



Berkshire Women's Aid
(Limited by Guarantee)
Report & Financial Statements
31 March 2024

Berkshire Women's Aid Contents

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Berkshire Women's Aid Charity Information

Company number 03081670

Charity number 1050484

Registered office and Operational address Suite 12, Green Park,
100 Longwater Avenue,
Reading
Berkshire
RG2 6GP

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under Charity law, who served during the period up to the date of this report were as follows:

M. Beddall	Chairperson (from 1 July 2023)
M Rice-Jones	Chairperson (until 30 June 2023/resigned 1 May 2024)
D Hunt	
J Cooper	
P Spinks	
K Baddeley	
F Jones	
E O'Kerry	(resigned 5 April 2023)
B Moses-Mulrooney	
E Pedersen	
C Howard	(appointed 5 April 2023)
E Young	
G Hooper	(appointed 17 January 2024)

Key Management Andrea West Chief Executive (resigned 29 May 2023)
Alexandra Simpson Chief Executive (appointed 8 June 2023)

Personnel Nicola Wimble Finance Director
Rachel Murray Director of Operations

Bankers

Barclays Bank plc Leicester LE87 2BB	Nationwide Building Society PO Box 3 5-11 St Georges Street Douglas Isle of Man IM99 1 AS
Metro Bank One Southampton Row London WC1B 5HA	

**Berkshire Women's Aid
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Year ended 31 March 2024**

Solicitors

Field Seymour Parkes
1 London Street
Reading
RG1 4PN

Dexter Montague
105 Oxford Road
Reading
RG1 7UD

Auditor

Edwin Smith
32 Queens Road
Reading
RG1 4AU

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About BWA

Our Vision

BWA is a charity that breaks the cycle of domestic abuse, today and for future generations.

Our Mission

We work with survivors to find immediate routes to safety to recover and rebuild.
We are part of a community tackling the impact of domestic abuse.

CEO Introduction

2023-24 has been a significant year for BWA with change leading to positive activities and outcomes. We have extended our offer into West Berkshire, TUPE-ing staff (Transfer under Protection of Employment) into the organisation and increasing the reach into more rural communities. I was delighted to join the organisation in June 2023 completing a strong senior management team with new roles of Director of Operations and Finance Director. Funding continues to be a significant challenge for BWA and we were thrilled to secure two large grants from The National Lottery and The Masonic Charity in line with our new fundraising strategy which seeks to diversify our income for future sustainability.

Probably our largest accolade to end this year was the announcement that BWA were awarded a new contract with Reading Borough Council to continue providing their key domestic abuse services. We value this relationship and hope to be able to build on the work we have been doing in this community since 1975. Next year sees BWA into its 50th year serving survivors of domestic abuse. All charities seek to end the problems they were

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created to solve. Sadly we have seen no reduction in the need for our help, in fact we see the opposite but we also know this means the work we do in our training sessions and awareness raising is meaningful and we intend to increase this even more in the coming years in line with a developing three year strategy. This report highlights our operational achievements and financial results for the year. We thank all our supporters, staff and volunteers for their tireless commitment and support in 2023/24 and look forward to strengthening relationships into next year and beyond.

Alexandra Simpson
Chief Executive

Our work and Impact

Domestic abuse impacts all genders, age groups and backgrounds across the whole of society; no one is immune from its reach and Berkshire Women's Aid (BWA) works with **all** survivors of domestic abuse. We have seen an increase in survivors with complex needs, emotional distress and housing challenges not to mention an increase in the number of survivors struggling with additional financial pressures and barriers to leaving their perpetrators as a result of the ongoing cost of living crisis.

Every week on average two women across the UK are killed by a partner or ex-partner. BWA staff work holistically with all survivors to address all risks and barriers to finding safe solutions. We work tirelessly in our campaign to raise awareness and ensure anyone who needs our service is able to access it easily. We work closely with partners (including the national charity Women's Aid) to increase awareness of the levels of abuse across the county and nationally, as well as influencing policy-makers through campaigns, attending local Domestic Abuse Boards and participating in Domestic Homicide Reviews.

BWA makes the critical difference to the lives of survivors and their families that we support. Our staff provide one-to-one and group support in all our settings and across our varied projects. In all aspects of our operations, we provide impartial advice and signposting to complementary services including legal/finance/housing/mental health/substance use, and assessment of risk and safety planning. Our staff are frequently told by survivors that they truly believe we have helped save their lives:

"I can't fault you at all, you're everything. You do great work and I know a lot of people like myself appreciate what you do. Thank you for all you have done for me."

"All the support you gave me and you speaking to professionals on my behalf made a big difference."

"I think the support has been amazing, you're actually the only person who understands."

"I feel so much stronger in myself [thanks to BWA], I feel a lot better."

The majority of the charity sector has faced funding challenges in recent years and BWA is no different; however, our new contract with Reading Borough Council (as the incumbent), and project funding from The National Lottery and The Masonic Charity are the beginning of our journey to increased financial resilience for the coming year and years beyond.

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BWA Delivery and Highlights in 2023-24

- Provided vital life changing support to nearly 6000 survivors and their children
- Outreach services, working in the community, supported 623 new clients
- Our children and young people's programmes supported 66 children one-to-one and in group sessions
- BWA received 757 referrals for refuge accommodation and accommodated 60 women and 50 children.
- BWA provide 32 safe accommodation units for survivors from across the country
- Our Helpline received over 4750 individual calls
- 10 Perpetrators experienced a greater focus on behaviour change within our Aim for Change programme, and 20 survivors were supported alongside
- 37 survivors attended BWA Choices programs
- 573 professionals attended BWA Domestic Abuse Training events
- BWA supported 26 men through our Addison Project (male survivors project)
- We supported 33 survivors from the LGBT+ community.

Highlights and key achievements of 2023-24:

- Secured the competitive Reading Borough Council Domestic Abuse Services (Accommodation and Non-Accommodation) contracts until 2027
- Successfully on-boarded team from West Berkshire to extend service delivery in this borough
- Funded Diverse Communities Outreach and Peer Support teams from The National Lottery Better Communities Fund
- Were awarded an in-year Cost of Living Fund by The National Lottery to support additional refuge provision and support services
- Achieved Respect Accreditation with the highest accolades for our Aim for Change perpetrator programme
- Increased reach and impact serving male and LGBTQ+ survivors historically underrepresented in our service
- Launched a modernised Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Plan creating shared focus for staff and volunteers
- Retained and championed our incredible staff team by consulting and introducing new pay structures with a focus on improving the terms and conditions for those on our lowest salaries
- Delivered the first year of our fundraising strategy diversifying our income with an increased focus on trusts and foundations
- Invested in the training and development of the staff, volunteers and trustees

In March 2023 we set the following objectives for the year ahead:

- To achieve Respect Accreditation for our Aim for Change programme
- To deliver our fundraising strategy to increase community fundraising, trust and foundation grants and government/local authority funding
- To provide an extensive EDI Strategy, Action Plan and Policy

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- To develop new partnerships and areas of growth e.g. training packages
- To diversify funding streams and deliver a balanced budget
- To reduce areas of risk and manage change
- Offer enhanced professional development, training and progression for staff
- To develop new projects that meet the needs of the local community, survivors and address the government agenda (e.g. Domestic Abuse Act 2023 and Perpetrator Work)
- To purchase dispersed accommodation units, establishing accommodation resources that are better placed to meet the needs of diverse communities, including men and LGBTQ+ survivors.

In the last 12 months through focus and hard work we have achieved everything we planned and while dispersed accommodation units have not yet been added to our property portfolio, consultation and specific funding research is underway to ensure we can make the best use of funds entrusted to us from Wokingham Area Housing Society Ltd (WAHS) for this purpose while providing enhanced outcomes for survivors in Wokingham and beyond.

Despite an extremely challenging financial climate for charities, we are buoyed by a strong and passionate team, enthusiastic supporters and partners and wish to be equally as ambitious into 2024-25.

We plan to:

- Secure additional safe accommodation, in the form of dispersed accommodation. In line with the changing needs of survivors we want to be better placed to meet the needs of diverse communities, including men and LGBTQ+ survivors.
- Develop policies and practice in refuge in order to consider SafeLives accreditation for our refuge services in addition to outreach/IDVA.
- Develop and embed new services including Volunteer Befriender Service, Peer Support, Helpline Plus and Policy Support/Training Offer.
- Further develop our EDI Strategy, Action Plan and Policy
- Develop new partnerships and areas of growth e.g. training packages
- Continue to diversify funding streams by reaching new funders
- Deliver our 3 Year Financial Plan and further develop the BWA Strategy 2024-27
- Offer additional professional development, training and areas of progression for staff
- To develop new projects that meet the needs of the local community and survivors (e.g. Children & Young People work, Aim for Change perpetrator programme, Choices and Volunteer Befriender Service)
- Influence policy-makers and the government agenda

Summary of BWA's current Services

BWA offers a range of services and domestic abuse provision across the Reading Borough, Bracknell Forest, Wokingham Borough and West Berkshire areas. All BWA activities are underpinned by a set of values adopted by the Charity's volunteers, staff, management and trustees:

- **Welcoming and empowering**
- **Places of safety**
- **We do not judge**

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- **Trust**
- **Equality**
- **Raising awareness**

Helpline

Our Helpline is the single point of entry for BWA services and operates 24 hours per day, seven days a week. The helpline offers information, signposting and support to a wide range of callers including those experiencing domestic abuse, calling on behalf of a friend or family member, or professionals. Experienced call handlers support callers from out of the area, as well as those from the local authority areas where BWA is commissioned to provide support.

Refuge

Our Refuges provide a safe place for survivors of domestic abuse and their children and have been at the centre of BWA services since 1975. We have five refuges across Berkshire which are able to accommodate up to 32 women and 66 children. In Reading, four of the refuge spaces are dedicated specialist provision for women and children from an Asian background supported by a specialist worker.

BWA refuges provide a safe, confidential home where survivors can feel safe and have time and space to make informed choices and decisions about their future. Staff work directly with survivors via a key-working program to provide emotional and practical support. They can assist with safety planning, managing finances, housing, legal support, accessing work, education or training, or health needs. They also give support with children's needs, including education and their health and well-being.

We expect to add dispersed housing provision to our accommodation offer in the coming financial year. This accommodation will support survivors for whom shared accommodation is not appropriate.

Resettlement

Moving out of refuge can be a challenging time for women and their families. BWA's resettlement service offers survivors a stepping stone between the supported environment of the refuge and independent accommodation. Resettlement is tailored to individual needs and may include practical tasks involved in such a move. Local authorities have been supportive in helping us resettle survivors and their children thus enabling us to free up spaces for new clients fleeing abuse.

Aim for Change

Aim for Change is a 26 week program promoting changes in the behaviour of those who perpetrate abuse towards a current or former intimate partner. Taking a psychoeducational approach to program delivery, the intervention is grounded in the stages of change model and draws on motivational interviewing to enable participants to raise their awareness and understanding of domestic abuse and reduce their abusive behaviour. Integrated survivor support is in place to monitor safety and risk for those associated with the participant, providing an independent source of support and psychoeducational sessions to survivors.

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Aim for Change is divided into two phases. The first phase consists of an 'early intervention' and is designed to enable BWA staff to work with individuals who have yet to acknowledge the abuse, incorporating readiness to change and awareness raising. If an individual has acknowledged abusive behaviour at the conclusion of the first phase, they are assessed for suitability to progress to the second phase that focuses more on behavioural changes.

Outreach/IDVA Support

BWA Outreach/IDVA services offer support to those experiencing domestic abuse in the community. The support consists of risk assessment, safety planning, emotional support and advocacy. BWA provides those experiencing abuse with information about legal and civil remedies, housing, finances and benefits, signposting or making referrals to specialist support where required. BWA also provides support at court, attendance at child protection proceedings and other meetings as needed by the survivor. BWA attends Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) meetings.

Choices

BWA Choices Programme is a psychoeducational programme that looks at the dynamics of domestic abuse and how the elements of power and control can affect our minds as well as our bodies. The group is open to survivors who have been affected by abuse by a spouse or a family member, either currently or in the past.

The Choices Programme covers the following themes:

- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- How domestic abuse affects the survivor's confidence and self-esteem
- How domestic abuse affects children and young people
- Recognising controlling behaviours at an early stage in a relationship
- The impact of domestic abuse on beliefs
- Rebuilding damaged self-confidence and self-esteem

Children and Young People Programmes

BWA recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognised children as survivors in their own right and BWA has designed and delivered services to meet this need.

BWA offer children and young people a safe environment in which they can share experiences and develop a better understanding of domestic abuse, its effects and importantly how they can keep themselves safe. BWA has provided tailored support either individually or in groups for over 10 years for children and young people and understands the impact on this group. Our programmes were well established by the time The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognised children as survivors of domestic abuse in their own right.

Expect Respect

Women's Aid 'Expect Respect' programme focuses on sessions regarding healthy relationships with children and young people aged five and over. We work with children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse, with engaging and age-appropriate activities that aim to resolve conflicts, safety plan and enhance their self-esteem tackling issues of domestic abuse in a safe and contained way.

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Domestic Abuse Recovery Together (DART)

Developed by the NSPCC, the DART program works with children aged 7-14 and their parent to provide them with a safe space and the skills to speak to each other about domestic abuse, learn to communicate and rebuild their relationship.

Multi-Agency Training

BWA provides specialist domestic abuse multi-agency training and/or briefing sessions in partnership with the RBC/BFC/WBC councils and other statutory and voluntary agencies.

Training undertaken with partners has included BWA Services, Domestic Abuse, Introduction to Coercive Control, Understanding Domestic Abuse Perpetrators, DASH and MARAC Training, Domestic Abuse in the Workplace and Cut it Out Training (DA Awareness)

Our Supporters

Thank you to all supporters in 2023-24. Your support changes and saves lives.

We receive various grants from many funders and supporters, some of which are listed here:

The Earley Charity	Greenham Trust	Microfocus
Garfield Weston	NHS Berkshire West	Reading Women's Self Defence Team
Reading Borough Council,	Mental Health Inequalities Fund	Connect Reading
Bracknell Forest Council	RBC Small Grants	Proctor and Gamble
West Berkshire Council	Co-operative Local Community Fund	Ultima
Wokingham Borough Council	M&G Local Community Grant	EES Group
National Lottery Better Communities Fund	Wokingham Area Housing Society	Diversified Ltd
National Lottery Cost of Living Fund	Blandy & Blandy	Bucklebury Plant Sale
Masonic Charity Foundation	Osborne Clarke	Pangbourne Art Café
Nationwide,	Pepsico	Reading Half Marathon
Berkshire Community Foundation	Verizon	Wokingham Lions
Inner Wheel Club of Maiden Erlegh	Cisco	Berkshire Motor Show
NatWest Circle Fund	Waitrose/John Lewis	Redlands WI
SafeLives	Involve	The Big Give
	Bracknell Mayor's Charity	

Berkshire Women's Aid Trustees Report Year ended 31 March 2024 Detailed Statements

The Trustees and Senior Management Team present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

Reference and administrative information set out on pages 3 & 4 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the memorandum and articles of association and the 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 (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Structure, Governance and Management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19 July 1995 and registered as a charity on 25 June 1975.

The company was established under a memorandum of association, which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

The Trustees are also the Directors and the report is also the Directors' Report required by section 417 of the Companies Act 2006.

Trustees delegate the day to day management and responsibility to the Chief Executive who is supported by the Finance Director who ensures the ongoing financial viability of the Charity and a Director of Operations who oversees all aspects of operations/delivery with a small team of Operational Managers.

The CEO, Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees followed the procedures advised by the Charity Commission before making appointments for positions. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the Charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the Charity are set out in note 8 of the financial statements.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

Trustees are recruited through advertisements placed in local volunteer bureaux, social media, via the BWA website and by potential Trustees expressing their interest by making direct contact with BWA. Potential Trustees are requested to speak with the Chair and submit a written resume of their career and interests for consideration by the Board of Trustees. Following an interview by a panel of at least two Trustees and reference checking including a DBS check, suitable applicants are invited to attend one board meeting as an observer and then complete relevant paperwork and an induction. After the first meeting and if the Board is unanimous, the new trustee is elected on to the Board at the next meeting.

Trustees are not appointed by anyone outside the charitable company. Trustees adhere to BWA policies and procedures for staff and volunteers.

BWA is a member of the Women's Aid Federation of England (WAFE).

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Trustees Report
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Induction and Training for Trustees

All Trustees receive a programme of induction, co-ordinated by the senior management team upon appointment. A Trustee Induction Pack is kept up to date and forms the basis of this induction.

The induction includes a welcome and introduction to the Board and also an explanation of functions and services within BWA.

New Trustees are required to read the trustee guidance on the Charity Commission website and access other digital training materials regarding the role and responsibilities of a Charity Trustee and information specifically regarding domestic abuse.

Mandatory training for Trustees includes safeguarding (adult and children) and equality and diversity. Additional training is offered by Involve to the Board throughout the year.

Remuneration

Currently, the key management personnel team consists of three staff including, the Chief Executive, Finance Director and Director of Operations. The combined annual salaries including pensions and benefits for these key personnel is £184,625. Individual salaries are reviewed after each appraisal annually, although the Charity cannot guarantee an annual pay review and any salary increase is based on available funding, achievement of targets and operational performance. An extensive and detailed pay scale and salary review was conducted this year by the senior team and signed off by the Board.

Staffing

The BWA staff team is made up of 20 full time and 21 part time members of staff. We currently have a number of volunteers who undertake specific projects or areas of work, with further volunteers in training. Additionally, 5-6 times a year, teams of 10-15 volunteers help with specific projects such as clearing gardens or painting and decorating in refuges as part of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes with local businesses and our charity partners.

Preparation, selection, vetting and vigilant maintenance are all central to our safer recruitment policy with all senior managers undertaking the Safer Recruitment Training. All of our staff, students and volunteers are screened before commencing employment or volunteering with us. This includes DBS checks and taking up references from former employers; proof of identity and ability to work is additionally sought from candidates prior to interview along with relevant training/ education/ qualification certificates. Our recruitment policy and volunteer policy are updated annually to ensure all recent legislation and guidance is followed.

Pre-planned interview questions with an interview panel of two members of staff are used to access the knowledge, insight and suitability of a candidate.

Berkshire Women's Aid Trustees Report Year ended 31 March 2024

All volunteers, students and staff have to complete an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before they can commence their duties and they have to undertake comprehensive safeguarding training along with our introduction to domestic abuse training.

Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

The mission, vision and objectives of the Charity are summarised in the BWA Memorandum of Association. BWA assists women, men and their children who are in necessitous circumstances and, in particular, those women and their children who have suffered from abuse or maltreatment in their homes.

The Trustees refer to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charitable aims and objectives and in planning future BWA operations and activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities and new projects will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

The Charity furthers its charitable purposes for the public benefit by providing a range of services to enable people experiencing domestic abuse to make positive choices about their future and to rebuild their lives.

Risk Review

BWA has a comprehensive Risk Register that is reviewed regularly at Board Meetings. The Risk Register covers governance, operations, financial aspects, people management, legal and external factors (e.g. government policy) and complements the Business Continuity Plan.

Risk to clients is managed through relevant policies including Health & Safety Policy, Safeguarding (adults and children), and the BWA Code of Conduct. Risk is also managed through monthly supervision and case management.

The senior team monitor financial risk by reviewing income and expenditure in the management accounts on a monthly basis as well as cash flow to ensure the Charity can meet its commitments as they fall due. Regular budget reforecasting allows tracking to ensure the Charity is looking ahead at its financial stability providing a longer term picture. The income and expenditure, funding and financial risk is explored thoroughly at Board meetings every other month allowing strategy and actions to be revised if required.

The BWA risk register identifies all key risks and how these are being managed.

Financial Review

BWA has been under financial pressure for the last few years but we have put a robust three year financial plan in place to monitor progress towards a return to surpluses. There has been an intended adjustment in the agenda for BWA to access grant funding from new trusts and foundations and the Trustees have invested in dedicated bid-writers to support with this area of development. Different funding streams have been essential to ensure we can continue to deliver the diversity of projects BWA is committed to providing to survivors and their families.

Berkshire Women's Aid Trustees Report Year ended 31 March 2024

The statement of financial activities shows that the total incoming resources decreased to £1,598,508 while total resources expended (before losses on defined benefit scheme) increased to £1,627,810 plus gains and losses of £35,415 resulting in a deficit of £64,717 including transfers and restricted funds. The deficit of income over expenditure on unrestricted funds was £65,935.

BWA's principal funding sources are Local Authority contracts to provide refuge and outreach services. This income is supplemented by donations and restricted grants.

The inflationary cost of living and increase in energy prices has had a significant impact on our costs across our refuges and other services which was not matched in the contracts from our local authorities, thus putting financial pressure on the organisation and leading to our operational deficit.

Income and expenditure for all services are continuously monitored and we take all possible steps to control our costs so that we can reach the widest number of clients possible.

BWA has a defined benefit pension scheme with the Social Housing Pension Scheme (SHPS) which was closed to new members in 2010. This is a multi-employer scheme with a valuation at the last formal actuarial valuation date 30 September 2020 revealing a shortfall of assets compared with the value of liabilities for the whole scheme of £1,560 million. The actuary has set a deficit contribution plan for all members to which BWA makes its share of payments.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have set a Reserves Policy to ensure there is no disruption of Berkshire Women's Aid (BWA) services in the event of an unforeseen reduction in income or increase in expenditure. We also believe the Reserves Policy is sufficiently prudent to mitigate major financial risks.

The Trustees have determined that free reserves should be maintained at a level sufficient to cover continued service delivery for 6 months of half the activity of the Charity.

At 31 March 2024 free reserves were £442,148.

The reserves policy requires free reserves of £487,799.

At 31 March 2024 the Trustees recognise that BWA falls short of its Reserves Policy by £45,651. If the provision for the defined benefit pension scheme liability were to be removed from these calculations, free reserves would increase by a further £228,028, leaving the Charity in excess of its reserves policy by £182,677.

Reserves are monitored at every Board Meeting and a 3 year financial plan is in place to target replenishing reserves by 2026. Trustees are collectively confident that given the organisation's structure and statutory contract durations we have a prudent approach.

The Reserves Policy is reviewed at least every three years along with the Charity's portfolio of owned properties to ensure our commitments and obligations are met over the longer term.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Trustees Report
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Investment Policy

The Trustees, having regard to the liquidity requirements of operating BWA, have kept available funds in interest-bearing deposit accounts.

Restrictions on Distribution

The memorandum of association prohibits the distribution of the income and property of the charitable company to the members. Upon dissolution or winding up of the company, the assets shall be given or transferred to some similar institution or institutions having objects similar to the charitable company.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the directors 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 these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Trustees Report
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Auditor

Edwin Smith were re-appointed as the Charity's auditors and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 25 September 2024 and signed on their behalf by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Beddall', written over a horizontal line.

M Beddall – Chair

Berkshire Women's Aid

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Berkshire Women's Aid as at 31 March 2024

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Berkshire Women's Aid (the "Charity") for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows 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 FRS 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 charity'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 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 12 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, including the trustees' 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.

Berkshire Women's Aid

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Berkshire Women's Aid (continued) as at 31 March 2024

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

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 trustees' report.

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 trustees' report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; 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.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement [set out on page 18) the trustees 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 charity 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.

Berkshire Women's Aid

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Berkshire Women's Aid (continued) as at 31 March 2024

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

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the company.

Our approach was as follows:


- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the Charity and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council and UK taxation legislation.
- We obtained an understanding of how the Charity complies with these requirements by making enquiries with management and those charged with governance. We corroborated our enquiries through our review of the Trustees' meeting minutes.
- We assessed the susceptibility of the financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur by considering the key risks impacting the financial statements and documenting the controls that the Charity has established to address risks identified, or that otherwise seek to prevent, deter or detect fraud. In our assessment we considered the risk of management override. Our audit procedures included testing manual journals on a sample basis and those journals where there is an increased risk of override, and an assessment of segregation of duties
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of noncompliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

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.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Berkshire Women's Aid
(continued)
as at 31 March 2024

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and the regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Charity's trustees 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 Charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Edwin Smith

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

32 Queens Road
Reading
RG1 4AU

Dated 8 October 2024
Edwin Smith is eligible to act as auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Berkshire Women's Aid
Statement of Financial Activities
Year ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	Note	£	£	£	£
<u>Income:</u>					
Donations	2	95,440	2,500	97,940	687,155
Income from charitable activities	4	1,198,797	272,257	1,471,054	1,268,896
Investment income	3	14,425	15,089	29,514	6,451
Total income		1,308,662	289,846	1,598,508	1,962,502
<u>Expenditure:</u>	5				
Cost of raising funds		147,206	-	147,206	109,537
Cost of charitable activities		1,191,976	288,628	1,480,604	1,411,166
Total expenditure		1,339,182	288,628	1,627,810	1,520,703
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers		(30,520)	1,218	(29,302)	441,799
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	21	(35,415)	-	(35,415)	(32,556)
Gain on disposal of property		-	-	-	299,617
Transfers between funds	17	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/Net movement in funds		(65,935)	1,218	(64,717)	708,860
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		2,169,027	632,065	2,801,092	2,092,232
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		2,103,092	633,283	2,736,375	2,801,092

The statement of financial activities complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006 and includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2024

		2024		2023	
	Note	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	9		1,660,944		1,674,149
Current assets					
Debtors	10	373,833		42,200	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,564,453		1,606,686	
		<u>1,938,286</u>		<u>1,648,886</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(362,974)		(147,658)	
Net current assets/(liabilities)			1,575,312		1,501,228
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	13		(271,853)		(142,156)
Provisions for liabilities					
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	14		(228,028)		(232,129)
Total net assets			<u><u>2,736,375</u></u>		<u><u>2,801,092</u></u>
Income funds of the Charity					
Restricted funds	17		633,283		632,065
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds	17	2,103,092		2,130,748	
Designated funds	17	-	2,103,092	38,279	2,169,027
			<u><u>2,736,375</u></u>		<u><u>2,801,092</u></u>

The charitable 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. No member of the company has deposited a notice, pursuant to section 476 requiring an audit of these accounts under the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors (trustees) acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the company keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The accounts were approved by the Board on 25 September 2024.

Director/Trustee – M Beddall



Company Registration No. 03081670

Berkshire Women's Aid
Statement of Cash Flows
Year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:		(38,206)	367,360
Net cash provided/(used) by operating activities		(38,206)	367,360
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Interest from investments		29,514	6,451
Proceeds from disposal of tangible fixed asset		-	312,235
Purchase of freehold property		-	(376,432)
Net cash provided by investing activities		29,514	(57,746)
Cash flows from financing activities:			
Repayments of borrowing	19	(33,541)	(32,138)
Net Cash used in financing activities		(33,541)	(32,138)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(42,233)	277,476
Cash and equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,606,686	1,329,210
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		1,564,453	1,606,686
Net income/(expenditure) for the year (as per the statement of financial activities)		(64,717)	708,860
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation charges		13,205	19,205
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed asset		-	(299,617)
Interest from investments		(29,514)	(6,451)
(Increase) / decrease in debtors		(331,633)	1,061,459
Increase / (decrease) in creditors and provisions		374,453	(1,116,096)
Net cash provided from operating activities		(38,206)	367,360
Analysis of cash and equivalents			
Cash in hand	19	1,564,453	1,606,686
Total		1,564,453	1,606,686

Berkshire Women's Aid

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation

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 to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Berkshire Women's Aid meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The Trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

Fund Accounting

- Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the objectives of the Charity
- Designated funds are 'unrestricted' funds allocated by the Trustees for particular purposes.
- Restricted funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes.

Income

Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether capital or revenue grants, is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

Donations and other income

Donations and other income are recognised when they become due and credited to the statement of financial activities. Any donations received for specific time restricted purposes are carried forward as deferred income and matched with related expenditure.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024
1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Interest receivable

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.

Expenditure

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

Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings within the statement of financial activities to one of the following headings:

- **Costs of raising funds**
The direct costs of fundraising and publicity activities (see below).
- **Expenditure on charitable activities**
The direct and associated support costs of providing refuge accommodation to women and children and community outreach/IDVA support to people who have experienced domestic violence and abuse.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Grants payable are payments made to third parties in the furtherance of the charitable objects of the Charity. In the case of unconditional grants, they are accrued once the recipient has been notified of the grant award. The notification gives the recipient a reasonable expectation that they will receive the one year or multi-year grant. Grant awards that are subject to the recipient fulfilling performance conditions are accrued as the performance conditions are met.

Allocation of support and governance costs

Expenditure is allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. These costs have been allocated between the cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. Costs of generating funds includes the cost of bid-writing consultants and an allocation of the payroll costs of a small number of staff working on fundraising and the submission of bids. The allocations vary between 10% and 100%.

Costs are identified relating to the governance of the Charity being the costs associated with constitutional statutory requirements and costs associated with the strategic management of the Charity's activities.

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned between the key charitable activities undertaken in the year on the basis of revenue earned.

Berkshire Women's Aid

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended 31 March 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual assets or groups of similar assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate that their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of fixed assets over their estimated useful lives. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Freehold land is not depreciated

Freehold buildings 50 years straight line

Housing and office equipment 3 years straight line

Computer equipment and software 3 years straight line

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term deposits with a maturity or notice period of twelve months or less at the balance sheet date.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Pension Schemes

Defined contribution scheme

The Charity operates a defined contribution scheme for its employees. Contributions payable to the scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities in the period to which they relate. The assets of the scheme are held separately from the Charity in an independently administered fund.

Defined benefit scheme

The Charity also participates in a multi-employer defined benefit scheme, being the Social Housing Pension Scheme (SHPS), which was closed to new entrants in March 2010 and the scheme was closed to contributions with effect from April 2013

A defined benefit plan defines the pension benefit that the employee will receive on retirement, usually dependent upon several factors including age, length of service and remuneration. A defined benefit plan is a pension plan that is not a defined contribution plan.

The liability recognised in the balance sheet in respect of the defined benefit plan is the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the reporting date less the fair value of the plan assets at the reporting date.

The defined benefit obligation is calculated using the projected unit credit method. Annually SHPS engages independent actuaries to calculate the obligation. The present value is determined by discounting the estimated future payments (recovery plan contributions) using equivalent single discount rates that vary with the duration of the employer liabilities which give the same results as as using a full AA corporate bond (high quality corporate bond) yield curve to discount the employer's obligations over the specific duration of the employer's liabilities ('discount rate').

The fair value of plan assets is measured in accordance with the FRS 102 fair value hierarchy. This includes the use of appropriate valuation techniques.

Remeasurements of the net defined benefit liability, which comprise actuarial gains and losses arising from experience adjustments, the return on scheme assets, changes in actuarial assumptions are charged or credited to the statement of financial activities after net income/expenditure.

The net interest cost is calculated by applying the discount rate to the net balance of the defined benefit obligation and the fair value of scheme assets. This cost and other expenses are recognised in income/expenditure of the statement of financial activities.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

2. DONATIONS

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	91,843	2,500	94,343	63,681
Other grants etc.	3,597	-	3,597	623,474
	95,440	2,500	97,940	687,155

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Bank interest	14,425	15,089	29,514	6,451

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Refuge				
Rent	281,701	-	281,701	251,228
Service charges	36,390	-	36,390	54,235
Reading Borough Council	133,500	-	133,500	107,000
Bracknell Forest Council (BFC)	89,803	-	89,803	78,470
BFC - Safe Accommodation	26,250	-	26,250	-
BFC - VCFS	-	14,847	14,847	-
Bracknell Forest Council IDVA	35,579	-	35,579	10,000
National Lottery COL	-	44,266	44,266	-
Wokingham Borough Council	40,000	-	40,000	40,000
Other	11,180	2,500	13,680	12,074
	654,403	61,613	716,016	553,007
Outreach				
Reading Borough Council (RBC)	359,709	-	359,709	358,792
RBC - Outreach	8,906	-	8,906	-
RBC - Triage	7,500	-	7,500	-
RBC - Small grants	-	500	500	-
Bracknell Forest Council	10,000	-	10,000	82,000
West Berks Council	158,279	-	158,279	71,309
The Earley Charity	-	49,454	49,454	46,621
National Lottery SAFE	-	53,910	53,910	-
Garfield Weston	-	20,000	20,000	5,000
Nationwide	-	32,489	32,489	24,994
	544,394	156,353	700,747	588,716
Children's Services				
Masonic Charitable Foundation	-	34,943	34,943	-
The Fairhill Foundation	-	-	-	108,840
RBC - Small grants	-	4,998	4,998	-
Berkshire West Mental Health Inequalities Fund	-	5,000	5,000	-
	-	44,941	44,941	108,840
Core Services				
Involve Community Grant	-	-	-	18,333
Other	-	9,350	9,350	-
	-	9,350	9,350	18,333
Total	1,198,797	272,257	1,471,054	1,268,896

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

5. EXPENDITURE

	Cost of raising funds	Refuge	Outreach	Children's services	Governance costs	Support costs	Total	2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff training	-	3,904	4,730	240	-	3,096	11,970	16,693
Volunteer costs	-	-	-	-	-	378	378	128
Other staff costs	-	584	2,084	989	-	28,592	32,249	20,967
Grants to institutions	-	-	275	-	-	3,750	4,025	-
Provision of housing services	-	153,072	18,332	804	-	47,439	219,647	212,369
Rent and property costs	-	54,197	-	-	-	31,512	85,709	65,064
Premises and offices costs	-	20,138	13,118	2,111	-	72,080	107,447	134,856
95% payroll and support costs (including fundraising costs)	147,206	177,956	422,924	55,114	30,124	294,899	1,128,223	1,032,101
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	13,205	13,205	19,205
Professional advice	-	-	-	-	-	6,996	6,996	6,162
Finance cost – pension deficit	-	-	-	-	-	10,191	10,191	6,066
Audit and accounts	-	-	-	-	7,770	-	7,770	7,092
	147,206	409,851	461,463	59,258	37,894	512,138	1,627,810	1,520,703
Allocation of overheads		237,220	259,278	15,640		(512,138)	-	-
Allocation of governance costs		17,553	19,184	1,157	(37,894)		-	-
Total expenditure	147,206	664,624	739,925	76,055			1,627,810	1,520,703
2023 expenditure	109,537	616,236	691,491	103,439			1,520,703	

Auditor's remuneration comprises audit fees of £6,180 (2023: £5,868) and accountancy services of £1,520 (2023: £1,224).

Of the total expenditure, £1,376,787 was unrestricted (2023: £1,142,580) and £251,023 was restricted (2023: £251,023).

Berkshire Women's Aid

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2024

6. TAXATION

The company is a registered Charity. It has no liability to corporation tax on bank interest received on its charitable activities.

7. TRUSTEES AND RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Trustees were not paid and did not receive any benefits from employment with the Charity in the year (2023: £nil).

There were no reimbursements of expenses to Trustees during the year (2023: £nil).

There were no related party transactions with trustees although a close relative has been employed (ended during the year) at normal rates of pay for the position in charity. (2023: £nil).

8. EMPLOYEES

Employment Costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	925,671	834,211
Social security costs	76,205	70,089
Other pension costs	24,926	21,751
	1,026,802	926,051

Number of employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024	2023
	Number	Number
Refuge	9	9
Outreach	16	16
Children's Services	2	4
Support	14	12
	41	41

The average number of full-time equivalent staff employed during the year was 32 (2023: 31).

No employees received more than £60,000 (but less than £70,000) in the financial year (2023:1).

The key management personnel of the Charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, Finance Director and Director of Operations. The total employee benefits including pension contributions of the key management personnel of the Charity were £184,625. (2023: £164,165). See note 8 for specific details on Trustees.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property	Furniture and equipment	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	1,796,377	53,423	1,849,800
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	(11,368)	(11,368)
At 31 March 2024	1,796,377	42,055	1,838,432
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	122,228	53,423	175,651
On disposals	-	(11,368)	(11,368)
Charge for the year	13,205	-	13,205
At 31 March 2024	135,433	42,055	177,488
Net book value			
At 31 March 2024	1,660,944	-	1,660,944
At 31 March 2023	1,674,149	-	1,674,149

10. DEBTORS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Debtors	17,404	15,691
Prepayments and accrued income	356,429	26,509
	373,833	42,200

Accrued income includes a multi-year grant due over one year £164,733 (2023 nil).

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

11. CREDITORS

Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank loan	35,034	33,539
Trade creditors	27,826	17,333
Taxes and social security costs	28,933	10,089
Other creditors	1,206	574
Accruals	81,974	31,496
Deferred income	188,001	54,627
	362,974	147,658

12. DEFERRED INCOME

Deferred income comprises of restricted grants

	2024	2023
	£	£
Balance at beginning of year	54,627	122,593
Amount released to income in the year	(54,627)	(97,600)
Amount deferred in year	352,734	29,634
Balance at year end (including amounts due after one year)	352,734	54,627

13. CREDITORS

Amounts falling after one year

	2024	2023
Bank loan	107,120	142,156
Deferred income	164,733	-
	271,853	142,156

The bank loan totaling £142,154 at 31 March 2024 is the balance on a commercial mortgage taken out in 2018 for a term of ten years with a fixed rate of interest of 4.32%. The mortgage is secured upon the Charity's freehold property.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

14. PROVISION FOR LIABILITIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	228,028	232,129

The movements in the year regarding the provision are detailed in note 21 on page 42.

15. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	1,660,944	-	1,660,944	1,674,149
Net current assets	777,296	798,016	1,575,312	1,501,228
Creditors falling due after one year	(107,120)	(164,733)	(271,853)	(142,156)
Pension deficit provision	(228,028)	-	(228,028)	(232,129)
	2,103,092	633,283	2,736,375	2,801,092

16. COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

At 31 March 2024 the Charity had a total of future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:

Several of the leases have completed their term, the values included are the current rentals and where leases terminate during the next financial year, the commitment included is the value to the date of termination of the lease.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Expiry date:		
Not later than one year	63,288	71,111
	63,288	71,111

Since the year end the Charity has entered into a non-cancellable operating lease with a one-year commitment of £51,740.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

Movements in restricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Wokingham Area Housing Society Limited	613,481	15,089	(600)	-	627,970
Refuge					
Berkshire Community Foundation	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
Shanti Fund	1,584	-	(351)	-	1,233
National Lottery Cost of Living	-	44,266	(44,266)	-	-
Bracknell Forest Council VCFS	-	14,847	(14,847)	-	-
BCF Surviving Winter	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
Outreach					
The Earley Charity	-	49,454	(49,454)	-	-
Garfield Weston	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
Nationwide Community Grant: Safe Accommodation Worker	-	32,489	(32,489)	-	-
National Lottery SAFE project	-	53,910	(53,910)	-	-
Greenham Trust Community	-	6,000	(6,000)	-	-
RBC Small Grant	-	500	(500)	-	-
Sovereign Network Group Mental Health Fund	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Children's Services					
Masonic Charitable Foundation	-	34,943	(34,943)	-	-
RBC Small Grant	-	4,998	(4,998)	-	-
Berkshire West Mental Health Inequalities Fund	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Resident Wellbeing					
Inner Wheel Resettlement Fund	2,000	2,350	(1,750)	-	2,600
BCF Resettlement Fund	10,000	-	(8,520)	-	1,480
Other	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
	632,065	289,846	(288,628)	-	633,283
Unrestricted Funds					
General funds	2,130,748	1,308,662	(1,374,597)	38,279	2,103,092
Designated fund	38,279	-	-	(38,279)	-
	2,169,027	1,308,662	(1,374,597)	-	2,103,092
Total Funds	2,801,092	1,598,508	(1,663,225)	-	2,736,375

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (CONTINUED)

Purposes of the restricted funds

Shanti Fund

A fund specifically set up to meet the religious and cultural needs of women from BAME communities accessing BWA services.

The Earley Charity

Provided the funds for a senior management role that is targeted to develop our operations teams and key services including refuge accommodation, outreach and specialist projects.

Berkshire Community Foundation

Provided us with a selection of funds this year including play equipment for the garden of a BWA refuge supporting families fleeing domestic abuse. This equipment has been purchased for one of our refuges.

Wokingham United Charities, Tackling Poverty in Wokingham, funded a support service for survivors in the Wokingham Borough to provide additional financial advice, training for staff members and resettlement support through hardship grants and funding household items when living in or moving on from refuge.

Surviving Winter Fund provided vital additional funds during the coldest months to ensure we could maintain our accommodation to the standard of living and comfort we want for all our residents. It helped BWA address many of the challenges we have been facing as a result of increased utility bills.

Inner Wheel Resettlement Fund

To support service users with hardship grants and household items when living in or moving on from refuge.

Garfield Weston

To support dedicated outreach provision with children and young people.

Wokingham Area Housing Society

To provide funding for the acquisition of dispersed refuge accommodation.

Masonic Charitable Foundation

To fund our children and young people's services in schools and across the county in community provision.

Nationwide Community Fund

To support a dedicated outreach worker in the West Berkshire area.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (CONTINUED)

Community Grant: Berkshire West Mental Health Inequalities Fund

Distributed through Reading Voluntary Action: project targeted to extend our mental health and well-being offer to support children and young people across Berkshire in schools previously not reached.

Sovereign Network Group Mental Health Fund

To provide additional groups across Reading and Bracknell for our Choices group work and increasing mental health support for survivors of domestic abuse and their families.

National Lottery

Better Communities Fund to target diverse communities, to increase outreach provision and consistency across the county and develop a new peer support programme after the conclusion of our group delivery.

Cost of Living Fund to support safe accommodation in our refuges and help us manage our increasing energy costs with a particular focus on key support sessions with refuge workers and interpretation facilities when required.

Greenham Trust Community Grant

A donor grant, provided through the Greenham Trust, to support the development of our new outreach services across West Berkshire, helping us reach rural areas.

Reading Borough Council Small Grant

Two specific grants provided: one to support our children and young people provision in Reading schools and one to enable us to deliver additional Choices programmes for survivors, helping support them with historical abuse and develop a peer support aspect of the programme.

Bracknell Forest Council Household Support Fund VCFS Grant

Crisis support fund for refuge residents to access additional funds to enable them to purchase food, furniture, pay utilities and other essential items as needed either while at refuge or as they transitioned to move on/resettlement accommodation. Specialist advice and support provided by the key workers.

DESIGNATED FUNDS

Addison project

The transfer between unrestricted and designated funds relates to the Trustees' decision to undesignate the funds previously allocated to the Addison Project.

Berkshire Women's Aid

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2024

18. LEGAL STATUS OF THE CHARITY

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

19. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Cash- flows £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Cash	1,606,686	(42,233)	1,564,453
Loans falling due within one year	(33,539)	(1,495)	(35,034)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(142,156)	35,036	(107,120)
	(207,833)	33,541	(174,292)
Total	1,398,853	(8,692)	1,390,161

20. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

Defined benefit pension liability

As detailed in note 21 the Charity participates in the Social Housing Pension Scheme which is a multi-employer defined benefit scheme

We were notified in 2021 by the Trustee of the Scheme that it has performed a review of the changes made to the Scheme's benefits over the years and the result is that there is uncertainty surrounding some of these changes. The Trustee is seeking clarification from the Court on these items, and this process is ongoing with it being unlikely to be resolved before the end of 2024 at the earliest. It is estimated that this could potentially increase the value of the full Scheme liabilities by £155m. We note that this estimate has been calculated as at 30 September 2023 on the Scheme's Technical Provisions basis. Until the Court direction is received, it is unknown whether the full (or any) increase in liabilities will apply and therefore, in line with the prior year, no adjustment has been made in these financial statements in respect of this.

Other

There is a possible but uncertain obligation dependent on the outcome of events relating to the potential award of extended contracts in the future. It is anticipated that in the event a liability became a present obligation that a liability of up to £43,882 could arise.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024

21. PENSION SCHEME

The Charity participates in the Social Housing Pension Scheme (SHPS) which was closed to new members in 2010. SHPS offer several pensions structures including a multi-employer defined benefit scheme which provides benefits to some 500 non-associated employers.

A full actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with an effective date of 30 September 2020. This actuarial valuation showed assets of £5,148m, liabilities of £6,708m and a deficit of £1,560m. The estimated debt withdrawal at 30 September 2020 is £1,260m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustees and the participating employers have agreed that additional contributions will be paid, in combination, from all employers. The Charity's contributions are detailed on page 45.

The liability recognised in the balance sheet is the present value of the defined benefit obligation less the fair value of the plans assets at the year-end as detailed below.

PRESENT VALUES OF DEFINED BENEFIT OBLIGATION, FAIR VALUE OF ASSETS AND DEFINED BENEFIT ASSET (LIABILITY)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Fair value of plan assets	991,928	1,012,514
Present value of defined benefit obligation	1,220,356	1,245,043
Surplus (deficit) in plan	(228,428)	(232,529)
Unrecognised surplus	-	-
Defined benefit asset (liability) to be recognized	(228,428)	(232,529)

RECONCILIATION OF THE IMPACT OF THE ASSET CEILING

	31 March 2024
Impact of asset ceiling at start of period	-
Effect of the asset ceiling included in net interest cost	-
Actuarial losses (gains) on asset ceiling	-
Impact of asset ceiling at end of period	-

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

21. PENSION SCHEME (CONTINUED)

**RECONCILIATION OF OPENING AND CLOSING BALANCES OF THE
DEFINED BENEFIT OBLIGATION**

	31 March 2024
	£
Defined benefit obligation at start of period	1,245,043
Current service cost	-
Expenses	3,821
Interest expense	59,279
Contributions by plan participants	-
Actuarial losses (gains) due to scheme experience	(4,151)
Actuarial losses (gains) due to changes in demographic assumptions	(14,198)
Actuarial losses (gains) due to changes in financial assumptions	5,918
Benefits paid and expenses	(75,356)
Liabilities acquired in a business combination	-
Liabilities extinguished on settlements	-
Losses (gains) on curtailments	-
Losses (gains) due to benefit changes	-
Exchange rate changes	-
Defined benefit obligation at end of period	<u>1,220,356</u>

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

21. PENSION SCHEME (CONTINUED)

**RECONCILIATION OF OPENING AND CLOSING BALANCES OF THE
FAIR VALUE OF PLAN ASSETS**

	31 March 2024 £
Fair value of plan assets at start of period	1,012,514
Interest income	49,088
Experience on plan assets (excluding amounts included in interest income) - gain (loss)	(47,846)
Contributions by the employer	53,528
Contributions by plan participants	-
Benefits paid and expenses	(73,356)
Assets acquired in a business combination	-
Assets distributed on settlements	-
Exchange rate changes	-
Fair value of plan assets at end of period	<u>991,928</u>

The actual return on the plan assets (including any changes in share of assets) over the period ended 31 March 2024 was £1,242.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

21. PENSION SCHEME (CONTINUED)

**DEFINED BENEFIT COSTS RECOGNISED IN STATEMENT OF
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**

For the year to 31 March 2024

	£
Current service cost	-
Expenses	3,821
Net interest expense	10,191
Losses (gains) on business combinations	-
Losses (gains) on settlements	-
Losses (gains) on curtailments	-
Losses (gains) due to benefit changes	-
Defined benefit costs recognised in statement of comprehensive income (SoCI)	<u>14,012</u>

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024

21. PENSION SCHEME (CONTINUED)

**DEFINED BENEFIT COSTS RECOGNISED IN OTHER
 COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (OCI)**

For the year to 31 March 2024

	£
Experience on plan assets (excluding amounts included in net interest cost) - gain (loss)	(447,846)
Experience gains and losses arising on the plan liabilities - gain (loss)	4,151
Effects of changes in the demographic assumptions underlying the present value of the defined benefit obligation - gain (loss)	14,198
Effects of changes in the financial assumptions underlying the present value of the defined benefit obligation - gain (loss)	(5,918)
Total actuarial gains and losses (before restriction due to some of the surplus not being recognisable) - gain (loss)	(35,415)
Effects of changes in the amount of surplus that is not recoverable (excluding amounts included in net interest cost) - gain (loss)	-
Total amount recognised in other comprehensive income - gain (loss)	(35,415)

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024

21. PENSION SCHEME (CONTINUED)

ASSETS

	31 March 2024	31 March 2023
	£	£
Global Equity	98,850	18,893
Absolute Return	38,732	10,956
Distressed Opportunities	34,966	30,645
Credit Relative Value	32,501	38,215
Alternative Risk Premia	31,481	1,880
Emerging Markets Debt	12,832	5,437
Risk Sharing	58,059	74,541
Insurance-Linked Securities	5,126	25,560
Property	39,830	43,583
Infrastructure	100,199	115,647
Private Equity	810	
Private Debt	39,030	45,056
Opportunistic Illiquid Credit	38,766	43,316
High Yield	151	3,543
Opportunistic Credit	-	68
Cash	19,573	7,300
Corporate Bond Fund	-	6
Liquid Credit	-	9
Long Lease Property	6,407	30,549
Secured Income	29,619	46,474
Liability Driven Investment	403,688	466,313
Currency Hedging	(395)	1,942
Net Current Assets	1,703	2,581
Total assets	991,928	1,012,514

None of the fair values of the assets shown above include any direct investments in the employer's own financial instruments or any property occupied by, or other assets used by, the employer.

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024

21. PENSION SCHEME (CONTINUED)

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

	31 March 2024	31 March 2023
	% per annum	% per annum
Discount Rate	4.87%	4.89%
Inflation (RPI)	3.19%	3.20%
Inflation (CPI)	2.76%	2.72%
Salary Growth	3.76%	3.72%
Allowance for commutation of pension for cash at retirement	75% of maximum allowance	75% of maximum allowance

The mortality assumptions adopted at 31 March 2024 imply the following life expectancies:

	Life expectancy at age 65 (Years)
Male retiring in 2024	20.5
Female retiring in 2024	23.0
Male retiring in 2043	21.8
Female retiring in 2043	24.4

Berkshire Women's Aid
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
Year ended 31 March 2024

21. PENSION SCHEME (CONTINUED)

OTHER SMALL MULTI-EMPLOYER SCHEME

The Charity also has a much smaller multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 950 non-associated participating employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. The scheme is so small the necessary disclosures as a defined contribution scheme are not considered material. The pension deficit liability of this scheme is £78 (2023 - £168).

DEFINED CONTRIBUTION SCHEME COSTS

The defined contribution scheme contributions for the year total £24,926 (2023: £19,716).

