensure that all GP practices in Leeds are provided with the skills and knowledge to implement the Leeds Routine Enquiry model with their patients.
>
> The report recommends that funding should be secured to ensure that all GP practices across Leeds have access to specialist support, alongside this it is suggested that further analysis of the longer-term impact on patients referred to the specialist worker is advised to ascertain if those patients who were making very frequent visits to the GP before getting help have reduced in attendance after being supported by the DV & A Worker. This would help to establish whether, in the longer term, savings to primary care can be identified."

This continues to form part of LWA's strategy to increase support in health services.

2.6 Advanced Practitioners (APs)

We secured further funding to continue the work this year of one of our Advanced Practitioners (previously funded by the Ministry of Health, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), as this continued to have huge impacts. The main projects are the review of and breaking down barriers to support (including immigration status) and move-on accommodation and supporting women with severe and complex needs and additional substance misuse and mental health issues.

2.7 Additional emergency accommodation

We were successful in applying for MHCLG emergency funding to provide additional refuge spaces for women and children. This included providing additional support to women and children in our non-commissioned refuges and help towards the loss of income due to unavoidable voids. In addition, our Housing and Support Coordinator was funded to secure and deliver support to families in eight additional dispersed properties until 31 March 2021 for women and children fleeing DV & A.

Our outcomes were that we housed 10 women, 9 of whom had children. It was used mainly to move clients out of highly intensive supported refuge to make space available for more vulnerable clients who needed the support of having staff on site.

Residents who had been in refuge and completed their support but remained in refuge waiting for housing were the most successful example. Those who completed their support in refuge were ready for the next challenge with support that was longer lasting and more far reaching than 6-weeks of resettlement. This was particularly notable in two cases:

- 1 client managed her starter tenancy well, so we do not anticipate any issues converting this into an Assured Tenancy. This client has returned to work after furlough.
- Another client now has a tenancy with a supported housing project. She is managing well and is beginning to plan studies so that she can enter the workforce when her child goes to school.

2.8 Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS)

LDVS remains a hugely well-respected service. LWA and our partners often work over capacity with hundreds of families every year.

Despite significant challenges this year due to the pandemic, all our services have continued to operate.

We increased the number of staff within the Access and Assessment Team (AAT) due to the increase in demand.

LDVS work in close partnership with statutory agencies and a particular focus is activity relating to the prevention of children going into care. An example is a service user we worked with whose children were on Child Protection Plans to Children's Social Work Service (CSWS), and at the beginning of LDVS Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) support, social workers were concerned regarding her ability to safeguard her children from the perpetrator. Since intake, her positive engagement with IDVA has worked to reduce concerns of CSWS, and IDVA has supported the service user to obtain a Restraining Order for the protection of herself and children. Child contact is now managed safely due to joint advice and support from CSWS and LDVS.

There have been a number of examples of positive joint working with other providers this year, both with individual cases, despite lockdowns and COVID restrictions, and in partnership for funding and service delivery.

Case study:

Jo (not her real name) initially contacted our helpline, with the support of a friend. During her initial call, Jo described the continuing financial abuse, emotional abuse and control she was subjected to by her husband, who had also physically assaulted her in the past. The LDVS helpline worker discussed safety planning and provided signposting relating to family law, immigration, housing, emotional support and children's services. Multiple support needs were identified, services were over capacity. As such, Jo's case was opened to our Access & Assessment Team (AAT) case worker to provide light-touch support while awaiting availability of further support.

Over the following two weeks, the AAT worker had regular contact with Jo over several telephone calls. Support provided during this contact focused around:

- Family law: Protection orders were discussed, along with the process of seeking legal advice from solicitors. Jo was empowered to approach solicitors, who proceeded to take steps to confirm her eligibility for legal aid before applying for a Non-Molestation Order, Prohibited Steps Order, and Occupation Order.
- Safety planning: Strategies to try to keep safe were considered, while Jo and her children still lived in the same household with her husband. This included, for example: safety of phones and other tech devices, packing a covert emergency bag, safe places to flee from the house, the option of seeking emergency refuge accommodation etc.
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC): A Dash risk assessment was completed, scoring 7, however a MARAC referral was submitted on professional judgement due to the presence of concerning high risk factors. The case was later heard at the Leeds MARAC meeting and flagged as high risk.
- Children: Jo contacted CSWS herself, expressing her concern about her children's wellbeing in the circumstances, and wanting them to receive support. The AAT worker raised safeguarding concerns internally and spoke with CSWS duty and advice to follow this up. A duty social worker made contact and subsequently passed the case to Early Help.
- Mental wellbeing: Trauma-aware emotional support was provided throughout calls with the AAT worker, providing a space in which Jo could be listened to and believed, her feelings and responses validated, and her concerns taken seriously.

Once Jo knew that her solicitor would be applying for the relevant court orders, she identified that she and her children would need to leave the family home so as to be away from her husband when the orders were served, with the escalation of risk this entailed. Jo's options were explored in advance, and when a suitable vacancy then happened to become available at our commissioned refuge, the AAT worker was able to make an immediate referral for Jo and her children. They moved into the refuge accommodation the next day. Shortly after, Jo's husband was served with the court orders as planned. Jo and her children continue to reside in refuge with ongoing support from the refuge staff.

2.9 Clare's Law

We have attended all fortnightly Clare's Law panel meetings throughout the year. Clare's Law disclosures continue to be managed over the phone as face-to-face appointments are still not taking place.

We also chair some Clare's Law meetings. Wording and disclosures have been composed with a full understanding and perspective of how the process works, and we have often taken the lead on chairing the process of information sharing and decision making with other agencies.

2.10 Women's Lives Leeds

The final year of the 4-year National Lottery Community Fund funded project has ended, however, with good financial management and savings due to COVID, we have managed to ensure that key personnel are funded through to August 2021 in order to bridge the gap between our application for refunding our Empowering Systems Change 4-tiered project.

Due to funding from Comic Relief's Power Up programme, with the aim of a WLL VOICES project for Leeds to become the UK's first Women Friendly City, we were invited to apply for COVID-19 emergency funding. This was successful and in partnership with WLL colleagues and 100% Digital, an inclusion movement in Leeds that aims to reach the most digitally excluded people in the city and help them to understand and benefit from digital, we provided a platform and resources that helped facilitate the engagement of some of the most vulnerable women, young women and girls (including those with no recourse to public funds or facing harm) in Leeds. This included a 'Digital Disadvantaged' fund that was extended across the city by our team who have established links with Culturally Diverse Communities Hub.

Another notable success for our WLL team was to conduct a COVID-19 Women's Survey, which received almost 1,000 responses. The completed report, and executive summary from the COVID-19 women's survey was shared widely with strategic partners and leaders in the city

WLL has continued to be part of the Communities of Interest fortnightly forum, representing 'women and maternity.'

The Women Friendly Leeds team responded to the survey findings around women experiencing additional stresses, juggling multiple roles and having no time for themselves whilst working from home, and looking after others. We partnered with Space2 and applied for funding from Leeds Inspired to design and curate 400 women's Wellbeing and Arts packs to inspire women to take some time for themselves and nurture body and soul.

In October 2020, we hosted a Black History Month event with inspiring black women from the City to take part in an on-line panel discussion designed to amplify black women's voices, raise awareness, and celebrate their contributions. In February 2021, the LGBTQ+ History Month event celebrated and raised visibility of Leeds LGBT+ women.

3 Support provided

3.1 The numbers from April 2020 to March 2021:

Despite the pandemic and housing services being dramatically affected, this year we admitted 43% more women than last year in our commissioned refuge. This is a remarkable achievement considering the difficulties in continuing to operate 24/7 face to face refuge services, move families into permanent accommodation and welcoming new families.

Our two non-commissioned refuges had a similar number admitted, but we had more move on, which created a higher than expected number of vacant properties. This is discussed in the financial review section relating to voids.

Admissions to emergency refuges were as follows:

- The two LWA non-commissioned (independent) refuges admitted 39 new women this year.
- The commissioned local authority contracted self-contained hostel & dispersed properties (LDVS) had 40 women.

The total number of women and children supported in refuge accommodation was 123 adults and 158

children. 75% of women stay for up to a year, however 9 have been with us for longer than 18 months.

The 24-hour telephone helpline received 6,225 calls during the year, which was 30% more than last year, however the last quarter of the year received double the calls that the first quarter received.

Our community-based services supported more clients than the year before, with 753 adults supported (98% were women).

Our Drop-in services did not operate this year due to limits on face-to-face support, and partner organisations, such as hospitals, not allowing external practitioners onto their premises. We did however support a number of women for short-term work.

Our GP services continued, albeit mainly virtually, although many of the surgeries are now allowing us to see victims-survivors face to face.

Support was provided to adults aged between 16 and 86, and this was given in 27 different languages.

1,829 DASH Risk Assessments were completed for people in support, 585 Safety plans were undertaken and 845 Support Plans were actioned.

3.2 Types of Abuse

The average length of the abuse our service users have experienced is 5½ years.

75% have experienced emotional abuse
66% have experienced physical abuse
64% have experienced jealous/controlling behaviour
44% have experienced harassment/stalking/surveillance
31% have experienced financial abuse
16% have required hospital attendance following physical injury
31% have experienced attempted strangulation/suffocation
41% have experienced threats to kill.

3.3 LWA Client feedback:

- 98% said they felt better about themselves and more confident after being supported by our services.
- 98% of people said that receiving support from our service made a positive difference to their life.
- 100% of people supported said they felt listened to and believed by staff.
- 95% of people said they would come back to our service if they needed to.
- 100% of respondents would recommend our services to family/friends if they needed help.
- 100% of respondents said staff were knowledgeable and competent.
- 98% said the service was non-judgemental.
- 100% said the service met their needs effectively.
- 100% said the service understood and respected my needs.

Service users said:

"I feel confident that there are people willing to help me if needed. I don't feel as anxious and I feel more confident in myself and my decision making."

"Being listened to and supported to make my own choices without being judged has encouraged me to believe in myself more."

4 Values and Culture

At LWA, our behaviours support our purpose and create our culture, which in turn drives innovation and growth.

We do what we do because we believe:

- All women and children should live in safety, free from abuse and fear.
- Every woman and child have a voice and should be empowered, inspired and listened to.
- Women centred support is powerful and improves the lives of women, men and children.

Our **Values** reflect our organisation's views; they are the principles, standards & qualities that tell the story about the way in which we conduct our work.

Be Exceptional
We are experts in our field and proud of having a women-centred approach.
We are pioneers and leaders, striving to perform and innovate.

Be Courageous
We are honest, inventive and have the integrity to challenge perceptions and practice.
We are encouraging and empowering of each other to be courageous and brave.

Be Inclusive
We are diverse, welcoming, approachable and inclusive in as employers, service providers and people.
We promote unity, fairness and respect.

Be Inspirational
We are proud of our creativity & how we motivate, listen, empower and support each other.
We are encouraging and lead by example to achieve the best.

.

Be Responsive
We are collaborative, aware, compassionate and sensitive.
We adapt our approach to meet changing needs.

4.1 The Behaviours that create our Culture

Our Culture is a set of basic assumptions that we all share, these are 'norms' that control the way people interact with each other and others or put in a different way, 'the way we do things here'.

These behaviours apply to everyone, irrespective of position or seniority. Structural hierarchy represents the division of work and skills, not the division of people.

We not only agree to uphold professional ethical standards but will go further in our commitment to hold ourselves accountable to maintaining behaviours that seek to create a safe and respectful culture and prevent incidences of workplace bullying.

Our key principles are:

- Challenge and support each other to be exceptional by being curious about different ways of doing things, thinking beyond our roles, and embracing learning and development in all its forms.
- Be courageous enough to demonstrate humility and vulnerability, and to approach failure with curiosity rather than criticism.
- We welcome, accept and include everyone based on inherent worth and value, enabling divergent thinking in an inclusive environment.
- We believe that everyone has the potential to be inspirational both in what they do, and the way they do it.
- Through our compassionate lens, we find solutions by being responsive, agile and adaptable.

We have undertaken an 8-month leadership programme, looking at how we can create a compassionate culture within LWA.

To support these principles, as a leadership team we are committed to undertake the following and to introduce a conduct agreement within LWA for all staff to:

- Model behaviours with integrity, both inside and outside of work, ensuring that our behaviours always match our values.
- All take responsibility for our own behaviours.
- Take time to be curious and learn about each other, our authentic selves. We are more than our work.
- Share our workstyle and communication preferences.
- Recognise the power of divergent thinking.
- Share our roles, our capabilities, our mistakes, our successes and learn from each other.
- Engage fully and mindfully with our colleagues.
- Be courageous enough to demonstrate humility and vulnerability when needed.
- Commit to being willing to challenge behaviours that do not meet these standards.
- Trust that people have the power to change.
- Be willing to hold people accountable when they do not support these principles and behaviours.

4.2 Staff Learning & Development

LWA is committed to staff wellbeing, learning and development. Support and supervision are essential, with particular attention being paid to how to develop staff personally and professionally. Courses,

training and qualifications are undertaken based on consideration of individual and organisational needs. A pilot supervision process has been undertaken this year, which is more values based and reflective, and is receiving great feedback from staff and managers alike.

Around a fifth of our staff started work with LWA as a relief worker; building up their interest and expertise, increasing the number of hours worked, progressing to temporary and permanent employees. There is also a strong ethic within the organisation for volunteering, with 78% saying they had volunteered at some point, with 23% currently volunteering in some capacity.

More work will be undertaken in this next financial year regarding structure and infrastructure, which will develop new policies for remuneration and staff development.

4.3 Staff feedback

"The sense of helping others at their most vulnerable and difficult times in their life and watching them grow, become independent."

"Everyone working as a team and pulling together, sharing information and being kept informed regularly, good management and just the passion for the job which we all share in knowing we make a difference."

"Working with lots of inspiring, caring, dedicated women. Working for an organisation that genuinely wants to be the be the best organisation to work for and has actions that reflect this."

"Working within an organisation that is respected across the City as being a compassionate and inclusive leader".

5 Operating model and risks

5.1 Fundraising

We are regulated by the Fundraising Regulator and all our fundraising practices are ethical and considerate. We have an in-house Head of Fundraising and Marketing, and do not employ fundraising companies or consultants. All our fundraising and marketing is done to further the organisations charitable activities.

We fund our work with income from a wide range of restricted and unrestricted funds. Our restricted funds include our commissioned services by which we are contracted after an open tender to deliver and report back on specific service delivery. Our largest contract is from Leeds City Council, delivering the LDVS consortium. Other restricted income includes grants from the National Lottery Community Fund, Children in Need, Comic Relief and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Our unrestricted income gives us the flexibility to fund a range of things directly for our service users and for our infrastructure. It also allows us to invest in reserves (see page 24) of this report), which can be designated for specific charitable purposes.

We have enjoyed the final year's funding as lead agency of the successful WLL partnership with the National Lottery Community Fund. We are currently leading a bid for re-funding which we hope will be successful by the autumn of 2021.

Our WLL partnership with Comic Relief led us to be offered further funding through their emergency COVID fund, to lead a digital inclusion project, enabling those women and girls who were the most disadvantaged to participate and have their voices heard.

The balance of our funding comes from Government Grants, Charitable Trusts and fundraising efforts.

Our fundraising and marketing team have been so innovative this year in particular, and have achieved so much. This year we have increased: our social media presence; visitors to our website; and income generation – doubling our unrestricted income in particular from our public appeals. A message on our online fundraising platform says:

"Leeds Women's Aid has been identified by our Granddaughter who would like to make this donation instead of receiving a Christmas Present from us. (she donated £100)".

Our Head of Fundraising and Marketing has had a specific strategy to increase our individual giving and supporter base and our results have exceeded our expectations, giving us our most successful year ever. In just over a year from November 2019 to March 2021 the numbers of individuals who regularly donate through direct debit has almost trebled from **33** to **90**, it is one of our greatest quantifiable fundraising achievements.

We have seen 850 people donating through on-line giving platforms, 13 people have done fundraisers – including unusual things like a wedding dress walk and a head shave, with people running, doing triathlons and other energetic fundraising events.

This is a huge increase on the year before and shows our increasing community reach. We currently have 20 individuals signed up to our Friends of LWA scheme, only launched at the end of 2019, and 387 supporters on our quarterly newsletter mailing list. Our newsletter includes creative features such as poems from an LWA member of staff thanking our supporters, a message from the fundraising team and from the shop manager.

Before the pandemic we launched a large fundraising project to upgrade the children's play area in one of our independent refuges. Part of our range of services includes children's support. Almost every woman who comes to our refuge has one or more children; they too have often witnessed or experienced the trauma of domestic violence. The children we support come with diverse and complex needs, as the result of domestic violence, which range from impaired physical or cognitive development to problems at school such as bullying. The current play equipment was old, well-worn and needed replacing to allow the families to make full use of the gardens to play and feel safe. We aimed to raise around £40,000, but we realised close to £60,000 and our fundraising team ensured that this work got done, despite various lockdowns, so our children could benefit. Funding for the project was raised through business, community groups and individuals.

When lockdown eased, the demand for our helplines went through the roof and calls trebled. We fundraised for additional support and increased our staffing levels three times, meaning we have managed to answer more helpline calls than ever before.

The pandemic also meant that our community and charity shop closed on 23 March 2020, having significant impacts on our presence in the community and for our income in the first quarter of the financial year. The fundraising team were innovative to ensure that we mitigated any losses, and worked tirelessly to create new ways of raising money. Whilst the shop assistant was furloughed, our shop manager worked with the fundraising team on social media campaigns and organised an on-line silent auction for the first time ever which raised over £1,000.

She also ensured that our eBay page continued to be active, collecting items from the shop and ensuring they were sent. Additionally, we went onto Instagram, and have just in the last month ventured into sales on a new and upcoming on-line sales platform Depop, which has a very different aesthetic to eBay, and when used on mobile telephones it feels like a social media platform.

The fundraising team launched our first ever LWA Christmas cards and worked with our refuge staff to

enable children in our refuge to design the cards. Even though the shop remained closed before and during Christmas, we sold them on-line and through word of mouth. They were hugely successful. All children who designed one got a thank you and certificate from the CEO.



We have received grants, donations and gifts in kind from hundreds of individuals and organisations, and would particularly like to thank the following donors and funders:

The Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, Victoria Leeds, Elizabeth & Prince Zaiger Charitable Trust, Asda, Children in Need, Leeds Community Foundation, GlobalGiving, PayPal Giving Fund, Bramhope WI, Graham Stowe Bateson & Oakwood Solicitors from Make-a-Will-Month donations, BNY Mellon, Black Shire Villains, Total Gas & Power, BUPA, Sky, Irwin Mitchell, Rotary Club of Headingly, Direct Line Group, Shadwell church, Recycle 4 charity, W & M Charitable Trust, Waitrose stores Otley and Meanwood, Roundhay Women's Group, Kirkland & Ellis Fund, Addleshaw Goddard Charitable Trust, Business Focus & Systems ltd, Bramhope Rolling Scones, Headingley St Columbia Church, Yorkshire Ladies' Council of Education, Inner Wheel, Soroptimists International (Leeds), Stowe Family Law, PIB Risk Services, Terracycle, and Turnaround Foundation.

We also had an anonymous corporate donation of £10,000, which passed our strict due diligence tests.

In addition, LWA values its individual donors for their dedication and hard work, some of whom have been tirelessly fundraising for the organisation for over 20 years. Here was a message from our fundraising team:

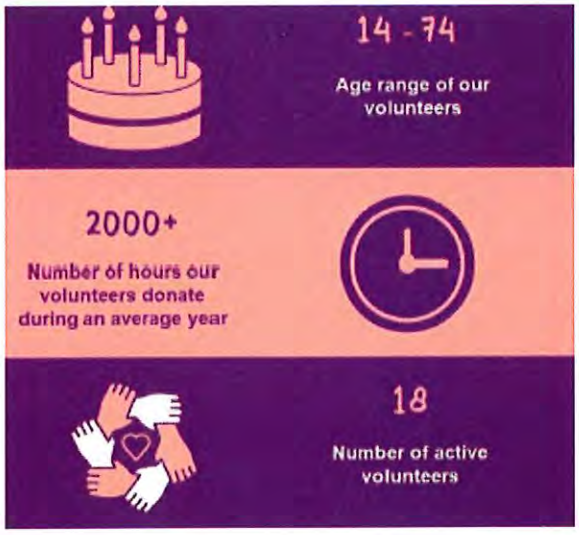


5.2 Volunteers

LWA has around 70 staff including employees and relief workers.

We are proud to work with volunteers of all ages from teenagers working on their Duke of Edinburgh Award to people wanting to support LWA and help their community.

We currently have a total of 18 volunteers assisting with the day to day running of our charity shop, which equates to 2,000+ hours. Without our volunteers the shop would not be what it is today, a well-established charity shop offering a unique and friendly shopping experience.



5.3 Reserves Policy

For some years, LWA has been operating a Reserves Policy based upon an approach that is now outdated. The Reserves Policy as included in the Annual Report for year-ended 31 March 2019 is included as Appendix I in the Reserves Policy Booklet.

It is now accepted good practice that a Reserves Policy for a charity should:

- Be based on a detailed understanding of the actual and predicted cash inflows and outflows of the charity;
- Not be based upon holding a set number of months cover on expenditure;
- Be integrated with the risk assessment and strategic plans of the charity;
- Not be based upon a closure scenario unless this is considered likely;
- Be regularly reported to and reviewed by the Trustee Board.

The development of a new Strategy has identified a large number of areas where we need to invest in our infrastructure. Added to this, the Needs Research Project has and will continue to identify specific services that we may want to invest in.

In addition, the unexpected and unprecedented pandemic in 2020 has raised vulnerabilities for the whole charitable sector, along with every sector in the world.

The Board of Trustees want to ensure that our reserves policy considers the above points, along with any unexpected risks. Additionally, should there be any scope for investment we would consider this by a combination of using a contribution of our existing unrestricted reserves and new funding, hence the need to review our Reserves Policy and ensure that it is fit for purpose and conforms to the good practice described above.

As it is highly unlikely that all of the situations described in point 2 above would occur in the same 12-month period, the Trustee Board therefore believes that an adequate range of our unrestricted reserves should be between £400,000 and £470,000. This will cover the scenarios detailed in points 1, 3 & 4, and in the lower range a contribution towards ¼ of the scenario risks in point 2, and in the higher level of the range ⅔ of the risks in point 2.

5.4 Financial Review

Principal funding sources remain as Local Authority contracts and rental income including Housing Benefit. We are very grateful for the respectful partnership that we continue to enjoy with Leeds City Council. This year they have provided us robust and considerate contract management and worked with us to secure emergency COVID funding for our much-needed services.

This year we have received funding through government sources from both the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Ministry of Justice (through the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office). In addition, we were fortunate to be part of a successful multi-regional and multi-national partnership which secured Tampon Tax funding, via the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), led by Solace Women's Aid.

Voids (empty refuge spaces) were slightly higher than last year (8.45% compared to 2020 figure of 7%) and bad debt written off in the year being 1.25% (compared to a very low 1% last year). We are pleased at how the services have been managed, as the target for voids in normal circumstances are 8% and bad debts is 4%. The continued reduction in the level of bad debts is testament to the hard work of the refuge teams in managing the clients' financial situations both when the clients are in refuge and when they are able to move on.

Planned voids mainly cover the period when units are empty due to cleaning and maintenance or occasionally for the reservation of a unit for a woman urgently needing to flee to safety. Systematic

management of turnaround times and housing management have resulted in the first reduction in voids for some time.

Our non-commissioned refuges were badly affected by voids (14.5%), with our commissioned refuge being much less at 4.5%. Voids were significantly higher in our non-commissioned refuges due to them all being shared houses. During various COVID lockdowns it was impossible to move new residents in to shared houses, due to the need to keep current residents safe. We used innovative ways of improving the situation over time, partnering with housing providers to enable new residents to get COVID tests and enable faster turnaround times, helping us to house women fleeing DV & A more safely and easier.

The trustees submit the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. The net income for the year amounts to a surplus of £199,586. This is in part due to careful strategic management of reserves this year, how we account for the management of our services and substantial fundraising success. This compares to a net income in 2020 of £300,158 (unrestricted £150,475, restricted £149,683). Reserves carried forward are £921,580 of which £125,792 are restricted and £795,788 are unrestricted funds.

Of the £795,788 of unrestricted funds, we have identified and designated £433,276 over a 2-year period for investment in our growth and infrastructure to meet the continuing need and demand for what we do. The consequently lower level of unrestricted reserves of £362,512 is below the £400,000 minimum of our reserves policy but by phasing the investments prudently, we do not expect to fall below the £400,000.

6 Future plans

LWA's strengths are in delivering excellent services, leading collaborative partnerships, developing new and innovative services and having strategic influence locally, regionally and nationally.

We predicted last year that demand for all LWA's services was highly likely to increase, and this is clearly evidenced within this report. Additionally, changing profiles of migrant communities' post Brexit indicated a reduction in EU nationals living in Leeds but potentially an increase from African, South Asian and Middle Eastern communities is predicted. We saw a rise in those from culturally diverse communities accounting for over 60% of those in refuge and 32% in the community.

Within our strategic objectives we aim to concentrate on:

1. Reorganising the SLT to fit the business needs and new strategic priorities and objectives of LWA more closely. Bring more clarity to our core infrastructure and bring stability in leadership.
2. Being future ready and sustainable.
3. Reflecting the changing nature of funding sources.
4. Releasing the CEO from operational tasks to focus on strategic leadership and business development.
5. Elevating responsibilities and accountabilities to a level commensurate with our organisational size and maturity.
6. Creating a more complementary fit between the SLT and our governance structure.
7. Enhancing the wellbeing of our staff.
8. Creating a better fit with client focus and women centred voices as our priority.
9. Increasing and developing services, including widening our health based and house support.

7 Governance and decision-making

LWA operates as a charitable company and registered its purpose and objectives with the Charity Commission on 12 November 1991. It is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association which set out clearly the purpose of the charity together with rules about how it conducts its business, including governance.

Trustees are recruited by external advertisement in the same way that employees and workers are recruited, and there are role profiles and an application form. People may also approach, or be approached if specific skills are required, at any time. We have commenced an external review of our governance arrangements against the contents of the Charity Governance Code, and will report on this in next year's Annual Report.

Applicants are interviewed by the Chair/Deputy Chair and Chief Executive, and the final decision is made by the Trustee Board. All new Trustees receive an induction, and training is planned, commissioned and delivered regularly.

The organisation employs a Chief Executive who takes decisions on the day to day running of the charity. The Chief Executive manages staff; ensures proper financial management; follows policies as agreed by the Trustees; and complies with legal obligations and those directed by funders, the Charity Commission, Companies House and other regulatory bodies. Trustees ensure adherence to legal requirements, i.e. maintaining correct policies - Health and Safety at Work; Fire Safety; Risk Assessments; recruitment and selection, and other policies such as grievance and disciplinary.

LWA is an independent organisation; however, it benefits from being part of the wider Women's Aid network across the UK.

All Trustees give of their time freely and no Trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Chair of Trustees and in accordance with the charity's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations: none of our Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a Trustee or senior manager of the charity with a client or other stakeholder must be disclosed to the full Board of Trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

7.1 Risk management

The Trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- A fully updated Risk Register, comprising of an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces.
- The establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual reviews.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.
- A Resources and Governance Committee, having Trustee and senior management representation along with a commissioned external and independent Health & Safety consultant and, when required, the named organisation's Data Protection Lead.

The Risk Register focuses attention on the areas of: Governance and Management; Operational Risks regarding People and Activities/Premises; Financial; Environmental and External.

Significant work was undertaken this year in relation to COVID Risk Assessments and contingency plans. The Board met monthly and the SLT met twice weekly, reducing to weekly at the beginning of 2021.

Additional work was undertaken this year to identify and incorporate the specific areas of risk regarding the current COVID-19 pandemic (see page 10) along with risks in identifying and dealing with future pandemics.

Other risks regularly identified include that of our service users being at risk of injury or even death. There are also ongoing, daily risk assessments on service delivery, and at regular intervals in respect of premises.

Attention has also been focused on other non-financial risks including those arising from fire, flood, terrorist attack, technology, reputation and health and safety of staff. These risks are managed by having robust policies and procedures in place, and through regular awareness training for staff.

Financial sustainability is one of the risks identified by the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of LWA's financial position through management reports including available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, liaison with the bank when necessary, and active management of debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital. LWA has been dynamic and strategic this year in its use of unrestricted reserves and in how we will use them.

7.2 Data Security and Protection

Data security and protection is of paramount importance to LWA. We deal with very sensitive personal data relating to the people we support, our staff and our supporters so it is vital that we process this information securely and in accordance with data protection law.

The organisation continues to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. As data controllers, LWA continues to monitor and review our statutory due diligence. LWA has a named Data Protection Lead (DPL), who passed the Practitioner Certificate in Data Protection in summer 2020 and is now a qualified Data Protection Practitioner.

She continues to report to the CEO and the Resources and Governance Committee of the Board regarding Subject Access Requests, Data Breaches and areas of consideration and improvement. This is reviewed both internally within LWA, and also as consortium lead for our LDVS and WLL partnerships.

All LWA staff have received data protection training. Briefings and regular updates are circulated to all staff to ensure that they remain up to date.

LWA remains vigilant to the threat of cyber-attack. The DPL has attended various data protection training sessions and seminars during the last year looking in particular at cyber security. This has been discussed at staff meetings and detailed briefings have been circulated. Staff are vigilant to suspicious emails and these are raised and reported to the DPL for appropriate action to be taken.

There have been no breaches of data which have needed to be reported to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

7.3 Information, Communications, Technology (ICT)

Our ICT strategy changed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with us ensuring that every member of staff who required one had access to a work laptop, access to our server and a mobile phone. We successfully fundraised to cover the costs of these as well as ensuring that staff that were working remotely had access to the most appropriate equipment for their health, safety and wellbeing.

Additionally, most of our families in refuge had children who could continue to attend school due to being classed as vulnerable, and they required internet access. For the last year, we have provided internet access to all 51 families in our emergency accommodation units where needed, and continue to fundraise to keep this going.

This not only ensures that children have the opportunity to continue to learn and do their studies, but they can also play and connect with others, and it gives a lifeline to the mums who can connect and

speak with family and friends in other parts of the country.

8 Statutory information

8.1 Auditors

A resolution to reappoint Bohorun & Co Ltd, Chartered Certified Accountants & Registered Auditors as auditors for this financial year was proposed at last year's Annual General Meeting. Bohorun & Co Ltd agreed to be re-appointed. The Trustees decided that due to the number of years that Bohorun & Co Ltd have acted as auditors for the charity, that an open and transparent invitation to tender would be launched for next year's audited accounts. This was due to happen this year, but due to the pandemic and the difficulties that this caused, we reappointed Bohorun & Co Ltd again.

8.2 Trustees of the charity

The Directors of the charitable company are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law. The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year end are listed on page 1 of the financial statements.

8.3 Public Benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the Trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit in the Charities Act 2011 in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance on the advancement of health and saving of lives.

8.4 Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that period.

In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

8.5 Statement of disclosure of information to Auditors

The Trustees of the company who held office at the date of approval of this annual report confirm that:

So far as the Directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each Director has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved on behalf of the Board

Nneka Ikeogu

Nneka Ikeogu (Jul 29, 2021 17:58 GMT+1)

Nneka Ikeogu
Director and Chair of the Board
13/07/2021

Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees of Leeds Women's Aid

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Leeds Women's Aid (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006
In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception
In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees'/directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees
As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 27, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of the irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;

- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charity through discussions with trustees and other management, and from commercial knowledge and experience of the sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations in both the UK, which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the charity, including the Charities Act 2011, data protection legislation, anti-bribery, employment, safeguarding principles, health and safety legislations;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence;
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit;

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimated set out in the accounting policies were indicative of potential bias; and
- used data analytics to investigate the rationale behind any significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures that included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing any available correspondence with HMRC and the company's legal advisors.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Divya Prakash Bohorun

D P Bohorun FCCA FCMI (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Bohorun & Co Ltd, Statutory Auditor

6 Howley Park Business Village
Morley
Leeds
LS27 0BZ

Leeds Women's Aid

Statement of Financial Activities (Including Income and Expenditure Account)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	**2021 Total £**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	**2020 Total £**
Incoming Resources:							
Charitable activities	2	868,121	1,967,172	2,835,293	890,683	1,875,998	2,766,681
Trading income	3	60,458	-	60,458	70,727	-	70,727
Investment income	4	948	-	948	2,200	-	2,200
Total income		929,527	1,967,172	2,896,699	963,610	1,875,998	2,839,608
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	5	536,389	2,049,269	2,585,658	730,727	1,726,315	2,457,042
Trading expenditure	5	47,165	-	47,165	58,239	-	58,239
Governance costs	6	49,001	15,289	64,290	24,169	-	24,169
Total expenditure		632,555	2,064,558	2,697,113	813,135	1,726,315	2,539,450
Net income / (expenditure)		296,972	-97,386	199,586	150,475	149,683	300,158
Transfer between funds	-	52,754	52,754	-	-13,708	13,708	-
Net movement in funds	16	244,218	-44,632	199,586	136,767	163,391	300,158
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward	16	551,570	170,424	721,994	414,803	7,033	421,836
Total funds carried forward	16	795,788	125,792	921,580	551,570	170,424	721,994

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

Leeds Women's Aid

Balance Sheet

Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	11	33,845	24,215
Current assets			
Debtors	12	284,310	323,489
Cash at bank and in hand		1,064,639	978,567
		1,348,949	1,302,056
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	-461,214	-604,277
		-461,214	-604,277
Net current assets		887,735	697,779
Net assets		921,580	721,994
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	15	125,792	170,424
Unrestricted funds	15	795,788	551,570
Total charity funds	15	921,580	721,994

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board on 13th July 2021.

Signed on behalf of the board of trustees

Nneka Ikeogu

Nneka Ikeogu (Jul 29, 2021 17:58 GMT+1)

N Ikeogu, Director and Trustee

The notes on pages 36 to 48 form part of these financial statements.

Company registration number: 02627468

Leeds Women's Aid

Cashflow Statement

Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flow from operating activities		199,586	300,158
Interest paid		0	0
Interest receivable		-948	-2,200
Depreciation		13,522	8,912
(Increase) / decrease in debtors		39,179	116,403
Increase / (decrease) in creditors		-143,063	-47,965
Net cash flow from operating activities		108,276	375,308
Cash flow from investing activties			
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets		-23,152	-14,915
Return on investment and servicing of finance		948	2,200
Net cash flow from investing activities		-22,204	-12,715
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		86,072	362,593
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April		978,567	615,974
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March		1,064,639	978,567
Cash and cash equivalents consists of:			
Cash at bank and in hand		1,064,639	978,567
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March		1,064,639	978,567

1 Summary of significant accounting policies

(a) General information and basis of preparation

Leeds Women's Aid is a registered charity and a registered company limited by guarantee in England. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 of these financial statements. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are providing support to women and children affected by domestic violence and abuse (DV & A).

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 (as updated through Update Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016 and Update Bulletin 2 published on 5 October 2018), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

(b) Funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

(c) Income recognition

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

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Donated facilities and donated professional services are recognised in income at their fair value when their economic benefit is probable, it can be measured reliably and the charity has control over the item. Fair value is determined on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity. For example the amount the charity would be willing to pay in the open market for such facilities and services. A corresponding amount is recognised in expenditure.

No amount is included in the financial statements for volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102). Further detail is given in the Trustees' Annual Report.

Gifts in kind donated for resale are recognised within 'Income from other trading activities' at the net realisable value in the year in which they are sold. As the gifts in kind are mostly second-hand donated goods they are not valued and or included in stock at the year end.

Fixed asset gifts in kind are recognised when receivable and are included at fair value. They are not deferred over the life of the asset.

For legacies, entitlement is the earlier of the charity being notified of an impending distribution or the legacy being received. At this point income is recognised. On occasion legacies will be notified to the charity however it is not possible to measure the amount expected to be distributed. On these occasions, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed.

Income from trading activities includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity. Income is received in exchange for supplying goods and services in order to raise funds and is recognised when entitlement has occurred.

Income from the charity shop is included in the year in which it is received.

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

Investment income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes such as shares and property. It includes dividends, interest and rent. Where it is not practicable to identify investment management costs incurred within a scheme with reasonable accuracy the investment income is reported net of these costs. It is included when the amount can be measured reliably. Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method and dividend and rent income is recognised as the charity's right to receive payment is established.

Other income includes the conversion of endowment funds into income which arises when capital funds are released to an income fund from expendable endowments or when a charity has authority to adopt a total return approach to its permanent endowment fund. It also includes other income such as gains on disposals of tangible fixed assets.

(d) Expenditure recognition

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

- Costs of raising funds includes of comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes including the charity's shop;

(d) Expenditure recognition (continued)

- Expenditure on charitable activities comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that are allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above, such as governance costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as an expense against the activity for which expenditure arose.

Grants payable to third parties are within the charitable objectives. Where unconditional grants are offered, this is accrued as soon as the recipient is notified of the grant, as this gives rise to a reasonable expectation that the recipient will receive the grants. Where grants are conditional relating to performance then the grant is only accrued when any unfulfilled conditions are outside of the control of the charity.

(e) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost (or deemed cost) or valuation less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Cost includes costs directly attributable to making the asset capable of operating as intended.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset on a systematic basis over its expected useful life as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	25% straight line

(f) Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to process and sell. Cost includes all costs of purchase, costs of conversion and other costs incurred in bringing stock to its present location and condition. Cost is calculated using the first-in, first-out formula. Provision is made for damaged, obsolete and slow-moving stock where appropriate.

Donated stocks are fair valued as described in (c) above. However, the management view is to value stock at nil value as all items are donated goods.

(g) Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

(h) Impairment

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

(i) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the charity has an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount can be reliably estimated.

(j) Leases

Rentals payable and receivable under operating leases are charged to the SoFA on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

(k) Employee benefits

When employees have rendered service to the charity, short-term employee benefits to which the employees are entitled are recognised at the undiscounted amount expected to be paid in exchange for that service.

The charity operates a defined contribution plan for the benefit of its employees. Contributions are expensed as they become payable.

(l) Tax

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

(m) Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on the basis that the charity can continue to operate as a going concern as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist.

The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure and are of the opinion that the charity has adequate working capital to continue its operations over the next 12 months. This conclusion was made having considered the impact of the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic on future operations and available funding. The trustees, therefore, have made an informed judgement, at the time of approving the financial statements, that there is reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

2 Incoming Resources

	2021		2020	
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds
Independent Refuge	309,845	-	310,890	-
Funded LDVS	474,676	248,922	466,456	248,922
LDVS	-	661,979	-	661,979
A P Funding	-	9,894	-	38,275
GP Pilot	-	38,899	-	36,976
DA Car	-	-	-	29,756
Children in Need	-	39,843	-	28,439
Comic Relief	-	120,000	-	60,252
Early Help Hub	-	120,000	-	103,000
Shop	60,458	-	70,727	-
Women's Lives Leeds	-	317,879	66,386	585,980
Staying Safe	-	-	-	11,171
Other Income	-	-	49,151	-
Last Resort Fund	-	-	-	5,691
Residents Activities	-	-	-	5,000
VRU Police Control Room	-	67,617	-	10,779
Angelou Gardens	-	-	-	49,778
Management & Admin	84,548	-	-	-
Online Chat	-	26,041	-	-
Donations	-	12,695	-	-
MHCLG	-	72,771	-	-
Covid 19 MOJ LWA	-	39,411	-	-
Covid 19 MOJ Patnership LDVS	-	75,455	-	-
Comic Relief Covid 19	-	38,116	-	-
Designated Donation	-	10,000	-	-
Leeds Covid Plan LDVS	-	56,400	-	-
Solace Labrynth Project	-	11,250	-	-
Total Income	929,527	1,967,172	963,610	1,875,998

Total incoming resources were £2,896,699 (2020 - £2,839,608) of which £1,967,172 was attributable to restricted (2020 - £1,875,998) and £929,527 was attributable to unrestricted (2020 - £963,610).

3 Income from other trading activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Shop Income	60,458	70,727
	60,458	70,727

Income from other trading activities was all attributable to unrestricted funds.

4 Income from investments

	2021	2020
	£	£
Interest - Deposits	948	2,200
	948	2,200

Income from investments was all attributable to unrestricted funds.

5 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Charitable activities 2021	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Independent Refuge	188,926	-	188,926
Funded LDVS Refuge	336,321	248,922	585,243
LDVS	-	710,828	710,828
AP Funding	-	17,433	17,433
GP PILOT	-	38,899	38,899
Children in Need	-	41,358	41,358
Comic Relief	-	110,404	110,404
Early Help Hub	-	120,000	120,000
Women's Lives Leeds	-	328,421	328,421
Staying Safe	-	-	-
Last resort fund	-	-	-
Resident activities	-	-	-
VRU Police Control Room	-	67,615	67,615
Trading expenditure - Shop	47,165	-	47,165
Management & Admin	11,142	-	11,142
Relief worker	-	-	-
Online Chat	-	20,489	20,489
Donations	-	52,104	52,104
MHCLG	-	72,771	72,771
Covid 19 MOJ - LWA	-	39,411	39,411
Covid 19 MOJ - LDVS	-	75,455	75,455
Comic Relief Covid 19	-	37,223	37,223
Designated donation	-	-	-
Leeds Covid Plan LDVS	-	56,400	56,400
Solace Labrynth Project	-	11,536	11,536
	583,554	2,049,269	2,632,823

5 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities (continued)

Charitable activities 2020	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Independent Refuge	210,762	-	210,762
Funded LDVS Refuge	332,086	248,922	581,008
LDVS	-	675,687	675,687
AP Funding	-	30,736	30,736
GP PILOT	-	36,976	36,976
DA CAR	-	36,789	36,789
Children in Need	-	24,400	24,400
Comic	-	26,053	26,053
Early Help Hub	-	103,000	103,000
Women's Lives Leeds	-	522,464	522,464
Staying Safe	-	8,171	8,171
Last resort fund	-	448	448
Resident activities	-	1,890	1,890
VRU Police Control Room	-	10,779	10,779
Trading expenditure - Shop	58,239	-	58,239
Management & Admin	185,522	-	185,522
Relief worker	2,357	-	2,357
	788,966	1,726,315	2,515,281

6 Governance Costs

	2021			2020		
	£	£	£	£	£	£
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Governance	10,134	-	10,134	-	-	-
Audit Fees	4,500	-	4,500	4,200	-	4,200
Legal	18,912	11,752	30,664	14,405	-	14,405
Recruitment Costs	1,505	2,059	3,564	-	-	-
Bank Charges	1,487	91	1,578	1,573	-	1,573
Depreciation	10,963	1,387	12,350	2,062	-	2,062
Accountancy Fees	1,500	-	1,500	1,440	-	1,440
Others	-	-	-	489	-	489
Total	49,001	15,289	64,290	24,169	-	24,169

7 Net income for the year

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):	2021	2020
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	13,521	8,912
Operating lease rentals	2,191	2,166
Property rent	194,620	189,545
Audit remuneration	4,500	4,200

8 Trustees' and key management personnel remuneration and expenses

Trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year (2020: £ Nil).

9 Staff costs and employee benefits

The average monthly number of employees and full time equivalent (FTE) during the year was as follows:

	2021 FTE	2020 FTE
Refuge and aftercare	14	14
Community services	22	20
Social enterprise and funding	2	2
Management and administration	5	6
	43	42

The total staff costs and employee benefits were as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	1,225,009	1,163,351
Social security	94,404	93,927
Defined contribution pension costs	49,747	43,026
	1,369,160	1,300,304

The number of employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of more than £60,000 is as follows:

	2021 Number	2020 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	1	1
	1	1

10 Pension Costs

The company operates various defined contribution schemes. The schemes and their assets are held by independent managers. The pension charge represents contributions due from the company and was £49,747 (2020 - £43,026).

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Office Equipment	Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment	Total
Cost or valuation:			
At 1 April 2020	58,858	45,571	104,429
Additions	3,811	19,342	23,153
At 31 March 2021	62,669	64,913	127,582
Depreciation:			
At 1 April 2020	40,736	39,479	80,215
Charge for the year	8,858	4,664	13,522
At 31 March 2021	49,594	44,143	93,737
Net book value:			
At 31 March 2021	13,075	20,770	33,845
At 31 March 2020	18,122	6,092	24,214

12 Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade debtors	228,717	281,216
Other debtors	2,000	2,946
Other debtor - VRU Police Control Room	15,010	0
Prepayments and accrued income	38,583	39,327
	284,310	323,489

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	22,266	30,666
Other tax and social security	25,337	24,554
Other creditors	5,677	5,633
Accruals and deferred income	407,934	543,424
	461,214	604,277

14 Deferred Income

	2021	2020
	£	£
At 1 April	456,829	492,764
Additions during the year	1,050,678	456,829
Amounts released to income	-1,218,218	-492,764
At 31 March	289,289	456,829

Income has been deferred (all under 1 year) for funds received in 2021 but relates to projects and costs for 2021/22 financial year.

15 Fund Reconciliation

Unrestricted funds

	Balance at 01.04.2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains / (losses)	Balance at 31.03.2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	223,008	929,527	-632,555	-157,468	-	362,512
Designated Funds	328,562	-	-	104,714	-	433,276
	551,570	929,527	-632,555	-52,754	-	795,788

	Balance at 01.04.2019	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains / (losses)	Balance at 31.03.2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	86,241	963,610	-813,135	-13,708	-	223,008
Designated Funds	328,562	-	-	-	-	328,562
	414,803	963,610	-813,135	-13,708	-	551,570

Reserves Policy

In the year the the old reserves policy had been reviewed and a new Reserves Policy has been implemented. As a result, in the year ending 31 March 2021 the previously designated funds were released and replaced with designated funds for projects identified as potential opportunities to further our charitable objectives. Of the £795,788 unrestricted funds carried forward at 31 March 2021, £333,276 has been identified as designated funds and a further £100,000 has been set aside as working capital for our core.

Area	Description	£
1	Working capital for our core	100,000
2	In support of our Risk Assessment - items with medium or high rating	190,000
3	Possible Opportunites	150,000
4	Unexpected or unprecedented Pandemic or other situation	100,000
		540,000

For some years, LWA has been operating a Reserves Policy based upon an approach that is now outdated. The Reserves Policy as included in the Annual Report for year-ended 31 March 2019 is included as Appendix I in the Reserves Policy Booklet.

It is now accepted good practice that a Reserves Policy for a charity should:
- Be based on a detailed understanding of the actual and predicted cash inflows and outflows of the charity;
- Not be based upon holding a set number of months cover on expenditure;
- Be integrated with the risk assessment and strategic plans of the charity;
- Not be based upon a closure scenario unless this is considered likely;
- Be regularly reported to and reviewed by the Trustee Board.

The development of a new Strategy has identified a large number of areas where we need to invest in our infrastructure. Added to this, the Needs Research Project has and will continue to identify specific services that we may want to invest in.

15 Fund Reconciliation (continued)

In addition, the unexpected and unprecedented pandemic in 2020 has raised vulnerabilities for the whole charitable sector, along with every sector in the world.

The Board of Trustees want to ensure that our reserves policy considers the above points, along with any unexpected risks. Additionally, should there be any scope for investment we would consider this by a combination of using a contribution of our existing unrestricted reserves and new funding, hence the need to review our Reserves Policy and ensure that it is fit for purpose and conforms to the good practice described above.

As it is highly unlikely that all of the situations described in point 2 above would occur in the same 12-month period, the Trustee Board therefore believes that an adequate range of our unrestricted reserves should be between £400,000 and £470,000. This will cover the scenarios detailed in points 1, 3 & 4, and in the lower range a contribution towards ¼ of the scenario risks in point 2, and in the higher level of the range 2/3 of the risks in point 2.

Restricted funds

	Balance at 01.04.2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains / (losses)	Balance at 31.03.2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Funded LDVS Refuge	-	248,922	-248,922	-	-	0
LDVS	-	661,979	-714,448	52,469	-	0
A P Funding	7,540	9,894	-17,433	- 1	-	0
GP Pilot	-	38,899	-38,899	-	-	0
DA Car	-	-	-	-	-	0
Children in Need	4,039	39,843	-41,403	-	-	2,479
Comic Relief	34,198	120,000	-110,561	-	-	43,637
Early Help Hub	0	120,000	-120,000	-	-	0
Women's Lives Leeds	63,516	317,879	-339,887	-	-	41,508
Staying Safe	3,000	-	-	-	-	3,000
Last Resort Fund	5,243	-	-	-	-	5,243
VRU Police Control Roor	-	67,617	-67,616	-	-	1
Online Chat	-	26,041	-20,489	-	-	5,552
Donations (Ang. Gradens & Res. Act.)	52,888	12,695	-52,104	-	-	13,479
MHCLG	-	72,771	-72,771	-	-	0
Covid 19 MOJ LWA	-	39,411	-39,411	-	-	0
Covid 19 MOJ Partnershi	-	75,455	-75,455	-	-	0
Comic Relief Covid 19	-	38,116	-37,223	-	-	893
Designated Donation	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Leeds Covid Plan LDVS	-	56,400	-56,400	-	-	0
Solace Labrynth Project	-	11,250	-11,536	286	-	0
	170,424	1,967,172	-2,064,558	52,754	-	125,792

15 Fund Reconciliation (continued)

Restricted funds

	Balance at 01.04.2019	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains / (losses)	Balance at 31.03.2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Funded LDVS Refuge	-	248,922	-248,922	-	-	0
LDVS	-	661,979	-675,687	13,708	-	0
A P Funding	-	38,275	-30,735	-	-	7,540
GP Pilot	-	36,976	-36,976	-	-	0
DA Car	7,033	29,756	-36,789	-	-	0
Children in Need	-	28,439	-24,400	-	-	4,039
Comic Relief	-	60,252	-26,054	-	-	34,198
Early Help Hub	-	103,000	-103,000	-	-	0
Women's Lives Leeds	-	585,980	-522,464	-	-	63,516
Staying Safe	-	11,171	-8,171	-	-	3,000
Last Resort Fund	-	5,691	-448	-	-	5,243
Resident Activities	-	5,000	-1,890	-	-	3,110
VRU Police Control Roo	-	10,779	-10,779	-	-	0
Angelou Gardens	-	49,778	-	-	-	49,778
	7,033	1,875,998	-1,726,315	13,708	0	170,424

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Designated funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	33,845	-	-	33,845
Current assets	789,881	433,276	125,792	1,348,949
Current liabilities	-461,214	-	-	-461,214
Total	362,512	433,276	125,792	921,580

	Unrestricted funds 2020	Designated funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	24,215	-	-	24,215
Current assets	803,070	328,562	170,424	1,302,056
Current liabilities	-604,277	-	-	-604,277
Total	223,008	328,562	170,424	721,994

17 Financial commitments

Annual contractual commitments under non-cancellable operating lease on land and building were as follows:

Expiry date	2021	2020
	£	£
Within one year	198,202	189,545
Between two and five years	0	0
	198,202	189,545

18 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions during the year (2020: £ nil).

LWA - Final Accounts 31/3/2021

Final Audit Report 2021-07-30

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