SOLACE WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales · Charity number 1082450

Details

Other names	CAMDEN WOMEN'S AID
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	03376716
Registered	2000-09-16
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Solace Womens Aid 6 Greenland Place London NW1 0AP
Phone	02076191350
Email	info@solacewomensaid.org
Website	www.solacewomensaid.org

Activities

Objects: FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC, THE RELIEF OF NEED BY THE PROMOTION OF THE PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND SAFETY OF VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC, SEXUAL AND ASSOCIATED ABUSE, IN PARTICULAR WOMEN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND CHILDREN

Activities: THE PROMOTION OF THE PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND SAFETY OF VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC, SEXUAL AND ASSOCIATED ABUSE, IN PARTICULAR WOMEN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND CHILDREN.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, Accommodation/housing
- **Who:** Children/young People, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, Other Defined Groups

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Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£15,815,369	£15,619,146	£2,195,490	306
2024-03-31	£14,385,910	£14,387,744	£1,999,267	266
2023-03-31	£15,155,682	£15,257,322	£2,001,101	280
2022-03-31	£16,361,422	£16,927,412	£2,102,741	297
2021-03-31	£16,265,804	£15,592,165	£2,668,731	266

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Abigail Ampofo		2025-12-10
Alison Ruth McKinlay		2025-07-09
Emily Florence Hutchings		2019-06-27
Hannah Clare Cane		2023-03-30
Jo Michaella Tity Jengo		2023-08-07
Katherine May Couper		2025-07-09
Kerri Hartwell		2022-06-29
Madeline Church		2022-08-05
Meghan Roach		2022-08-05

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SOLACE WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1082450

Accounts



Creating safe and happy futures
Annual Report and Financial Statements
31 March 2025

solacewomensaid.org

Solace Women's Aid is a charity registered in England & Wales.
Charity Number 1082450. Company Number 03376716.

@SolaceWomensAid

solace

“There is a safe, happy future waiting for you, even if you can’t see it right now. Solace taught me that.”

Survivor



What you can find inside.

Why we exist.

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A message from our Chairs and CEO

Last year, we celebrated Solace's fiftieth anniversary – fifty years of women working together to support other women. Fifty years of creating safe and supportive spaces in which women can not only survive, but also rediscover their strength to thrive. Fifty years of pushing back against dangerous stereotypes that numb society to the horrifying realities of violence against women and girls.

We are so proud of our achievements, our pioneering ways of working and the impact we have had. You can see in this report all the work we have done and the amazing commitment of our staff and volunteers – something that always warrants acknowledgement and praise. However any anniversary is bittersweet: after half a century, we cannot help but reflect on the extent to which our services are still so desperately needed. We are growing, but unlike organisations in the corporate world, we do not celebrate a rise in demand. Women and children are still living in fear; men are still abusing, harming and killing women because they are women.

So, while we look back at the immense amount of work we have done, and the many lives we have touched, we never stop thinking about the future. New challenges to our mission and vision emerge every day: new influences, new trends, new types of relationships, new ways of connecting and controlling that can be misused and abused to make others feel small.

Thoughts of the future are the basis of our preventative work with children and young people. Our education programmes continue to teach boys and girls about healthy relationships and the harm of gender stereotypes. In our refuges, we provide counselling, days out and play sessions to build children's confidence and enable their healing – because at Solace, we believe that abuse should never be a barrier to anyone fulfilling their potential.

Our commitment to creating a better world applies to our organisation too. Through innovative equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). We continue to recognise systemic dynamics and reframe narratives within our ways of working. We are breaking down barriers to promotion and leadership within our workforce. We are thinking deliberately about the power of the language we use.

We have over 147 brilliant volunteers, and this number continues to grow and flourish through exciting new opportunities to support survivors. This inspiring group now boasts the amazing survivors who make up our Shadow Board. Far from a box-ticking exercise, the Shadow Board will truly inform our ways of working, ensuring the voice of survivors remains central and runs throughout everything we do.

Alongside our new leadership programmes for women of colour and establishing our Shadow Board, our key achievements in 2024-25, include:

- **Launched our successful 'No More Injury Time' around Euros 2024.**
- **Supported 88 local authorities to undertake the Women's Rough Sleeping Census 2024 to increase the understanding of women's experiences of homelessness.**
- **Launched three new accommodation projects so survivors can continue to reach safety**
- **Began the delivery of our conditional caution pilot with the Metropolitan Police, funded by the Mayor's Office.**
- **Expanded our volunteer programme to over 140 active volunteers supporting survivors**
- **Embedded our psychologically informed framework through staff training developed with a service user advisory group.**

It has been a year of challenge, gratitude and change. As ever, we are honoured to work with the courageous community that is Solace.

Nahar Choudhury, CEO

Hannah Cane and Madeline Church, Interim Chairs of Trustees



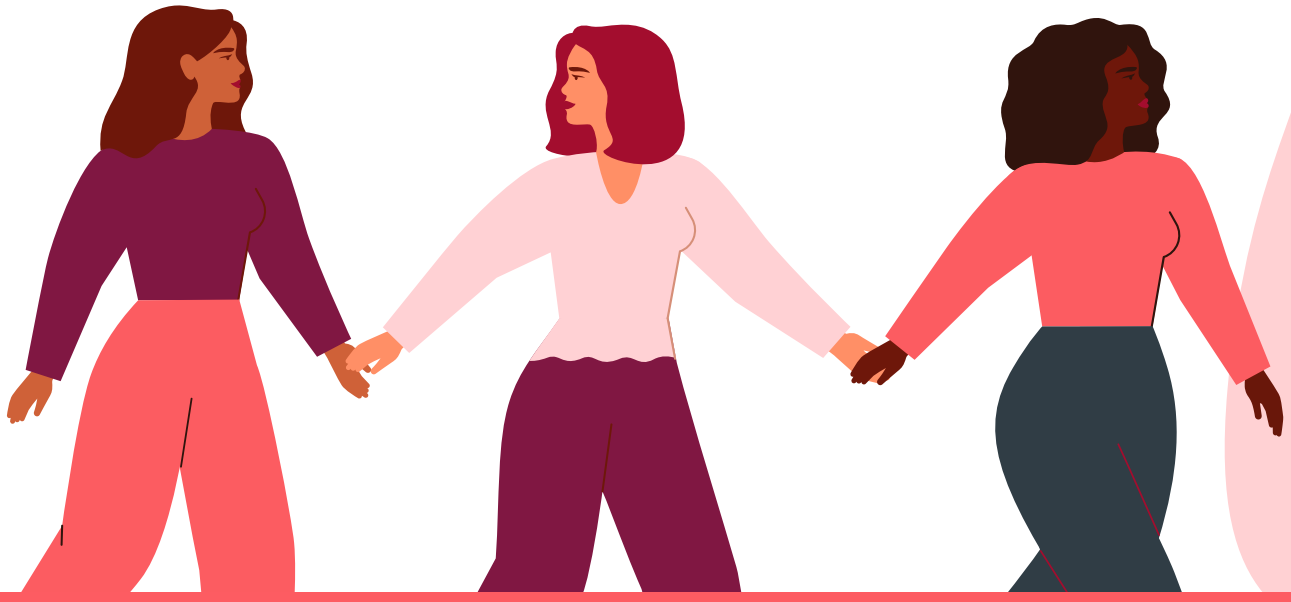
Nahar Choudhury
CEO



Hannah Cane
Interim Chair of Trustees



Madeliene Church
Interim Chair of Trustees



Our year at a glance.

Our work touched the lives of **24,394** people



(2023/24: 18,862)

17,264 adults and children supported in our frontline service of people



(2023/24: 14,435)



We worked with **7,130** people in our prevention service

(2023/24: 4,427)



817 women and children across our 19 refuges and 71 move on spaces

(2023/24: 809)



We raised an income of **£15.6 million** to run our vital services

Our **306** staff members work tirelessly to help survivors





We trained **4,453** people to recognise and respond to abuse

(2023/24: 2,418)



We worked in partnership with **42** organisations to end abuse



Volunteers helped to support survivors through **7,280** hours of their time

93% stated there was a continued need for Solace services

(2023/24: 93%)



89% rated the service as good, very good or excellent

(2023/24: 92%)

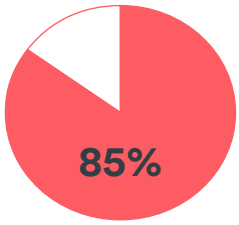




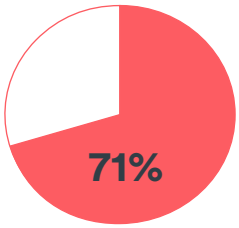
87% of respondents found it easy or very easy to make initial contact with Solace's services

(2023/24: 85%)

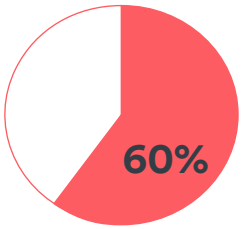
Who we support and their experiences



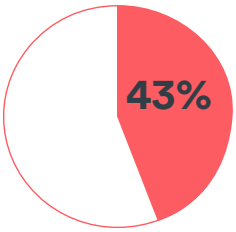
of survivors we support experienced emotional abuse



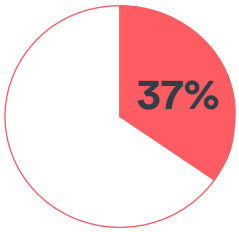
of survivors we support experienced jealous or controlling behaviour



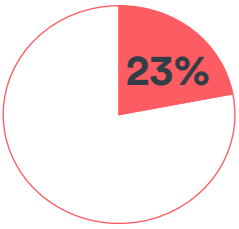
of survivors we support experienced physical abuse



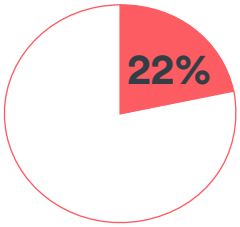
of survivors we support experienced economic abuse



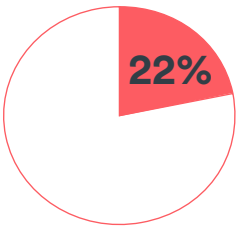
of survivors we support experienced harassment and stalking



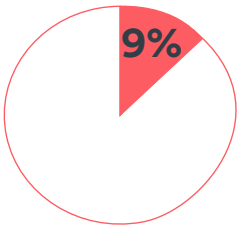
of survivors we support experienced post separation abuse



of survivors we support experienced sexual abuse



of survivors we support experienced tech-facilitated abuse



of survivors we support experienced so called 'honour' based abuse

55% of survivors we supported have children

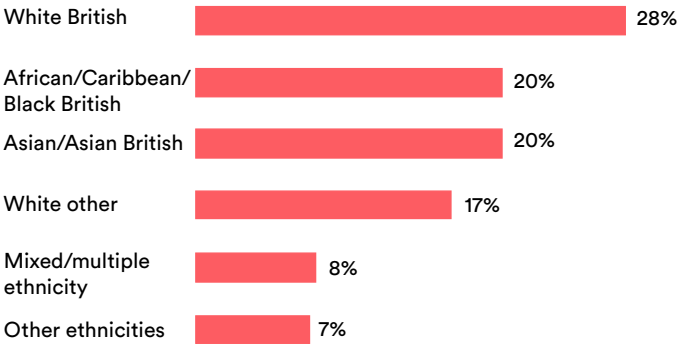
2536 survivors we supported had mental health support needs

34% of survivors we supported have a disability

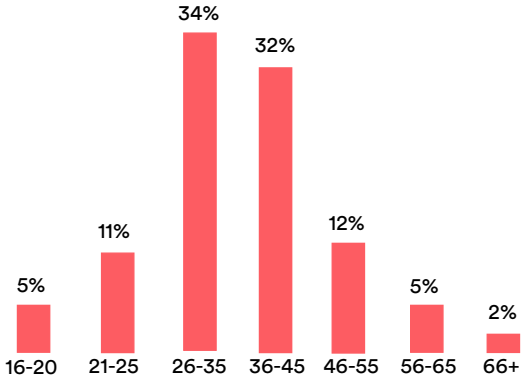
443 women supported (9%) with insecure status 336 with no resource to public funds

116 male survivors were supported through our services

Adults supported in our services

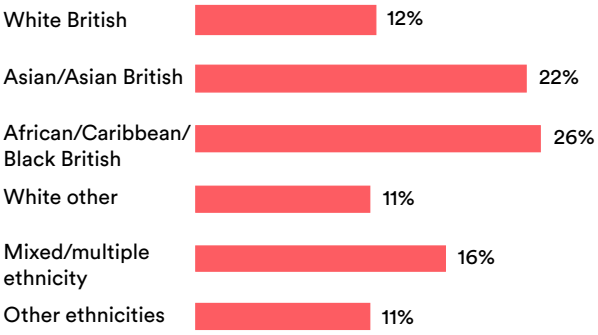


Ethnicity of adults

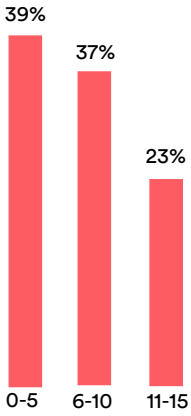


Ages of adults

Children supported in our services



Ethnicity of children



Ages of children



Strategic report

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. The reference and administrative information set out on page 36 forms part of this report. The trustees review the aims, objectives, and activities of Solace each year. This report looks at what Solace has achieved and the outcomes and benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people Solace is established to assist during the reporting period. The review also helps ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

Vision, mission and strategy



Our key objective

The promotion of the physical, emotional, and psychological wellbeing and safety of victims of domestic, sexual, and associated abuse, in particular women, young people and children.



Our vision

A world where everyone is able to live safe and independent lives which are free from gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation.



Our mission

Solace exists to end the harm done through gender-based violence. Our aim is to work to prevent violence and abuse as well as providing services to meet the individual needs of survivors, particularly women and children. Our work is holistic and empowering, working alongside survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse.



Our values

- Feminist and intersectional in our understanding of male violence against women and girls
- Survivor led, trauma informed and empowering
- Diverse, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory to create a fully inclusive environment for staff and service users



"I feel so much better about the future now. It's like I've entered a new phase of life.

Survivor

We are committed to:



Social justice and human rights



Service users having a central voice within the organisation



Working in collaboration with other agencies



Continuous improvement

Our strategic priorities 2022-27

Following the launch of Solace's 2022-27 strategy we have started to work towards our six strategic objectives to drive forward our ambitions of supporting more survivors on their journeys to recovery and beyond. Our six strategic objectives are:

1. Long-term recovery and lasting change
2. Strategic influencing, partnerships and leadership
3. Organisational development and growth
4. Aspirations, education and employment
5. Children and young people
6. Empowerment, engagement and accessibility

> **Solace has given me the skills to notice abuse, so I don't repeat the pattern in the future. They have empowered me as a woman to be strong and capable and as mentioned by my worker 'The AIM is to LIVE, not just EXIST.'**
>
> Survivor

> **Solace is an invaluable service that has completely changed mine and my daughter's life. We were able to grow in confidence as we are safe, no treading on eggshells.**
>
> Survivor



What we achieved this year:
Long term recovery and change

Since our humble beginnings in a single refuge in Camden in 1974, we have known that full recovery from abuse requires a holistic approach and the most effective support will not be the same for everyone. Over the last 50 years of working with thousands of women and children, we have seen the life-changing benefits of our work to survivors by identifying and addressing the range and complexity of their needs. Our services and expert frontline teams support survivors from crisis to recovery, recognising that no one survivor's journey is the same.

Safe accommodation is every woman's right

Our refuges and accommodation services provide safe living spaces while helping women and children receive the psychologically-informed, specialist support they need to address their practical and emotional needs during this highly challenging time. In 24-25 with funding from seven London boroughs, the GLA and MOPAC, we supported 826 women and children across our 19 refuges and 71 move-on spaces across London (23/24: 809). We are proud to have expanded our support for survivors in accommodation through the opening of two new projects:

- Seven new move-on properties are available for survivors leaving London refuges – this project is in partnership with Newlon and funded by the Mayor's Move on Fund.
- A self-contained accommodation project for women with complex needs in Haringey

74%
of survivors in our accommodation said they felt safer following our support
(23/24: 87%)



Advice and advocacy services bring safety to survivors

Whilst our support for survivors started in a refuge, many of the women who receive our life-changing support do so in the community. Solace's dedicated London Advice Line provides a first point of contact for survivors who need support at crisis point in 16 London boroughs. In 2024/25, our advice line answered 7,690 calls from individuals and professionals throughout London to offer free and confidential support on domestic and/or sexual abuse (23/24: 4,063). The line is staffed by trained advocates funded by London Councils and MOPAC.

81%
of survivors in our advice and advocacy services said their advocate was a good listener

Our Community Advice and Support Teams continue to work with survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence in their communities, often supporting those deemed 'high risk' and referred by local multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs). This year we supported 17% more survivors in our advocacy services, recognising the continuing need for our support. We supported 5,827 survivors across seven London boroughs (23/24: 4,990).

Therapeutic services provide space to heal from trauma

Our person-centred, strengths-based counselling and group work supports survivors of domestic abuse and wider VAWG to transition from surviving to thriving. The services operate within communities in Islington, Waltham Forest and via the pan-London Ascent Advice and Counselling service, for which we provide services to East, North East and South East London.

We also continue to deliver counselling to women and children in our refuges through MOPAC funding, helping 132 survivors to heal, empowering them to recover.

> **Solace helped me reconnect with my emotions and instincts as well as those of my children.**
>
> Survivor in a Solace refuge

Supporting sexual violence survivors

Our North London Rape Crisis Service's free and anonymous helpline is open daily to provide specialist emotional support and confidential information to women and girls aged 13 and above. The Rape Crisis Service has 11 Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAS), all trained to address the needs of these survivors.

With funding from MOPAC, we were able to answer 1,228 calls on our helpline (23/24: 1,323), provide advocacy to 351 women who experienced sexual violence (23/24: 215) and support, and offer life changing therapeutic support to 401 women through 1:1 counselling or group work (22/23: 269). As we continue to strive to improve our support, in 2024-25 our North London Rape Crisis Service has piloted the use of EMDR therapies to support survivors to be ready for a more traditional therapy process during their long-term recovery. We also piloted new groups for survivors to access after they have completed their therapy, as sources of peer support in the long term.

77%

of survivors we supported said it improved their understanding of their rights

(23/24:78%)

Our psychologically informed framework

Over the past year, we have fully embedded a psychologically informed framework (PIF) across all services to provide a service culture that is reflective, thoughtful and compassionate for survivors. A staff working group helped embed the approach through the development of mandatory training on psychological approaches to working with service users and each other. This training was developed in collaboration with our PIF service user working group and in 2024/25 90 colleagues were trained. The framework consists of methods that support a better understanding of connections between thoughts, emotions and behaviour.

> **I feel safer now. Solace is someone you can trust and if anyone is in the same situation as me, I definitely recommend that they reach out to the team.**
>
> Survivor

What we achieved this year:
Empowerment, Engagement and Accessibility

At Solace, core values of being survivor-led, trauma-informed and empowering have steered our organisation for the last 50 years. In 2024/25, this has meant developing services to support survivors from intersectional backgrounds and focusing on support for those women who are not well served by existing services. We remain committed to embedding survivors' voices in our decision making, ensuring survivors are part of a continued approach to raising awareness of violence against women and girls.

Our new Shadow Board

Whilst our organisation looks different to how it started 50 years ago, we remain committed to survivors' voices being at the heart of what we do. To honour this, we have gathered a group of incredible experts by experience to form Solace's very first Shadow Board which honours this commitment. Each expert member of the Shadow Board has experienced VAWG in various forms, at various stages of their lives. They are united in helping Solace bring about the day when no woman needs to fear male violence. Shadow Board members will input into organisational decisions; they will inform the work that we do, from service delivery to the language used in our communications; and they will be a touch point for all Solace staff to ensure we never lose sight of the communities for whom we exist.

'No more injury time' campaign

During the men's Euros 2024, we held up a spotlight to the concerning fact that reports of domestic abuse rise by 38% when the England men's team loses at a major tournament. To raise awareness of this issue and the support available to survivors of domestic abuse, we launched our No More Injury Time campaign, developed by Jungle Creations and in collaboration with FourNine and NCDV. The campaign achieved 96 pieces of coverage with a combined reach of 1.75 billion and increased traffic to our website by 50%. We were also delighted that the campaign was awarded Best Charity/Not for Profit Campaign at the Global Social Media Awards and a Silver Award at the Drum Social Media Awards.

170

pieces of coverage secured, including Sky News, Woman's Hour and the Independent

Our new ambassadors and expert advisers

In the second year of our survivor ambassador programme, this group of incredible women who have all accessed Solace's services supported our work by featuring in our Euros 2024 campaign. They spoke at our All Staff Conference, shared their experiences at events for 16 Days of Activism and have featured in several press pieces. We were also thrilled to recruit three new survivor ambassadors this year.

We are also delighted to have appointed several new charity ambassadors this year: Jade Blue, who is vocal about the failings within the CJS for sexual violence survivors; Yvonne Roberts, an award-winning Observer columnist, Betsy Stanko, academic, and joint architect of Operation Soteria Bluestone and Judy Kawaguchi who leads fundraising organisation e-cubed.

We are also delighted that Professor Katrin Hohl, joint academic lead of Operation Soteria Bluestone and Independent Advisor to the UK Government on criminal justice responses to sexual violence, is now supporting Solace as an expert advisor alongside specialist expert advisors who support our trustee sub-committees.

Our thanks go to all these women for their voluntary commitment to ending male violence against women and girls, alongside our trustees and wider expert advisors.

Supporting women experiencing multiple disadvantage

Solace specialises in providing vital support to the most vulnerable women in London, including those experiencing multiple disadvantages. Through our WiSER Project, three Housing First projects in Westminster, Islington and our new pan-London Ruby Project funded by the Oak Foundation, our new complex needs accommodation service and our multiple disadvantage refuge, we have supported 167 people who are frequently excluded from mainstream services and/or find it hard to engage with support (23/24:137). We are proud to have fully launched our pan-London Inclusive Housing First service, the Ruby Project, which has supported 14 women in 2024/25 and aims to increase access to Housing First support for women from the global majority.

75%

of survivors in our multiple disadvantage services said that Solace helped them to understand processes and access further support



Survivor stories

"The support I was getting just gave me this overwhelming sense of security and safety. I felt like I had someone there with me, every step of the way. The crisis intervention after I fled was incredible. I remember those first four to six weeks were just filled with so much care and compassion, and it was all so validating. It was like I didn't have to explain myself constantly because I was interacting with people who had the training to pick up on things that I didn't even realise I needed. They recognised when I had complex needs or when I was struggling in ways that I couldn't even articulate at the time. It wasn't just emotional support; it was practical too. It helped me feel like I could move forward, even when everything seemed so uncertain. Being in a refuge run by Solace Women's Aid was such a lifeline. The support was just incredible, and it gave me the space to work through things I had never been able to face before." Survivor

"Before coming to the refuge, I was stressed and anxious, now I am here, I am relaxed and I can think about my future. I have the time and space to upskill my knowledge through courses and groups." Survivor

"All the staff I have worked with have helped me in different ways. They have showed me that they care and will always listen to what I have to say and work at my pace." Survivor

What we achieved this year:
Strategic influencing, partnerships and leadership

With over 50 years of providing support to survivors we know that they continue to face systemic barriers on their journeys to safety, whether this is through a lack of access to safe and affordable housing, or being failed by the criminal justice system. Ensuring survivors' voices are heard at the highest level remains a core priority, not only shaping our internal decisions, but driving our advocacy efforts, influencing media narratives, and informing key policy and legislative change.

1,104

Through the 2024 census we heard the experiences of 1,104 women experiencing rough sleeping – 10 times the number counted by the Government's snapshot.

Women's Rough Sleeping Census 2024

Our work with Single Homeless Project delivers our ground-breaking Women's Rough Sleeping Census. In 2024, the census continued to gain momentum and grow, expanding to include 88 local authorities across England. Support for the London Women's Rough Sleeping Census remains strong with all 33 boroughs taking part and support provided by London Councils and Greater London Authority.

Through the 2024 census we heard the experiences of 1,104 women experiencing rough sleeping – 10 times the number counted by the Government's snapshot. You can read the 2024 report here

Throughout the three years of the census, we have heard the experiences of more than 2,000 women. This work has led to positive changes across the country, including women's spaces co-created for those with lived experiences, new accommodation services, more gender-informed outreach policies and training. Our findings were incorporated into new homelessness strategies in both local authorities and across London, and we've seen improved responses and services for women in many participating areas.

> **"My gender definitely impacted on my experience of rough sleeping. I experienced sexual violence whilst sleeping in a stairwell.**
>
> Women's Rough Sleeping Census Participant 2024

> **"I think it would have helped if they [homelessness services] would have worked with us together, but also separately – it was the way they dealt with us, that made me keep running back to him, and him keep running back to me, because we could never both get housed at the same time."**
>
> Survivor



Housing First for Couples feasibility study

Our Women's Rough Sleeping Census and services for homeless women highlight the risks women face on the streets, and these risks can be even higher for women in couples. Solace worked in partnership with SHP, funded by Commonweal, to undertake a feasibility study to look at providing a Housing First service for couples. The project aims to address gaps in housing support for homeless couples affected by domestic abuse. It focused on mitigating risks for survivors, while ensuring that both survivors and perpetrators can access stable housing, healthcare and specialist support. You can read our nine principles on delivering a Housing First for Couples service here.

2024 London Mayoral elections

With 1 in 8 recorded offences in London for domestic abuse, the 2024 Mayoral Elections were a crucial time for survivors. We worked with our advisory board to develop priorities for the new mayoral team focusing on access to safe and affordable housing, sustainable funding for specialist VAWG services and the desperate need to improve the Metropolitan Police's response to VAWG.

Since the election of Mayor Sadiq Khan, Solace has submitted responses to the consultations on the London Rough Sleeping Plan of Action and Mayor's Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy and have been pleased to see some of our recommendations adopted.

Our partnerships

Partnership is one of our three key principles that steer our organisation, and they help ensure the expertise of the specialist violence against women and girls sector continues to provide life-saving support to all survivors and influence change for the most marginalised groups. We work with the wider voluntary sector and local services to challenge the barriers survivors face and make sure they get the support they deserve.

We are honoured to lead the Ascent Advice Plus Partnership, Casa Project, Ruby Project and the WiSER Project, and to be a member of the London VAWG Consortium. We are pleased to have added to our therapeutic services through the Healing Project, a partnership with sister organisation Refuge to provide counselling for women within their London refuges.

Partnerships run across all parts of our services and are integral to the support we provide to survivors. We continue to work alongside our sister organisations in the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership, Ascent Specialist Refuge Project, Ascent Floating Support Service, Housing First VAWG Westminster Service, Angelou Project and CouRAGEous Project to ensure that women and girls across London can access the specialist services they need.

42
the number of partners we worked with to support survivors of violence against women and girls
(23/24:44)

2,730
calls taken from advice lines through our Ascent Advice Plus partnership
(23/24:2568)

485
women provided casework support through our Ascent Advice Plus partnership
(23/24: 591)

What we achieved this year:
Organisational development - internal

Solace staff are passionate, driven and committed to our mission, and this has driven our organisation for the last 50 years. For so many, working here is a calling, not just a job. That emotional connection, as well as the nature of the stories and situations we encounter, means we need to prioritise the wellbeing of survivors and staff. We know that looking after each other and ourselves is essential to doing our best work and have implemented several measures to support colleagues' mental health and wellbeing.

Wellbeing and mental health support

We know that looking after each other and ourselves is essential to doing our best work and this year we have strengthened our sector-leading wellbeing support offer. Our staff volunteer Mental Health Champions foster a workplace in which colleagues feel safe to talk about their mental health and have a range of support services available to them. Building on our clinical supervision sessions and daily debriefs by trained British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) supervisors, our Mental Health Champions support the delivery of our mental health resources hub and create a regular newsletter for all staff. Mental health and wellbeing advice is regularly updated on our intranet, as are appointment slots for free and confidential counselling sessions, daily debriefs, free yoga classes and more. We are delighted that seven new staff were trained as champions in 2024/25.

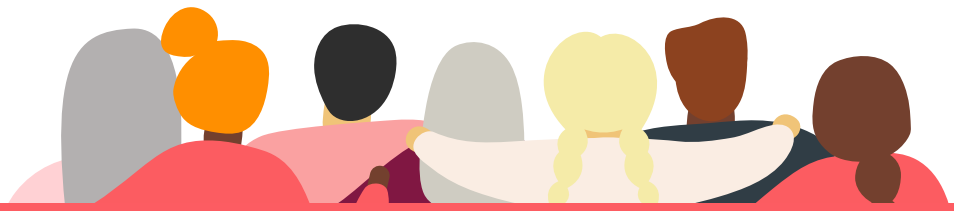
Training on self-care is offered to all staff, including specific training for managers; our employee assistance provider is available to provide more intensive support when needed and we have a specialist staff counsellor who provided 13 staff members with free counselling.

Solace Together

Following on from last year's Solace Together sessions, in which staff shared their thoughts on our culture, intersectional feminist practice and ways in which we can truly be an anti-racist organisation, our CEO and members of SMT have spent the past 12 months planning and implementing internal programmes in response.

We've relaunched our Inclusion Networks, developed leadership programmes for people of colour and initiated six-weekly Town Hall meetings chaired by CEO Nahar Choudhury and other members of SMT. As well as creating space for colleagues to ask questions of SMT members, these meetings spotlight some of the great work from teams throughout Solace. We also have plans to launch a Next in Line initiative to break down barriers with managers and leaders, and our frontline teams. These meetings present opportunities to gain a more holistic view of the organisation, creating an informal space for discussion and relationship building.

Senior leaders will implement further Solace Together sessions to focus on key themes raised by colleagues in the last round of sessions and will launch an intersectionality task and finish group in 2025/26. We continue to learn and grow, together.



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Over the last year, we've taken meaningful steps to improve inclusive practice for survivors and equitable career progression opportunities for staff.

We have established a strategic organisational steering group, our EDI and Culture Steering Group (ECSG), which co-designs and refines our two flagship development initiatives: a Mentorship Programme and a Leadership Programme called Inspiring Sisters specifically designed to support and elevate colleagues from the global majority. We are proud that 18 women from the global majority took part in the leadership programme and 18 took part in the mentoring programme.

100%

of staff who took part in the mentorship scheme said they strongly agreed or agreed that it provided them with tools and guidance for professional growth and career progression

To ensure our work is mindful of colleagues' lived experience and is informed by experts by experience, the ECSG helped redesign our staff survey, introducing new questions to better understand the day-to-day realities and challenges our colleagues face. It also serves to shape our ongoing work to be an inclusive and anti-racist culture.

Our Courageous Conversations training runs 12 times a year to equip staff with the skills to recognise and appropriately challenge microaggressions and exclusionary behaviour. After the course 89% of participants felt better equipped to gently challenge microaggressions or provide support when they see someone being excluded.

We are proud to have launched a brand new internal podcast called EDI Unwrapped! This is a show focused upon empowering the diverse colleagues and survivors within Solace.

Fighting for women for 50 years – our all staff conference

January 2025 saw our all staff conference, focusing on 'Fighting for women for 50 years – what next for VAWG as a social justice issue?' More than 200 staff attended and were joined by some exceptional speakers, including Independent Advisors to Government, representatives from the London Mayor's Office and Solace ambassadors. Highlights included a thoughtful panel discussion on tackling VAWG as a social justice issue, our annual 'Solace Stars of 2024' award ceremony, and an introduction to our new Shadow Board.



What we achieved this year:
Organisational development - growth

At 50 years we have reflected on how our services continue to be in such demand, and that there are still women that are not reaching us. With this in mind, growth remains central to our mission, enabling us to reach and support more women and children in need of our services. The ongoing cost of living crisis and mounting pressure on public services have created a difficult climate for fundraising across our sector. Despite these challenges, we remain committed to our dual mission: supporting survivors and strengthening the support available to our frontline staff.

253
miles ran in aid of Solace

In 2024/25, we generated £15.8 million in income. This vital work is only possible thanks to the generosity of individual donors, community groups, and corporate partners. We are in awe of the varied and creative ways people raise money for Solace and every pound raised has had a meaningful impact on the lives of survivors seeking safety and rebuilding after abuse.

Jazz Against Violence

In June 2024, the incredible E-cubed team hosted their third Jazz Against Violence event in support of Solace. Thanks to the amazing efforts of the team—and a talented group of jazz musicians—they raised over £15,000. The event featured a live jazz performance, a raffle, and an auction of generously donated items, all contributing to the total raised for Solace.

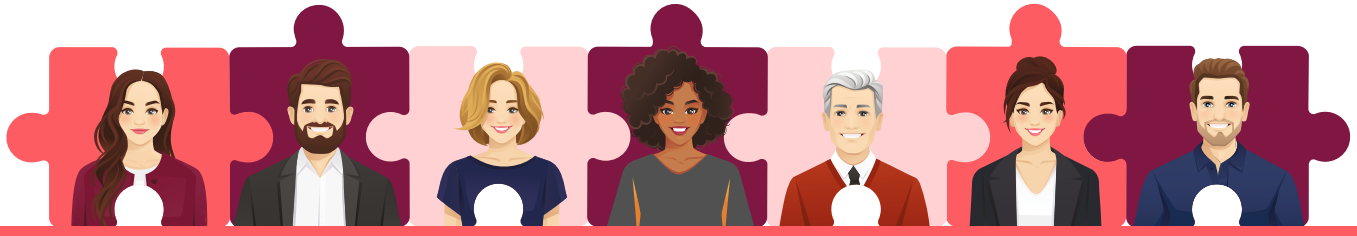
'I see Maya' Christmas campaign

This year our Christmas fundraising campaign #IseeMaya, focused on 'Maya', who represents the women in our lives who have experienced emotional or other forms of abuse at Christmas. To honour the women experiencing emotional abuse we produced a Christmas tree decoration of Maya, which were displayed in our supporters' offices and homes, reminding us that there are still so many women we need to reach.

Transform a refuge days

Corporate volunteering days can help us to transform our refuges. We were delighted to have welcomed corporate volunteering teams from across London to bring to life our living rooms, 1:1 support spaces and play rooms in our refuges. Teams of up to 12 people joined us to help with seven renovation projects in eight of our refuges, which help our survivors to be settled and give children a bright place to play.

We were delighted to continue our work with Furnishing Futures to re-vamp the living spaces in Haringey Refuges to ensure they are psychologically informed. Following the passing of a much loved colleague, we were delighted to rename one of the rooms' "Taiwo's Room" and to be joined by her family, current residents and colleagues to open the new space. CIS Charity Trust also kindly provide us with upgraded CCTV in our Bexley refuges.



Working with corporate partnerships

We are grateful for the new corporate partnerships we have formed and the continued support of existing partners. This year, Brown Rudnick supported our Children and Young People's services by organising a back-to-school donation drive. Their team gathered essential school supplies and backpacks, allowing them to provide much-needed resources to children living in several of our refuges. We have also started a new partnership with the Hearst Network as part of their 'End Abuse Against Women' initiative.

Partners also provide invaluable support to Solace through their pro bono services – this year the support provided was valued at £50,072 (2023/24: £70,000) with a large proportion attributable to the generous donations we get each year from corporates and individual supporters at Christmas.



£50,072

of pro bono support helped power our work this year, with much of it coming from the generosity of our partners at Christmas.

(2023/24: £70,000))



Solace50

We celebrated Solace's 50th anniversary this year at a Parliamentary Reception. We were pleased to host so many colleagues from throughout the sector, sister organisations, survivors, politicians, donors and corporate partners. Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls Jess Phillips MP and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Victims Alex Davies-Jones MP spoke alongside Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime Kaya Comer-Schwartz, our CEO Nahar Choudhury, and our Survivor Ambassador and Trustee Emily Florence Hutchings.



One of the survivors I spoke to tonight said Solace was their scaffolding. That's the heart of the women's movement: women need that scaffolding that holds them up for just that little bit longer. I do everything I can, but no matter what I design in fancy buildings, or push forward in Parliament, I will never create anything better than the women's movement: women helping other women to keep themselves safe.

Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls Jess Phillips MP





The women's sector's work is critical – it's so important and it does inform the work that we do in government.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Victims Alex Davies-Jones MP

To be able to do this kind of work across London has been the honour of a lifetime – tirelessly, an army of women that uphold a society of women. We stand on the shoulders of such giants, here with Solace. You support women who had nothing but fear in their eyes to become women who feel hope.

Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime Kaya Comer-Schwartz





I arrived at the refuge. I felt safe, I felt believed and I didn't have to justify why I was there.

Survivor Ambassador Emily



What we achieved this year:
Aspirations, Education & Employment

Our staff and volunteers know that hope is not just feeling: sometimes, it is a choice. To devote our work to bringing about lasting change, we must have hope – even in the darkest times, working within the most challenging circumstances. Hope drives our mission and vision, has motivated our 50 years of support for survivors and it remains crucial that we spread that hope alongside our expertise knowledge: through our training and volunteering work, we empower others to do better in supporting survivors.

Expert training

It can be difficult to know what to say or do when someone tells you they are experiencing domestic or sexual abuse. And we know the initial response survivors receive can make all the difference in what happens next. Our training programmes raise awareness and provide stakeholders with the essential skills they need to understand, recognise and address domestic abuse in their workplace. We prioritise sharing this knowledge through our expert training team and frontline teams provide training. We developed bespoke training on sexual harassment in the workplace following legislative changes, and training for those supporting survivors of domestic abuse in housing.

4,453
people received expert training on violence against women and girls

Our volunteers

We could not have achieved all we have this year or over the last 50 years without the support and passion of our volunteers. In the year 2024/25, Solace has grown its average cohort of volunteers by more than a third compared to 2023/24: by the end of the year, we had 147 volunteers, up from 110 at the beginning of April 2024. This past year, volunteers provided an incredible 7,280 hours of work, via 52 roles, across 27 projects. These roles ranged from Refuge Support Worker volunteers, to Therapists and Tai Chi instructors, to ambassadors and trustees.

From volunteers to Solace staff

We know how important it is to give back to our volunteers, and support them to excel in supporting survivors. Our volunteers accessed three CPD- accredited training in psychologically informed practice, understanding domestic abuse and coercive control and Tackling and Preventing Domestic Abuse training (DAPA), with 92 learners taking these courses in 2024/25. Eight volunteers undertook the DAPA course, a Home Office recognised qualification for IDVAs, with four volunteers going on to become staff at Solace.

We also introduced CV and Cover Letter Workshops for volunteers, who also joined our Solace Together workshops, helping inform and enhance Solace's working culture.

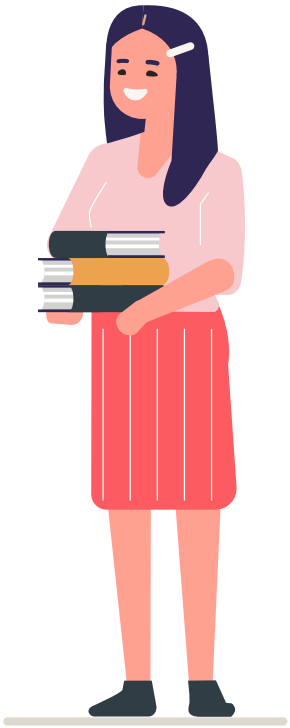
> **"Solace has equipped us with different trainings to help us understand the dynamics of the situations faced by service users and how to manage those dynamics...I am loving the growth and diverse job tasks.**
>
> Solace volunteer

New ways to volunteer

We have found new and innovative ways to involve volunteers this year, exploring an ad-hoc volunteering model for more specialised roles. We have piloted a new 'Court Support Volunteers' Programme as a resource open to all community advocacy teams and refuges. Ten knowledgeable volunteers were recruited from UCL's Law programmes final years and master's cohorts, to emotionally support service users in family courts when assigned IDVAs/ISVA's were not available. The creation of this programme involved a collaboration across Solace staff to create specialised training.

> **Volunteering with Solace has been an incredibly rewarding experience, and it's been a pleasure working alongside such dedicated and inspiring individuals. I truly appreciate the opportunities I've had to contribute and grow within the team.**
>
> Solace volunteer

To ensure we support as many women as possible, our new Volunteer Interpreter Directory provides access to free interpreting services for our refuge services. Our multi-lingual volunteers currently offer: Arabic, Dutch, Hindi, Kurdish, Punjabi, Turkish, Urdu. Even more languages will be available very soon, including: Azerbaijani, Bengali, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Sylheti and Yoruba. The model provides Solace staff with access to highly skilled volunteers, while the infrequency of volunteering means a wider range of women can give their valuable time to Solace and our mission.

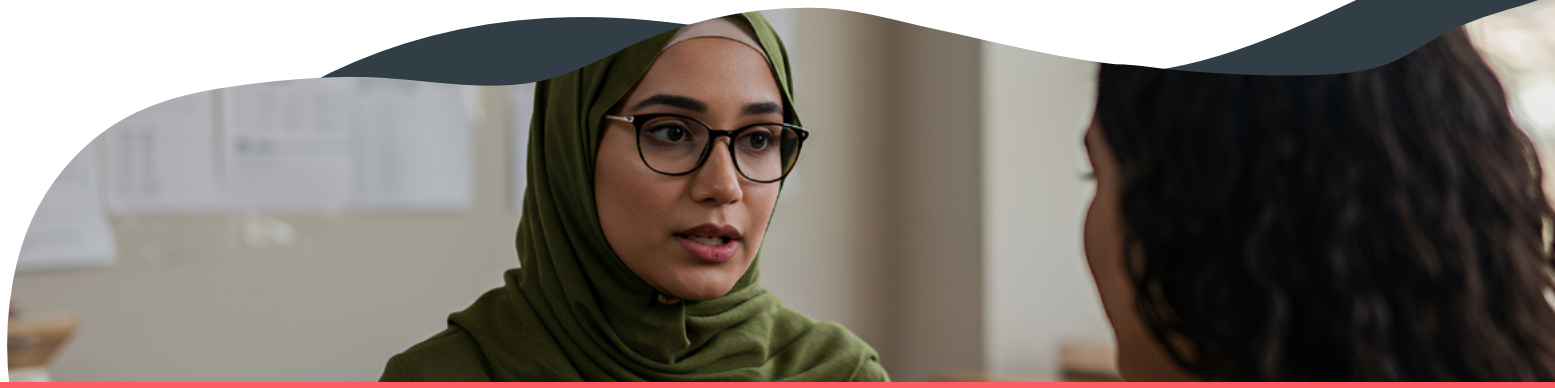


Employment opportunities for survivors

Financial independence is key to the recovery of domestic abuse survivors and our frontline teams support women to access financial support and employment opportunities.

We've worked alongside our generous funders such as Glasspool, Catalyst and Cloudesley to provide survivors with access financial support for educational courses, study materials and transport to get to work, allowing them to start or continue their education and employment journey. These vital funds also support survivors to access essential items such as food vouchers, support for their energy bills and essential furniture when they access new housing.

Our corporate partners have also supported initiatives to help survivors back into work. KPMG's SheCan network hosted a successful CV and interview workshop, offering employment support and confidence-building for women across our services. Our focus on creating opportunities continues - we are working on a mentorship programme for survivors looking to enter or re-enter the workforce.

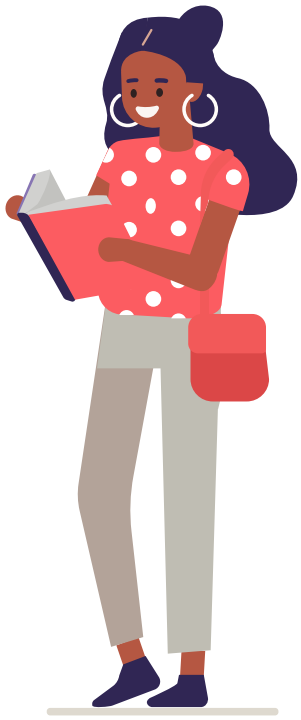


What we achieved this year:
Children and Young People

As an organisation turning 50, we have reflected on what is continuing to drive gender inequality and misogyny that creates the conditions for violence against women and girls. This has served to remind us why our preventative work is essential to reducing VAWG and know we will not reach our mission of ending violence and abuse without educating our children and young people. Solace's children and young people's services provide girls and boys with safe, non-judgmental spaces to unpack experiences, reduce risk, and develop healthy relationships.

Preventing VAWG

Solace's Protect Our Women Project (POW) continued to be delivered in Haringey schools, raising awareness about causes of VAWG, healthy relationships, and emotional wellbeing. We empower young people to build safer, healthier, and happier lives. We also support children and young people in refuge with their mothers, because no one's future should be compromised by abuse.



337
children and young people supported by CYP services
(23/24: 270)

110
children supported via our Advice Line

576
children and young people took part in the Protect Our Women Project

Supporting families in refuge

Solace's STAR (Supporting Trauma Awareness and Resilience) programme is part of our whole family approach and supports trauma awareness and building resilience for mothers and children. The programme, available across three London boroughs, provides safe and confidential spaces to mothers and children in their respective groups to unpack their experiences of abuse and trauma while building resilience, supporting the healing process, and strengthening relationships.

Despite a lack of ringfenced funding for children as victims, we continue to prioritise provision to support mothers and children. We provide counselling for children and younger people in our refuges; our family support workers play a crucial role in addressing the devastating impact that domestic abuse has on mothers and children and our sessional play workers provide respite for mothers in refuge.

> **"We, as parents, can rest for an hour and the sessions help the children understand why they are in a refuge with mum. Still my children are mischievous, but the sessions have helped them a lot.**
>
> **Survivor in refuge**

Emotion Coaching pilot

We continue to seek new ways to reduce the harm that domestic abuse creates for children, and rebuild relationships between mothers and children. We were delighted to be funded by Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) for a feasibility study of the Emotion Coaching programme in our Solace's refuges. Emotion Coaching is a parenting programme for non-abusive mothers and children exposed to domestic abuse. It involves 12 weekly skills-based group sessions to reduce children's externalising behaviours, such as aggression, improve their mental health outcomes, and boost mothers' confidence in their parenting abilities.

Raising awareness of peer-on-peer abuse

The young people we work with are so often the best advocates for the future we are seeking to create. As part of 16 Days of Activism 2024, we launched a series of CYP led videos on peer-on-peer abuse which were produced by our Young Change Makers and supported by the Rosa Fund. The aim of the films is to educate parents and teachers about the impact of peer-on-peer abuse so that they are informed to have better conversations with young people and take positive steps to identify and address this behaviour. The films were launched alongside a toolkit and a webinar featuring experts from Solace, Everyone's Invited and the NSPCC.

> **Before I was introduced to the service, I was shy, depressed and felt isolated, which made me lack trust and motivation to succeed with my career. However, after the key work sessions, I have changed dramatically. I speak confidently about my feelings, and I have a different mind-set, so I am willing to work towards my goals. I'm also now confident in speaking about my past experiences and I now want to be a voice to the younger generation who have also experienced domestic abuse.**
>
> CYP survivor



> **Whatever your abuser showed you in life, if he made you feel you cannot get help, Solace is here to help you. They will help you in your journey to become the person you want to be.**
>
> Survivor

Our thanks.

We are incredibly grateful for the support that Solace receives from generous individuals and organisations which help us to work towards our mission of ending the harm done through gender-based violence. A huge thank you to all our supporters during 2024/25, including those who have chosen to remain anonymous.

We continue to be grateful for our partnership with statutory funders and want to thank:

The London Boroughs of Barnet, Bexley, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, Islington, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Westminster, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, Violence Reduction Unit, Greater London Authority, London Councils and Home Office.

We also want to thank our trustees, survivor ambassadors and new shadow board members who use their expertise and lived experience to shape the work Solace does and raise awareness for other survivors who need help.



"Being in the refuge was a big turning point. They had a course that really helped me understand what I had been through. It helped me realise how trauma and stress had affected me, and how it had affected my children. It was amazing to see that, not just for me, but for them too. The foundation of support we got there made a huge difference. Having that support system, knowing they were liaising with other agencies to get the help I needed - it all really helped me start breathing again. It was like a whole new chapter where I wasn't doing everything alone anymore."

Survivor

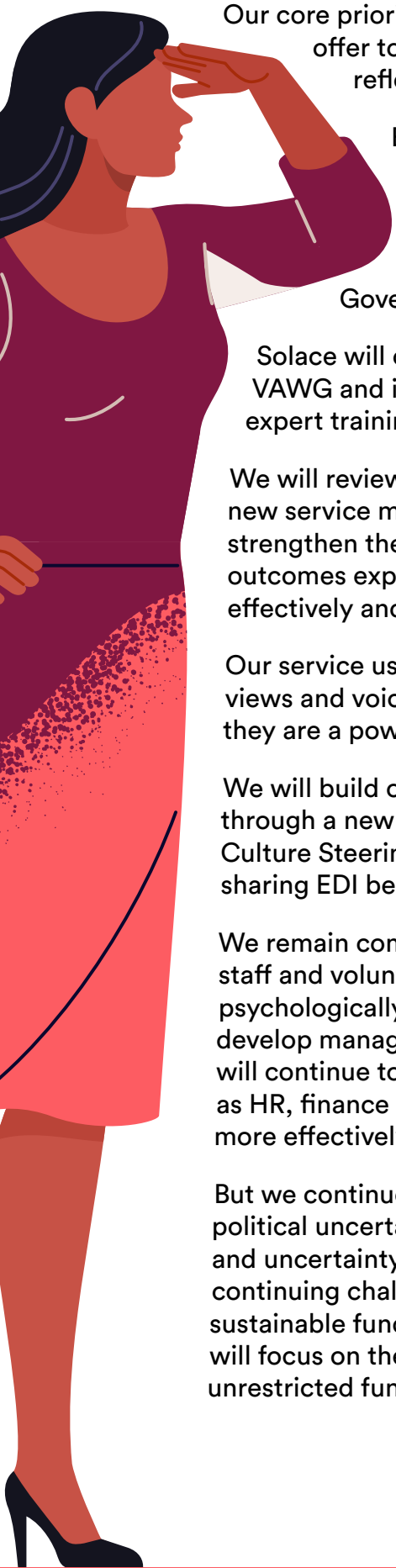


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The Glen Beg Foundation
The Golden Bottle Trust
The Rosa Fund
The Screwfix Foundation
The Tudor Capital Foundation
The Wogen Anniversary Trust
Trust For London
Urban and Mainline
Vanguard
Veeam
Vitol
Willilam Grant & Sons
Youth Endowment Fund
Yvonne Roberts



Looking to the future



Our core priority for 2025-26 is the ongoing development of the support we offer to survivors, including the development of responsive services that reflect the complexity of their experiences.

But after 50 years of providing lifesaving support, we are clearer than ever that we cannot solve this societal problem alone. Positively, more people than ever have recognised the epidemic of violence against women and girls with the National Police Chief's Council calling it a "national emergency" and the new Government having set out their mission to halve VAWG in a decade.

Solace will continue to work with new people and organisations to help us end VAWG and improve the public services response through more partnerships, expert training, awareness raising campaigns and influencing for change.

We will review how we can continue to deliver inclusive services and develop new service models to meet the changing needs of survivors. We will also strengthen the way we collect and use data to demonstrate the positive outcomes experienced by survivors, enabling us to tell their stories more effectively and refine our services accordingly.

Our service users should be a key voice in all that we do – we will embed the views and voices of our new Shadow Board in our decision making and ensure they are a powerful tool for change, both within the organisation and externally.

We will build on our Solace Together workshops on cultural transformation through a new intersectionality working group and further training. Our EDI and Culture Steering Group will focus on developing an internal EDI health check and sharing EDI best practice across the organisation.

We remain committed to investing in the wellbeing and motivation of our staff and volunteers, so that they are equipped to deliver impactful and psychologically informed support. We will improve our induction process, develop management training and sustain our sector-leading wellbeing offer. We will continue to improve the ways of working in our infrastructure services such as HR, finance and business support, to enable our frontline to operate more effectively.

But we continue in a difficult external environment: the cost of living crisis and political uncertainty continues to affect survivors, staff and the organisation, and uncertainty around funding – particularly from public services –creates continuing challenges. We work regularly with sister organisations to secure sustainable funding for specialist services, and with our new fundraising team we will focus on the retention of existing services with full cost recovery, increased unrestricted fundraising and strong delivery partnerships.

Goals for 2025-26



Our 2022-27 strategy set out our six organisational objectives, which help us to focus on our dual aims of supporting more survivors and improving our support of frontline staff working in the organisation – this remains as important as ever. Our CEO and board of trustees continue to focus on seven goals to sit alongside our five-year strategy:

- Inclusion, becoming an anti-racist organisation and cultural transformation
- Inclusive service delivery
- One team of valued, diverse and skilled people
- Amplifying the service user voice
- Make prevention a priority
- Strengthening our infrastructure services.



Financial Review

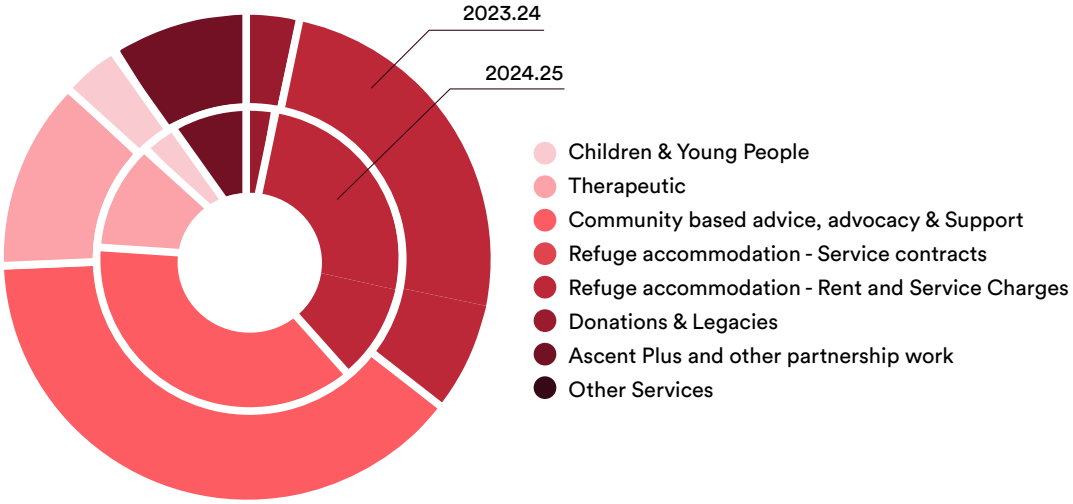
The financial results for the year ended 31 March 2025 are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities, balance sheet, cash flow statement and notes to the accounts on pages 46 onwards.

Income

For the financial year 2024/25, total incoming resources were £15.8m (2023/24 £14.4m). Solace was helped to maintain essential services this year thanks to funding from statutory partners, trusts and foundations, corporates and the public.

Solace has successfully focused on retention of services and securing new statutory funding with some new services beginning in 2025/26. Solace remains a trusted delivery partner for our commissioners successfully retaining 100% of our statutory contracts during the period.

The 10% increase in income compared to prior year is due in part to taking on the management of new accommodation services in refuge and community.



Refuge services grew by 24%. On the 1st April Solace took over management of the multi-disadvantaged accommodation service in Haringey. In November a new move-on service opened in Enfield. The service contract and associated rents from these services increased income by £555k. Rent and service charge uplifts averaged 7.7% from the 1st April 2024 in line with inflation.

Community-based advice and advocacy services commenced two new services; the three year Ruby Project funded by the Oak Foundation, which delivers a Housing First solution for women affected by domestic abuse in London and from June we began delivery of a Peri Natal IDVA service funded by Standing Together.

Not all of our services have been as financially secure. Therapeutic services, which see us reach some of our most vulnerable service users suffered from cuts to services during contract extensions and recommissioning.

Our work with Children and Young People saw a £67k drop in funding due to mobilisation funds being withdrawn in the second year of our highly impactful Major Trauma Centres project which provides crisis intervention support to young people of all genders who present in London's Major Trauma Centres due to domestic abuse and sexual violence issues.

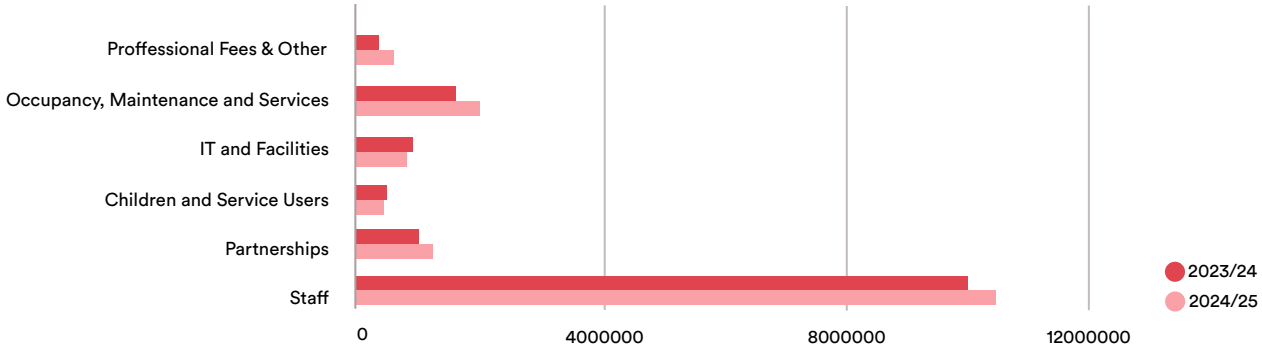
Our partnership work delivered consistent programming between years aligned with ongoing service delivery.

Voluntary unrestricted income from donations contributed 2% of our funding base through the support of the public, corporates and trusts and foundations. We continue to see reduced opportunities for core cost unrestricted funding through trusts and foundations. However we have seen an uplift in our restricted fundraising which we report within our programming components.

Staffing gaps in the fundraising team and no senior manager leading on fundraising for most of 2024/25 led to a reduction in funds. The new team is now embedding and we anticipate steady growth in upcoming years, whilst recognising that the fundraising environment remains challenging.

Expenditure

Our charitable spending on activities increased by 9% in line with the uplift in service delivery from £14.4m to £15.6m.



Our biggest expenditure is on staff, 67% (2023/24: 70%). Our staff are at the heart of the financial decisions we have to make. In September the Government announced changes to employer national insurance. This resulted in Solace's salary base increasing by 3% before the award of staff pay increases. In January 2025 Solace pay awards for all staff honoured our commitment to the London Living Wage awarding at least a 2.5% increase to our most junior staff (2023/24: 3.5%). We have not been able to recover the full impact of the NI increases through contracts placing Solace under further financial pressures in the future.

Occupancy costs are our second major expenditure as we seek to maintain our portfolio of owned and leased properties. The average maintenance cost per unit of our housing stock increased year on year from £7,868 to £8,947 as we incurred onboarding costs for our new sites and saw increased utility, and maintenance costs arising from general market pressures.

Central costs as a percentage of overall expenditure dropped from 15% to 14%. During the year Finance, Business Support and HR functions were restructured to reflect changes in organisational operations and strategic priorities.

Financial position

Our charitable spending on activities increased by 9% in line with the uplift in service delivery from £14.4m to £15.6m. The overall result for the year was a surplus of £196k (2023/24: deficit of £2k). The current year surplus aligns with managing central costs in a very uncertain funding environment. Going into 2024/25 Trustees have approved a deficit budget as we have a number of award outcomes pending.

Achieving a surplus remains a key performance target to enable the charity to set aside funds towards reserves for contingency requirements, and capital improvements as further explained in our reserves policy note.

Total fund balances as of 31 March 2025 were £2.2m (2023/24: £2.0m) of which £1.0m (2023/24: £1.0m) were designated funds, £25k were restricted funds for service delivery and the remaining £1.2m (2023/24: £1.0m) represent general funds. Designated funds as at the balance sheet date represent the net book value of tangible fixed assets.

Reserves policy and going concern

The reserves fund represents unrestricted general funds which are not committed or tied to any tangible fixed assets held by Solace.

It is Solace's policy to retain sufficient reserves to safeguard its financial commitments and to continue to provide essential services to women and children who are experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence, in the event of unforeseen financial problems for a length of time to enable those problems to be resolved.

The trustees have reviewed its reserves policy in March 2025 and agreed to build Solace's reserves based on an analysis of the risks facing the charity. In determining the level of reserves required by Solace, the following factors are taken into account by the Board of Trustees:

- key strategic risks as described in Solace's risk register;
- our strategic goals;
- financial strategy and sustainability;
- liquidity management;
- commitments to staff and other contractual obligations; and
- needs of services and beneficiaries.

This level of reserves is to protect the charity from having to make quick structural changes arising from the sudden loss of income, for example when contracts are not renewed or other unforeseen circumstances, to enable the charity to function during unexpected periods of financial difficulties. The Finance and Resources sub-committee reviews the level of reserves required by Solace annually and recommends the appropriate level to the trustees.

Based on the analysis of risks, the trustees have set a satisfactory reserve level and a target reserve level for the charity. A minimum satisfactory general reserves level of £1.6m was agreed as being satisfactory. The current unrestricted free reserves of £1.2m (unrestricted reserves less those related to tangible fixed assets and designations) are below the satisfactory reserve level.

The desired target reserves level was set at £2.3m and at March 2025, there is a shortfall of £1.1m. The need to increase reserves to achieve the desired target levels will be a focus of the charity over the coming five years. In the coming financial year Trustees have weighed the need to increase reserves against managing NI increases and offering a fair pay award to attract and retain staff . In the coming year we have set a deficit budget with identified measures to return this to a surplus in year. Solace plans to generate surpluses over the next 5 years to achieve a satisfactory reserve level.

Further notes on our reserves are outlined in **note 15** of the financial statements.

The trustees have considered the material uncertainties which may cast doubts on the appropriateness of the going concern assumption with regards to the 2024/25 financial statements. As noted above, these uncertainties are continually monitored by the board and the senior management team, and remedial actions are implemented in a timely manner. Having considered the risks of these uncertainties, the trustees have concluded that the going concern assumption remains appropriate for the coming year.



Risk management and principal risks

Trustees have overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the system of risk management at Solace. The charity maintains a charity risk register which tracks key risks to Solace and is reviewed by trustees at quarterly sub-committee meetings and full board meetings. Unexpected and sudden changes in risks would be scrutinised by trustees over and above planned meetings.

The principal risks facing the charity are financial, operational, reputational, people and culture and regulatory as detailed below.

Financial

Solace operates in a challenging and demanding sector with uncertainties over longer term funding due to our reliance on services commissioned by local and central government.

External risks to funding have been reduced by implementing a long-term strategy to diversify our funding base.

Solace actively monitors our pipeline to ensure we remain informed of opportunities for new services and recommissioning of existing services. Financial risks arising from any contract renewals in 2025/26 are mitigated through TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment) arrangements.

Financial risks are monitored through regular reporting to the Finance and Resources sub-committee and trustees with scrutiny of annual budgets, reforecasts, management accounts and cash flow projections. Scenario planning with prudent income generation activities has been prepared and reviewed with trustees to ensure that Solace continues to have sufficient resources to deliver its services and remain solvent in the foreseeable future.

Operational

The nature of our service delivery, which provides support to vulnerable women and children suffering from domestic and sexual violence, increases operational risks associated with the potential provision of inadequate support for our service users due to unclear priorities, lack of quality oversight or inadequate staff resources.

Operational risks are managed through implementation of suitable policies and procedures including good practices for case management, appropriate caseloads, rigorous staff training, staff supervision and support and regular reporting to senior management. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, risks assessments and data protection regulations in respect of service users, staff, trustees, volunteers, and visitors. Solace also has in place emergency procedures should we experience localized or national incidents. Appropriate insurance cover is in place.

Risks on IT systems and cybercrime are managed through the use of accredited managed IT providers using secure cloud-based technology. Monthly review of performance and IT risks are undertaken with senior management and reported to trustees. Staff receive regular training on IT and cyber security and induction training is provided to all new employees

Reputational

In line with our operational risks, reputational risks are heightened as we engage with vulnerable people in difficult circumstances. Service audits are conducted annually to review compliance with funder agreements and reported to trustees. The senior management team works closely with boroughs and other funder leads and attend meetings and events which enable issues to be dealt with promptly and manage reputational risks.

People and culture

Solace is committed to being an actively inclusive charity and has reviewed its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan with trustees, staff and volunteers.

Risks and challenges on staff recruitment and retention are managed through continuous staff learning and development. Like others in the charity sector, we continue to see high turnover of staff. We undertake benchmarking of staff turnover and analyse leaver exit information to learn from the changing needs of our employee lifecycle. We continue to work with our teams to adopt agile working practices without compromising on the quality of client services. Our expert peripatetic team help to reduce the impact of gaps created by challenges in recruitment.

Regulatory and compliance

Safeguarding is at the heart of our operational services and a key governance priority, keeping women and their children safe is our primary **responsibility** and we take all appropriate steps to protect everyone from harm.

We deliver robust safeguarding training to all our staff and volunteers, as part of their induction training. This includes the legal framework, how to spot signs and symptoms, how to respond and what makes a good referral to social care. We also explain our whistle blowing policies to all staff and volunteers during the training. Annual refresher training on safeguarding is mandatory for all staff.

We have a suite of policies and procedures designed to manage this risk including those covering acceptance of donations, unauthorised fundraising, procurement, IT security, anti-fraud, data protection and social media. We undertake regular training on compliance and continue to review and strengthen our training to staff and volunteers.



Reference and Administrative Information

The financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the memorandum, and articles of association, the Companies Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Company number	03376716
Country of incorporation	United Kingdom
Charity number	1082450
Country of registration	England & Wales
Registered office	9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP
Website	www.solacewomensaid.org

Board of Trustees
Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Ms. Priyanka Devani	Chair (resigned 27 March 2025)
Ms. Hannah Cane	Vice Chair (19 June 2024) Interim Co Chair (appointed 27 March 2025)
Ms. Madeline Church	Interim Vice Chair (stepped down 19 June 2024) Interim Co Chair (appointed 27 March 2025)
Ms. Kerri Hartwell	Treasurer
Ms. Emily Florence Hutchings	
Ms. Vivien Ma	
Ms. Natalie Lopez	
Ms. Meghan Roach	
Ms. Amy Pritchard	(resigned 27 March 2025)
Ms. Jo Jengo	
Dr. Alison McKinlay	(appointed 9 July 2025)
Ms. Katherine Couper	(appointed 9 July 2025)

Principal staff

Ms. Nahar Choudhury	Chief Executive Officer
Ms Arati Patel	Interim Director of Finance and Business Support (November 2023 to May 2024)
Ms. Julia Rank	Director of Finance and Business Support (appointed June 2024)
Ms. Paula Murphy	Interim Director of Business Development (appointed November 2023 to November 2024)
Ms Rebecca Goshawk	Director of Business Development (appointed December 2024)
Dr. Jennifer Cirone	Director of Services

Bankers	HSBC plc 1 Aldermans Hill London, N13 4YE
Auditor	Moore Kingston Smith 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP

Structure, governance and management

Solace is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 28 May 1997, and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 16 September 2000. The charity is formed under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

Recruitment and appointment of members for the Board of Trustees

Solace welcomes women to the Board of Trustees who have the skills, dedication, and enthusiasm to take overall responsibility for the organisation. The charity advertises for members in a number of ways including recruitment websites and other relevant publications.

Trustees serve for a period of six years in aggregate. Officers (chair, treasurer and chairs of sub-committees) may serve for a period of 9 years. Solace has a diverse Board, ensuring that our trustees represent the women we support. One third of members must resign each year, with the longest standing members resigning first. Two Trustees resigned during the financial year. We have not looked for other members to step down as Solace is currently building the Board's skills.

Induction and training for the Board of Trustees

All prospective members receive information regarding Solace including the most recent annual report and audited accounts, as well as copies of relevant policies and procedures. They meet with the CEO and principal staff who carry out an induction that includes training on key policies (including equality, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, confidentiality, complaints, whistle blowing, financial regulation, risk assessments, data protection and DBS checks), a tour of our services and meetings with both staff and service users.

Trustees observe the Charity Code for Good Governance. A skills audit is conducted annually, and any gaps identified are met through training, guidance from the CEO and other members of the trustees and staff, as well as targeted recruitment.

Trustees are encouraged to attend relevant training in areas such as governance, human resource management and financial management. The cost of this training is met by the organisation.

Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 6 to the accounts.

Public benefit

The trustees have referred to the guidance provided by the Charity Commission regarding public benefit, including its guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity (PB2)', when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In setting the annual plan each year, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives of the charity.

Fundraising

Solace is a member of the fundraising regulator. We do not employ the services of any fundraising agencies or third parties, nor have we run a telephone or door to door fundraising campaign. Our relationship with our supporters is especially important to us and the charity does not wish for our supporters to feel under any pressure to donate to the charity. We have a close relationship with our fundraisers and support them in delivering their events and complying with relevant codes of practice. Where we work with commercial participators, contracts are exchanged so that we can ensure compliance with the code of fundraising practice, applicable laws, and adherence to best practice.

We received no complaints about our fundraising practices in 2024/25.

Quality Management

Solace prides itself on high quality support to our service users. Our staff team are committed to providing a high standard of support to our service users and we continually look at how we can improve our services. We continue to invest in accredited training for our staff and have a comprehensive internal training programme to ensure we deliver quality services. The organisation is supported by our business development, business support, HR and finance teams who have introduced new systems and procedures to better support our frontline services and the wider organisation. This helps us to continue to deliver excellent services and ensure value for money for our funders.

In 2024/25, we achieved and retained several accreditations and quality marks, demonstrating the high standard of Solace's work, including:

- Rape Crisis National Service Standards;
- Disability Confident Committed Employer;
- Advice Quality Standards;
- ISO 9001; and
- CHAS (The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme).



Organisational structure

The trustees meet every quarter and are responsible for the organisation's overall management and strategic direction. The trustees also meet twice a year for Board Away Days. These women are drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to our work including those who have been impacted by domestic or sexual abuse. We are also committed to diversity and have a trustee board representative of our service users and staff.

The trustees delegate appropriate functions to the sub-committees listed below, of which at least two members must be from the Board.

Expert Advisors are selected to provide specialist advice to the sub-committees. They attend and scrutinise reports together with trustees at sub-committee meetings.

Business Development sub-committee: Oversees the overall strategy and business development plans for the charity, as well as Training and Consultancy, Fundraising, and Communications. Chair – Ms. Hannah Cane. Claire Geddie joined the committee as an expert advisor in 2024-25 and up to the date of publication Rosie Spigelhalter and Paula Murphy have also joined.

Finance and Resources sub-committee: Oversees financial management to ensure optimum use of resources. It scrutinises income and expenditure and regularly reports to, makes recommendations, and clarifies options available to the trustees. Chair – Ms. Kerri Hartwell. Two Expert Advisors joined the committee this year Becky Tobin and Holly Van Der Merwe.

Human Resources and Governance sub-committee: Oversees staffing issues including recruitment, retention, pay, equality and diversity, health and safety and environmental issues. It acts as the appeal body for any disciplinary and capability matters and is responsible for overall board governance. Chair – Ms. Natalie Lopez with support from Ms Madeline Church. Sian Elliot, and Rachel Galvin have continued to support this committee. Frances Gillies joined as an expert advisor in 2024-25 and up to the date of publication Claire Wright joined the committee as an expert advisor.

Services sub-committee: Scrutinises operational top-level reports and internal audits; discusses policy, devises, and reviews the service operations strategy. Chair – Ms. Madeline Church with support from Ms Meghan Roach. Frances Gillies joined the committee as an Expert Advisor this year.

Overall management is delegated to the CEO and Directors who are responsible for ensuring that Solace delivers high quality services, meets contractual obligations and conditions of grant aid. Principal staff are the CEO, Director of Services, Director of Finance and Business Support and Director of Business Development who convene regularly to oversee the organisational management of Solace. The Directors report to the CEO.

The wider Senior Management Team includes one Deputy Director of Services and nine Heads of Services who meet with the Directors and CEO on a monthly basis.

Team and Service Managers run the day-to-day activities with their staff teams delivering services in refuge, community-based services and from our Head Office. They report to Heads of Services and meet with the CEO and Directors each quarter.

Related party transactions

Related party transactions during the year related to professional pro bono services and valued at Nil (2023/24: Nil), and donations from three trustees totalled £214 (2023/24: £676).

Remuneration policy or key management personnel

Solace awards a fair remuneration package to all staff including key management personnel. Both the Human Resources and Finance and Resources sub-committees undertake an annual review of salaries, and the trustees are responsible for setting the CEO salary, and with the CEO set the salaries of Directors. The salary of the highest and lowest salaries in the organisation does not exceed 1:4.

Statement of responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Solace for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic 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 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 these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 operation.

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.

As 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.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2025 was 8 (2023/24 - 10). The trustees are members of the charity, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors

Moore Kingston Smith LLP were appointed as auditors in 2018 and are deemed to be reappointed to under Section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The report of the Board of Trustees has been approved by the trustees on 1 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by



Madeline Church – Interim Co Chair



Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Solace Women's Aid

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Solace Women's Aid ('the charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the Summary Income and Expenditure Account), the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement 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 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 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 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 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 there is 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 trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual 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 company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

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.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 40, 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 aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement 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 purposes 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.

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

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.

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 charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council.
- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance 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.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

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 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 any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Shivani Kothari (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

Date: 25 November 2025
9 Appold Street
London
EC2A 2AP

Statement of financial activities

(incorporating an income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	353,095	21,891	**374,986**	451,093	-	451,093
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	3	4,881,655	1,485,115	**6,366,770**	3,712,652	1,434,959	5,147,611
Community based advice, advocacy and support	3	4,035,631	1,696,104	**5,731,735**	4,016,559	1,362,948	5,379,507
Therapeutic	3	123,000	1,705,691	**1,828,691**	164,700	1,727,647	1,892,347
Children and Young People	3	61,998	427,081	**489,079**	67,078	494,098	561,176
Other services	3	49,705	-	**49,705**	22,061	-	22,061
Partnership work							
Ascent Plus and other partnership work	3	-	952,271	**952,271**	-	920,648	920,648
Investment income		22,132	-	**22,132**	11,467	-	11,467
Total income		**9,527,216**	**6,288,153**	**15,815,369**	**8,445,610**	**5,940,300**	**14,385,910**
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	273,083	-	**273,083**	284,854	-	284,854
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	4	4,488,731	1,493,156	**5,981,887**	3,648,345	1,434,959	5,083,304
Community based advice, advocacy and support	4	4,283,306	1,711,546	**5,994,852**	4,215,315	1,362,948	5,578,263
Therapeutic	4	128,982	1,706,075	**1,835,057**	155,060	1,727,647	1,882,707
Children and Young People	4	84,680	427,081	**511,761**	61,485	512,465	573,950
Other Services	4	45,771	-	**45,771**	42,154	-	42,154
Partnership work							
Ascent Plus and other partnership work	4	24,964	951,771	**976,735**	-	942,512	942,512
Total expenditure		**9,329,517**	**6,289,629**	**15,619,146**	**8,407,213**	**5,980,531**	**14,387,744**
Net Income / (Expenditure) for the year	5	**197,699**	**(1,476)**	**196,223**	**38,397**	**(40,231)**	**(1,834)**
Transfers between funds		(27,363)	27,363	**-**	(40,231)	40,231	-
Net movement in funds		**170,336**	**25,887**	**196,223**	**(1,834)**	**-**	**(1,834)**
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		1,999,267	-	**1,999,267**	2,001,101	-	2,001,101
Total funds carried forward		**2,169,603**	**25,887**	**2,195,490**	**1,999,267**	**-**	**1,999,267**

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities unless noted otherwise.

There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Notes on pages 49 to 63 form part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

for the year ended 31 March 2025

Company no. 3376716

	Notes		2025		2024
Fixed Assets:		£	£	£	£
Tangible Fixed Assets	10a		**954,838**		963,053
Intangible Assets	10b		**33,844**		57,728
			988,682		1,020,781
Current Assets:					
Debtors	11	**2,519,760**		1,842,492	
Cash at Bank and in hand		**1,696,223**		2,074,933	
		4,215,983		3,917,425	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	**3,009,175**		2,938,939	
Net Current Assets			**1,206,808**		978,486
Total Assets less Current Liabilities			**2,195,490**		1,999,267
Total Net Assets	14		**2,195,490**		1,999,267
The Funds of the Charity are represented by:					
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
Designated Funds	15	**988,683**		1,020,781	
General Funds	15	**1,180,920**		978,486	
Total Unrestricted Funds			**2,169,603**		1,999,267
Restricted Funds	15		**25,887**		-
Total Charity Funds			**2,195,490**		1,999,267

The accompanying notes on pages 49 to 63 form part of these financial statements.

The financial statements were approved by the Board and authorised for issue on the 1st October 2025 and are signed on its behalf by:

Madeline Church – Interim Co Chair

Kerri Hartwell - Treasurer

Statement of Cashflows

for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025		2024	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:					
Net cash flows (used in) / provided by operating activities	16		**(261,154)**		1,222,278
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Interest from investments		**22,132**		11,466	
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		**(75,047)**		(216,744)	
Net cash flows used in investing activities			**(52,915)**		(205,278)
Cash flows from financing activities:					
Interest paid		**(345)**		(11,893)	
Repayments of borrowing		**(64,296)**		(255,385)	
Net cash flows used in financing activities			**(64,641)**		(267,278)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			**(378,710)**		749,722
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			**2,074,933**		1,325,211
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			**1,696,223**		**2,074,933**

Analysis of cash and changes in net debt

	1 April 2024	Cash flows	31 March 2025
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS			
Cash in hand	37,355	(6,902)	**30,453**
Cash in bank	1,255,954	(492,828)	**763,126**
Immediate notice deposits	781,624	121,020	**902,644**
Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	2,074,933	(378,710)	**1,696,223**
BORROWINGS			
CBILS loan falling due within one year	(64,296)	64,296	-
Total	**2,010,637**	**(314,414)**	**1,696,223**

Notes to the accounts

1 Accounting policies

a) **Statutory information**
Solace Women's Aid is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address is 6th floor, 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP.

b) **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 in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.
Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.
The presentation currency of the Charity is British Pounds Sterling. The amounts in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound.

c) **Key judgements and Assumptions**
In the application of the company's accounting policies, 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. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis and actual results may differ from these estimates.

d) **Public benefit entity**
The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

e) **Going concern**
The trustees have considered the principal risks of the charity and the potential financial impact of these risks materialising in a range of adverse and worse case scenarios. The detailed cash flow forecast and the adequacy of cash resources under these scenarios have been reviewed by trustees. Based on these detailed scrutiny, the trustees have concluded that there is reasonable expectation that the charity is able to meet its obligations as they fall due for at least 12 months following approval of the financial statements. Accordingly the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

f) **Income**
Income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis once 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' grants 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 performance related or other conditions of income recognition have been met.

g) **Intangible assets**
Computer software are capitalised when direct expenditure enhances or extends the performance of the software beyond its specifications and can be reliably measured as a capital improvement. These costs are amortised using a straight line method over the estimated useful lives of three to five years.

h) **Donations of gifts, services and facilities**
Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised. The trustees' annual report describes their contributions in more detail.
On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

i) **Financial instruments**
Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument to meet the requirements of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102. Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, where 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.

j) **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.

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

k) **Fund accounting**

Restricted funds are accounted for in accordance with the express or implied wishes of donors in so far as these are intended to be binding on the charity. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes which are not subject to any special restrictions and are classed as unrestricted within the General fund.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

l) **Irrecoverable VAT**

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:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services and other charitable activities undertaken. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

m) **Allocation of support costs**

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity are provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure based on costs incurred with the publicity event.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

n) **Operating leases**

Rentals under operating lease charges are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

o) **Tangible fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000 or groups of similar assets purchased in bulk exceeds £7,500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Freehold land and buildings are carried at cost.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its life.

• Freehold land	Not depreciated
• Freehold buildings	2% on cost
• Leasehold property	Over the life of the lease
• Office equipment, fixtures and fittings and play area	25% on cost

p) **Stocks**

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. In general, cost is determined on a first in first out basis

q) **Debtors**

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

Specific provision is made where it is probable that a debt is unlikely to be recovered but where Solace continues to actively chase for recovery.

r) **Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

s) **Creditors**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present or constructive 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 are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due. Provisions are made for obligations when there is a legal or other obligation as a result of past events. It is more likely than not that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and a reliable estimate of the amount can be made for the provision based on the expected settlement amount.

t) **Pensions**

Solace Women's Aid operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions. It provides a contribution at 3% of annual basic pay for those staff who have joined the scheme. The pension charge recorded in these accounts is the amount of contributions payable in the accounting year.

2 Donations and Legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**2025 Total £**	2024 Total £
Individuals	206,463		**206,463**	241,738
Community fundraising and events	9,948	-	**9,948**	9,230
Corporates	38,029	-	**38,029**	64,534
Trust and Foundations	47,000	-	**47,000**	65,291
Legacy Income	-	21,891	**21,891**	-
Other	1,583	-	**1,583**	-
Donated services	50,072	-	**50,072**	70,300
	353,095	21,891	374,986	451,093

3a Income from charitable activities

Provision and Prevention	Unrestricted **£**	Restricted £	**2025 Total £**	2024 Total £
Local Boroughs	1,590,499	79,982	**1,670,481**	1,430,364
Core Rents	3,145,080	-	**3,145,080**	2,283,105
Personal Charges	136,001	-	**136,001**	103,543
MOPAC	-	569,039	**569,039**	539,428
London Councils via Ashiana (note 3b)	-	272,048	**272,048**	272,047
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	219,383	**219,383**	153,034
REFUGE	-	125,556	**125,556**	102,969
Greater London Authority	-	62,173	**62,173**	60,529
Hollick Foundation	-	6,377	**6,377**	11,218
Gallaher	-	55,000	**55,000**	45,000
The Youth Endowment Fund	-	81,557	**81,557**	54,615
London Community Foundation (MOPAC PIE)	-	14,000	**14,000**	79,116
Other	10,075	-	**10,075**	12,643
Sub-total for Refuge Accommodation	4,881,655	1,485,115	**6,366,770**	5,147,611

Prior year income from charitable Refuge Accommodation activities included £3,712,652 attributable to unrestricted activities and £1,434,959 to restricted activities.

	Unrestricted **£**	Restricted £	**2025 Total £**	2024 Total £
Local Boroughs	4,034,123	18,750	**4,052,873**	4,029,951
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	883,004	**883,004**	886,396
Southall Black Sisters	-	148,950	**148,950**	160,592
Women and Girls Network	-	195,432	**195,432**	188,562
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Emigrant Support Programme	6,276	43,379	**49,655**	35,000
Olwyn Foundation	-	-	**-**	18,356
Irish Youth Foundation	(3,868)	14,535	**10,667**	8,715
Irish Government	(1,750)	-	**(1,750)**	-
City Bridge	-	41,786	**41,786**	19,293
Peri-Natal Service	-	62,171	**62,171**	-
Vision	-	22,486	**22,486**	24,984
Ruby Project (Oak Housing First)	-	265,611	**265,611**	-
Other	850	-	**850**	7,658
Sub-total for Community based advice, advocacy and support	4,035,631	1,696,104	**5,731,735**	5,379,507

3a Income from charitable activities (continued)

Prior year income from charitable Community based advice, advocacy and support activities included £4,016,559 attributable to unrestricted activities and £1,362,948 to restricted activities.

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**2025 Total £**	2024 Total £
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	1,138,777	**1,138,777**	1,138,777
Local Boroughs	123,000	100,000	**223,000**	264,700
Women and Girls Network	-	376,618	**376,618**	425,578
Tri-borough Angelou Counselling Partnership(Healing Project)	-	44,300	**44,300**	44,300
Cloudesley	-	40,164	**40,164**	-
Other	-	5,832	**5,832**	16,042
	-	-	**-**	2,950
Sub-total for Therapeutic	123,000	1,705,691	**1,828,691**	1,892,347

Prior year income from charitable Therapeutic activities included £164,700 attributable to unrestricted activities and £1,727,647 to restricted activities.

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**2025 Total £**	2024 Total £
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	320,441	**320,441**	380,793
Local Boroughs	61,998	-	**61,998**	67,078
Women and Girls Network	-	89,973	**89,973**	89,972
Banham Family Fund	-	16,667	**16,667**	23,333
Sub-total for Children and Young People	61,998	427,081	**489,079**	561,176

Prior year income from charitable Children and Young People activities included £67,078 attributable to unrestricted activities and £494,098 to restricted activities.

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**2025 Total £**	2024 Total £
External training	45,656	-	**45,656**	21,711
Other	4,049	-	**4,049**	350
Sub-total for Other services	49,705	-	**49,705**	22,061

Prior year income from charitable Other services included £22,061 attributable to unrestricted activities.

Partnership work	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**2025 Total £**	2024 Total £
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	731,258	**731,258**	695,722
Greater London Authority	-	221,013	**221,013**	224,926
Sub-total for Partnerships	-	952,271	**952,271**	920,648

Prior year income from charitable Partnership activities totaling £920,648 were fully attributable to restricted services

Total Income from charitable activities	9,174,121	6,266,262	**15,440,383**	13,924,827

Prior year total income from charitable activities included £7,994,527 attributable to unrestricted activities and £5,940,300 to restricted activities

3b. **Income from charitable activities (continued)**

Grant Aid of £840,000 was received in 2024/25 from London Councils for the Ascent Specialist Refuge Partnership for YR3 Q4.

The following table illustrates how money was allocated across the partnership and that it has been used for the purposes outlined in the funding agreement.

	Grant Income	Grant Spend
	£	£
Lead Partner: Ashiana Network		
Delivery Partner: Solace Women's Aid	272,048	272,048
Total	272,048	272,048

Section 37 Statement

	Grant Income	Grant Spend
	£	£
Salaries	230,922	229,838
Beneficiary Costs:	21,840	22,928
Central Overheads:	19,286	19,287
Total	272,048	272.048

4. Analysis of expenditure

	Charitable Activities										
			Provision and Prevention				Partnerships				
	Cost of raising funds £	Refuge accomo-dation £	Community advice, advocacy and support £	Therapeutic £	Children and Young People £	Other services £	Partnerships £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	**2025 Total £**	2024 Total £
Staff (Note 6)	130,489	2,962,449	4,132,335	1,255,819	382,271	25,962	155,420	1,360,615	103,155	**10,508,515**	10,004,495
Partnerships	-	99,969	278,885	61,954	-	-	761,609	-	-	**1,202,417**	1,090,908
Children and service users	48,010	83,702	211,573	86,515	3,945	-	-	578	-	**434,323**	465,685
IT and Facilities	22,381	183,729	231,257	74,755	25,691	2,404	6,154	246,469	20,510	**813,350**	859,176
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	6,762	1,683,538	164,141	59,227	2,431	1,334	4,602	46,463	32,815	**2,001,313**	1,598,077
Professional Fees and Other	34,509	258,976	2,831	435	6,968	9,817	1,480	313,812	30,400	**659,228**	369,403
	242,151	5,272,363	5,021,022	1,538,705	421,306	39,517	929,265	1,967,937	186,880	**15,619,146**	14,387,744
Support costs	28,391	644,615	899,054	273,239	83,173	5,649	33,816	(1,967,937)	-	-	-
Governance costs	2,541	64,909	74,776	23,113	7,282	605	13,654	-	(186,880)	-	-
Total expenditure 2025	**273,083**	**5,981,887**	**5,994,852**	**1,835,057**	**511,761**	**45,771**	**976,735**	**-**	**-**	**15,619,146**	14,387,744
Total expenditure 2024	284,854	5,083,304	5,578,263	1,882,707	573,950	42,154	942,512	-	-	14,387,744	

Of the total expenditure, £9,329,517 was unrestricted (2024: £8,407,213) and £6,289,629 was restricted (2024: £5,980,531).

4. Analysis of expenditure (prior year comparative information)

	Charitable Activities										
			Provision and Prevention				**Partnership**				
	Cost of raising funds	Refuge accomo-dation	Community advice, advocacy and support	Therapeutic	Children and Young People	Other services	Partnerships	Support Costs	Governance costs	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff (Note 6)	189,230	2,466,248	3,933,580	1,239,188	433,275	18,798	145,390	1,482,484	96,302	10,004,495	10,416,711
Partnerships	-	93,606	235,686	42,410	-	-	719,206	-	-	1,090,908	1,305,602
Children and service users	29,027	128,116	249,351	51,929	4,496	1,563	498	705	-	465,685	451,656
IT and Facilities	11,396	187,095	259,098	99,937	31,494	3,550	9,043	233,466	24,097	859,176	706,826
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	5,718	1,282,502	144,666	70,189	3,798	1,191	5,382	46,076	38,555	1,598,077	1,726,389
Professional Fees and Other	60	60,584	54,816	(1,672)	180	14,238	7,790	178,066	55,341	369,403	650,138
	235,431	4,218,151	4,877,197	1,501,981	473,243	39, 340	887,309	1,940,797	214,295	14,387,744	15,257,322
Support costs	46,509	790,722	615,321	354,223	92,356	2,120	39,546	(1,940,797)	-	-	-
Governance costs	2,914	74,431	85,745	26,503	8,351	694	15,657	-	(214,295)	-	-
Total expenditure 2024	284,854	5,083,304	5,578,263	1,882,707	573,950	42,154	942,512	-	-	14,387,744	15,257,322

5 Net (expenditure)/income for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Depreciation	**107,146**	104,711
Interest payable	**345**	11,893
Operating lease rentals:		
• Property	**1,066,951**	**876,727**
• Other	**20,960**	**17,416**
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit (statutory audit)	**29,985**	28,000

Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

6 Staff costs were as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Salaries and wages	**8,097,546**	7,680,157
Social security costs	**762,773**	714,277
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**225,671**	212,352
Redundancy and termination payments	**(2,992)**	12,055
Staff training, supervision, travel and volunteer costs	**294,254**	292,838
Sessional counsellors and self employed	**365,067**	292,926
Agency & locum staff	**703,164**	749,637
Other forms of employee benefits	**63,032**	50,253
	10,508,515	10,004,495

Staff costs above have been allocated to expenditure as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Cost of raising funds	**130,489**	189,230
Refuge accommodation	**2,962,449**	2,466,248
Community advice, advocacy and support	**4,132,335**	3,933,580
Therapeutic	**1,255,819**	1,239,188
Children and Young People	**382,271**	433,275
Other services	**25,962**	18,798
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	**155,420**	145,390
Support and governance	**1,463,770**	1,578,786
	10,508,515	10,004,495

The following number of employees received emoluments exceeding £60k (excl pension contributions) during the year, between:

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
£60,000 - £69,999	**1**	1
£70,000 - £79,999	**-**	2
£90,000 - £99,999	**1**	-

6 Staff costs (continued)

All higher paid staff are members of the key management personnel.

The total employee benefits paid to the key management personnel (Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Director of Services Excellence, Director of Finance and Business Support and Director of Business Development) were £280,632 (2024: £249,7661). Employee benefits included employer pension contributions, on call payments and employer's NI. Pensions costs paid in respect of the higher paid employees above amounted to £8,239 (2024: £6,536).

No charity trustee received a payment for other services supplied to the charity (2024: £NIL). Reimbursement of travel and other expenses to trustees in 2025 was £NIL (2024:£NIL)

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Cost of raising funds	**2.6**	2.5
Refuge accommodation	**80.9**	68.3
Community advice, advocacy and support	**120.7**	101.4
Therapeutic	**34.3**	24.8
Children and Young People	**12.8**	12.1
Other services	**2.0**	0.6
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	**9.0**	4.0
Support and governance	**43.8**	52.0
	306.1	265.7

8 Related party transactions

Total donations from 3 Trustee were £ 214 in the financial year (2024: £676 from 2 Trustees)

9 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for the charitable purpose.

10a Tangible fixed assets

	Play area	Freehold property	Fixtures and fittings	Head Office	Total
Cost or valuation	£	£	£	£	£
At the start of the year	51,908	961,662	328,024	141,995	**1,483,589**
Additions in year	-	-	68,722	6,325	**75,047**
At the end of the year	51,908	961,662	396,746	148,320	**1,558,636**
Depreciation					
At the start of the year	51,908	193,832	259,661	15,135	**520,536**
Charge for the year	-	11,381	34,627	37,254	**83,262**
At the end of the year	51,908	205,213	294,288	52,389	**603,798**
Net book value At the end of the year	-	756,449	102,458	95,931	**954,838**
At the start of the year	-	767,830	68,363	126,860	**963,053**

Land with a value of £480,831 (2024: £480,831) is included within freehold property and not depreciated.

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

10b Intangible fixed assets

	Software £
Cost or valuation	
At the start of the year	**417,883**
At the end of the year	**417,883**
Depreciation	
At the start of the year	**360,155**
Charge for the year	**23,884**
At the end of the year	**384,039**
Net book value At the end of the year	**33,844**
At the start of the year	**57,728**

11 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Amounts due from Local Authorities and government agencies	**1,590,809**	980,024
Other debtors	**137,076**	96,087
Prepayments	**152,734**	111,150
Accrued income	**639,141**	655,231
	2,519,760	1,842,492

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
CBILS Loan payable (see note 13 below)	**-**	64,296
Trade creditors	**417,856**	348,240
Taxation and social security	**274,825**	236,379
Other creditors	**189,218**	96,978
Provision- see 12a below	**250,000**	250,000
Funds held on behalf of clients	**116,801**	15,379
Accruals	**787,807**	825,066
Deferred income – (see 12b below)	**972,668**	1,102,601
	3,009,175	2,938,939

12a Provision

The provision at the balance sheet date was the estimated settlement cost relating to the planned exit at one of our services. The timing of the settlement has not yet been agreed with the funder.

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	**250,000**	250,000
Balance at the end of the year	**250,000**	250,000

12b Deferred Income

Deferred income comprises income received in advance on contracts and projects which are delivered in the following year.

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	**1,102,601**	720,835
Amount released to income in the year	**(1,102,601)**	(720,835)
Amount deferred in the year	**972,668**	1,102,601
Balance at the end of the year	**972,668**	1,102,601

13a Loans payable

Loans payable includes £NIL(2024: £64,296) relating to the government backed Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, which carries interest at 6.5% and a final Scheme payable to Social Investment Business FM Limited (SIB). Interest is charged at 6.5% and monthly capital and interest payments commenced in July 2022. The loan was repaid in full in the financial year.

	2025 £	2024 £
Capital repayments are due as follows:		
- up to one year (see note 12)	**-**	64,296
Balance at the end of the year	**-**	64,296

14 Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds
Tangible fixed assets	-	954,838	-	954,838
Intangible fixed assets	-	33,845	-	33,845
Net current assets	1,206,807	-	-	1,206,807
Net assets at the end of the year	**1,206,807**	**988,683**	**-**	**2,195,490**

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	963,053	-	963,053
Intangible fixed Assets	-	57,728	-	57,728
Net current assets	978,486	-	-	978,486
Net assets at the end of the year	978,486	1,020,781	-	1,999,267

15 Movements in funds (current year)

	At the start of the year £	Income £	Expenditure & Losses £	Gains & Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted Funds:					
Fundraising	-	21,891	-	-	21,891
Provision and Prevention:					
Refuge service	-	1,485,115	(1,493,156)	8,041	-
Community advice, advocacy & support	-	1,696,104	(1,711,546)	15,442	-
Therapeutic	-	1,705,691	(1,706,075)	3,880	3,496
Children and Young People	-	427,081	(427,081)	-	-
Partnership Work:					
Ascent Plus and other partnership	-	952,271	(951,771)	-	500
Total restricted funds	**-**	**6,288,153**	**(6,289,629)**	**27,363**	**25,887**
Unrestricted Funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	1,020,781	-	(107,145)	75,047	988,683
Total designated funds					
General Funds:	978,486	9,527,216	(9,222,372)	(102,410)	1,180,920
Total Unrestricted funds	**1,999,267**	**9,527,216**	**(9,329,517)**	**(27,363)**	**2,169,603**
Total Funds	**1,999,267**	**15,815,369**	**(15,619,146)**	**-**	**2,195,490**

15a Movements in funds (prior year)

	At the start of the year	Income	Expenditure & losses	Gains & Transfers	At the end of the year
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds:					
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	-	1,434,959	(1,434,959)	-	-
Community advice, advocacy & support	-	1,362,948	(1,362,948)	-	-
Therapeutic	-	1,727,647	(1,727,647)	-	-
Children and Young People	-	494,098	(512,465)	18,367	-
Partnership work					
Ascent Advice and other partnership	-	920,648	(942,512)	21,864	-
Total restricted funds	-	5,940,300	(5,980,531)	40,231	-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	908,748		(104,711)	216,744	1,020,781
Total designated funds	908,748	-	(104,711)	216,744	1,020,781
General funds	1,092,353	8,445,610	(8,302,502)	(256,975)	978,486
Total unrestricted funds	2,001,101	8,445,610	(8,407,213)	(40,231)	1,999,267
Total funds	2,001,101	14,385,910	(14,387,744)	-	1,999,267

15b Purposes of restricted and designated funds

Fundraising Legacy income has been restricted for Mother & Baby Support.

Refuge Services are (via Ashiana lead partner) for the complex needs refuge in Camden; MHCLG funding for Family Support and Resettlement workers across our London boroughs. The MOPAC Tier 1 Accommodation funding supported several multiple disadvantage workers at our refuges. The GLA and L&Q Foundation funded the new move on accommodation NEST project across three London boroughs. The Youth Endowment Fund was used to pilot an emotional coaching Program to mothers living in refuges to exercise positive parenting skills and build healthy relationship with their children.London Community Foundation has been a pilot to transform the Haringey refuge into a psychologically trauma informed environment. Part of the work has been to create a multi-functional area in the lounge space for both the women to have a relaxing space, and the children to have a safe play area

Community advice, advocacy and support: This fund is for the advice, advocacy and outreach work to survivors of domestic violence. Women and Girls Network have channeled London Councils funding for our Advice hub. Other funders include Southall Black Sisters for women with no recourse to public funds, London Council for a Women's Homelessness project, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Program, together with the Irish Youth Foundation for the Irish and Irish Traveller communities and Trust for London towards the Immigration advice lawyer. The Olywn Foundation provides service user grants

Therapeutic: The counselling service is free to residents and service users of the organisation and is accessed through Ascent counselling and the North London Rape Crisis services. The funders are MOPAC, Women and Girls Network, Tri-borough Angelou, and Richard Cloudesley.

Children and Young People (CYP): Our work in partnership with VRU is to provide crisis intervention support to young people in hospital emergency departments is funded by MOPAC. WGN fund our work with Black and minoritised young women who have experienced domestic and sexual abuse. The Banham Family Fund has funded counselling for children and young people in communities and schools.

Ascent Plus and other partnership: This fund was for the provision of Violence against Women and Girls services delivered through the partners from the Ascent Plus project funded by London Councils. Greater London Authority has funded our Casa Project giving women second stage accommodations delivered through different partners.

Capital: This fund represents the net book value of all tangible and intangible fixed assets. The expenditure reflect the movements in depreciation charges and transfers from unrestricted funds made to align the tangible and intangible fixed assets to net book value.

16 Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flows (used in)/provided by operating activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period	**196,223**	(1,834)
Interest received	**(22,132)**	(11,466)
Loan interest paid	**345**	11,893
Depreciation charges	**107,146**	104,711
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	**(636,188)**	762,578
Increase in creditors	**93,452**	356,396
Net cash flows (used in)/provided by operating activities	**(261,154)**	1,222,278

17 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Property		Equipment	
	2025	2024	**2025**	2024
Up to one year	**1,045,084**	865,504	**18,868**	32,398
Two to five years	**150,219**	211,656	**9,434**	40,065
	1,195,303	1,077,160	**28,302**	72,463

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.

“Thank you the bottom of my heart for changing our lives for the better in every way possible.Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

Solace Women’s Aid
Registered Address
Moore Kingston Smith LLP,
9 Appold Street
London, EC2A 2AP

Advice line freephone | 0808 802 5565
Administrative phone | 020 7619 1350
For press and media email | media@solacewomensaid.org
Website | solacewomensaid.org
Social media| @SolaceWomensAid

Professional Advisors Auditors | Moore Kingston Smith LLP Solicitors | Anthony Collins LLP

To protect our service users, names & photos of service users have been changed.

Solace Women’s Aid is a charity registered in England and Wales. Charity number 1082450. Company number 03376716

solace

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

SOLACE WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1082450

Accounts



Together we can save lives.
Annual Report and Financial Statements
31 March 2024

solacewomensaid.org

Solace Women's Aid is a charity registered in England & Wales.
Charity Number 1082450. Company Number 03376716.

@SolaceWomensAid

solace

What you can find inside.

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"I would refer **Solace** to anyone in the same situation. It's not just a job to them, **they genuinely care** and really know their stuff. They help you deal with the hardest, darkest secrets you have hidden. **I have never felt judged or misunderstood.**"
Survivor

A message from our Chair and CEO

Welcome to Solace's Impact Report 2023/24.

It has been another busy, often pressured but extremely productive year at Solace. As with many Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) charities, at Solace we continue to navigate how to best support our service users within an increasingly underfunded sector with complex external pressures on VAWG sector charities, our staff and volunteers and the women, children and non-binary people that we support.

Despite these uncertain times, we continue in our mission to support survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse. We supported 14,435 people (22/23: 13,361) in our frontline services last year. Our work has a lasting impact on the lives of the women and children we work with, and we're proud to stand in solidarity with all survivors and to work towards a safer future.

This has been a year of fresh starts, with Nahar joining as our new permanent CEO in June 2023 and Priyanka as our permanent Chair of Trustees in September 2023. Another fresh start is our new permanent office in Camden. This move has made a huge difference to staff morale and allowed us to feel more rooted in north London. The offices are welcoming and friendly and it is great to finally have our new 'home' back where Solace started our journey in Camden nearly 50 years ago.

This year, some memorable moments have been:

- Launching a new pan-London project (the Ruby Project) which seeks to expand Housing First provision for Black and ethnically minoritised women with Hopscotch Women's Centre and funded by the Oak Foundation.
- Securing funding to expand our complex needs service to a new project in Haringey.
- Expanding our peer mentoring scheme so women with lived experience can support young women and girls in who have recently experienced violence and abuse.
- Representing survivors at the Covid-19 Inquiry to ensure that they are prioritised in future emergencies our country may face.
- Partnering with Furnishing Futures to develop a blueprint for a psychologically informed environment for our refuges, and using this to transform the living rooms in our Haringey refuges.
- Working with volunteer group, eCubed, to put on fantastic events which raised over £10,000.
- Bringing our staff together at our all staff conference to celebrate their work and look at how we support women from survivors to thrivers.

We are still seeing the long-term impact of Covid-19 on those experiencing domestic abuse and survivors are facing an increase in the cost of living and strained public services. Housing remains a critical issue for women and their families in London and accessing safe and suitable accommodation remains a priority for our campaigning. We continue to call on government and statutory services to ensure that survivors are able to access the services they need to reach safety and recover, including ensuring there is sustainable funding for the VAWG sector.

As a leadership team, we're building on our commitment and perseverance in promoting an inclusive and supportive environment for our staff and survivors to embed a zero-tolerance approach to racism and discrimination. We are committed to this ongoing journey to improve. Last year, the board of trustees commissioned an independent culture review. We are now taking this work forward through a series of planned Solace Together workshops, including every staff member, that calls for reflection and builds strong values and behaviours that guide our work with service users and our effective engagement as a unified workforce.

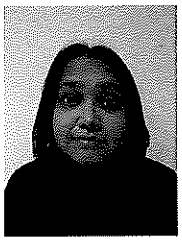
We continue to build on our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan and are actively working towards being an anti-racist organisation. The results from our culture review continue to inform our way forwards and our collective mission to be a fully intersectional and psychologically informed place of work.

The external environment remains challenging for the sector, with high staff turnover, recruitment challenges, and a lack of sustainable funding as well as changes in types and style of abuse with ever growing tech and online abuse. But we are constantly inspired by the courage of the survivors we support, and will continue to grow and adapt our services so we can reach and support more women and children.

Together, we can make change that saves lives.



Priyanka Devani
Chair of the Trustees



Nahar Choudhury
Chief Executive

“Despite these uncertain times, we continue in our mission to support survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse.”
Chair & CEO

Our year at a glance

Our services touched the lives of 18,862 people

We supported 14,435 adults and children in our frontline services

We worked with 4,427 people in our prevention services

We provided safe accommodation for 809 women & children across our 24 refuges and 64 move on spaces

We raised an income of £14.4 million to run our vital services

We worked in partnership with 44 organisations to end abuse

Our team of 266 staff members worked tirelessly to help survivors

We trained 2,418 people to recognise and respond to abuse

Volunteers provided 7,197 hours of their time

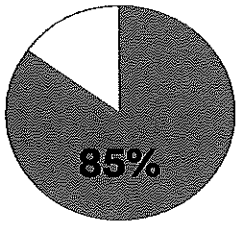
93% rated that there was a continued need for Solace services

89% found it easy or very easy to make initial contact with our sevices

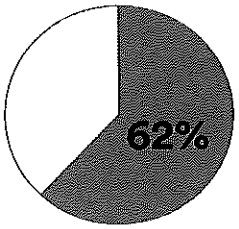
92% of service users rated Solace services as good, very good or excellent



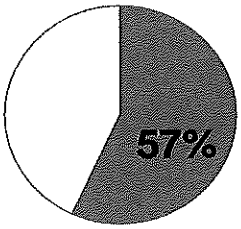
Who we support and their experiences



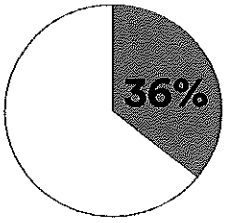
of survivors we support experienced **emotional abuse**



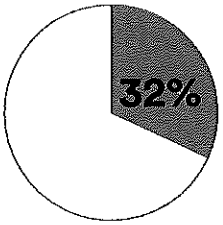
of survivors we support experienced **jealous or controlling** behaviour



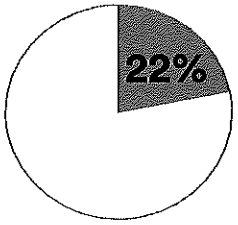
of survivors we support experienced **physical abuse**



of survivors we support experienced **financial abuse**



of survivors we support experienced **harassment and stalking**



of survivors we support experienced **sexual abuse**

57%
of women we supported have children

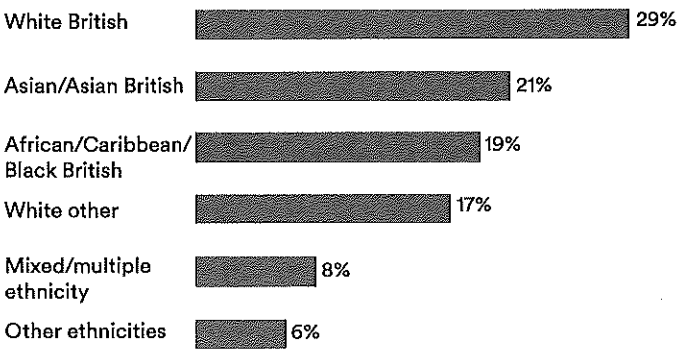
16%
of survivors had mental health support needs

30%
of people we supported have a disability

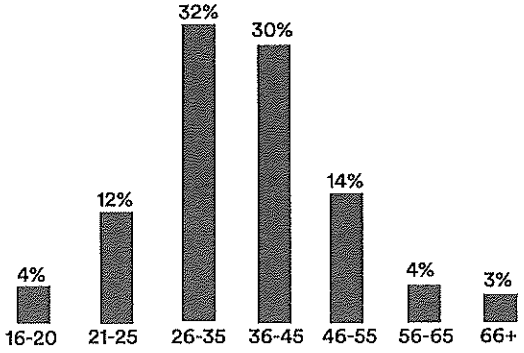
389
women we supported had no recourse to public funds

125
male survivors were supported through our services

Adults supported in our services

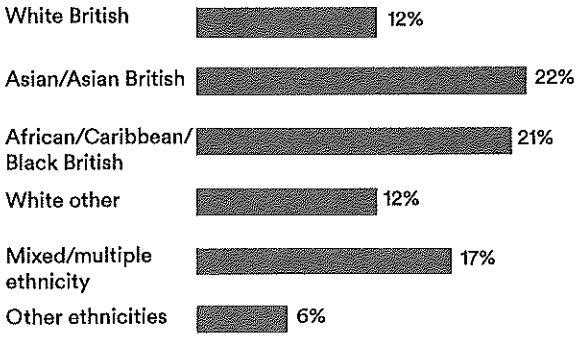


Ethnicity of adults

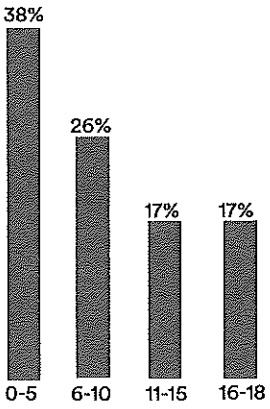


Ages of adults

Children supported in our services



Ethnicity of children



Ages of children



Strategic Report

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. The reference and administrative information set out on pages 38-39 forms part of this report. The trustees review the aims, objectives, and activities of Solace each year. This report looks at what Solace has achieved and the outcomes and benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people Solace is established to assist during the reporting period. The review also helps ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

Vision, mission and strategy

Our key objective

The promotion of the physical, emotional, and psychological wellbeing and safety of victims of domestic, sexual, and associated abuse, in particular women, young people and children.

Our vision

A world where everyone is able to live safe and independent lives which are free from gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation.

Our mission

Solace exists to end the harm done through gender-based violence. Our aim is to work to prevent violence and abuse as well as providing services to meet the individual needs of survivors particularly women and children. Our work is holistic and empowering, working alongside survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse.

Our values

- Feminist and intersectional in our understanding of male violence against women and girls
- Survivor led, trauma informed and empowering
- Diverse, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory to create a fully inclusive environment for staff and service users



"I'm so grateful, it's been a long time coming and it's such a relief. Thank you for all your hard work on this.

Survivor

We are committed to:

- Social justice and human rights
- Service users having a central voice within the organisation
- Working in collaboration with other agencies
- Continuous improvement

Our strategic priorities 2022-27

Following the launch of Solace's 2022-27 strategy we have started to work towards our six strategic objectives to drive forward our ambitions of supporting more survivors on their journeys to recovery and beyond. Our six strategic objectives are:

1. Strategic influencing, partnerships and leadership
2. Organisational development and growth
3. Long-term recovery and lasting change
4. Aspirations, education and employment
5. Children and young people
6. Empowerment, engagement and accessibility

> **The work you do is so important, keep doing it!**
>
> Survivor

> **The care and compassion I received deserves the highest praise. My advocate was absolutely amazing in helping me in any way she was able to. Talking to me and providing me with advice has helped me on my journey to overcoming everything my family and I have been through.**
>
> Survivor



What we achieved this year:
Long term recovery and change

At Solace, for women and children to truly recover from the effects of violence and abuse, we need to take a holistic approach leading to lasting change. Our services continue to provide life changing and long standing benefits to the survivors we support.

Safety support through our advice and advocacy services

Solace's dedicated London Advice line provides a first point of call for survivors. In 2023/24, our advice line answered 4,063 calls from individuals and professionals across London to provide support on domestic and/ or sexual abuse (22/23: 4,107). The line provides immediate advice and short-term support on safety planning, legal rights and options, housing advice, financial concerns, immigration issues, safeguarding and mental health issues.

78%
of survivors we supported said it improved their understanding of their rights

Our Advocacy and Support teams continue to offer support to those affected by domestic and sexual violence in seven boroughs across London. Our community based advocates work hard to increase service users' safety and meet a range of needs to recover from abuse. This year we supported 4,990 in our advocacy services (22/23: 5,916).

Longer term support for sexual violence survivors

Our North London Rape Crisis service offers a range of services to women and girls 13+ who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives. This year we answered 1,323 calls on our helpline (22/23: 894), 215 women who experienced sexual violence were provided advocacy (22/23: 286) and support, and we provided 269 women with counselling or group work (22/23: 272).

We piloted a new group work programme for survivors who have finished their counselling and who have had a negative outcome from the criminal justice system. The groups begin with a counsellor facilitating, and then women are encouraged to continue together and provide peer support. Survivors fed back that they felt empowered to have their experience normalised by their peers and felt safer and comfortable to share things.



77%
of survivors said our advice and advocacy services helped them to understand processes and access further support

Providing safe accommodation

We provide skilled, specialist support for women and children across our refuges and accommodation services, enabling them to address both their practical and emotional needs during this difficult time of transition. This year, we supported 809 women and children across our 19 refuges in seven boroughs and 64 move on spaces across London (22/23: 949).

87%

of survivors in our accommodation said they felt safer following our support

Space to heal from trauma

We continue to provide person centred and strengths based counselling and group work for survivors of domestic abuse and wider VAWG. We provide counselling for women in the community in Islington, Waltham Forest and through the pan-London Ascent Advice and Counselling service. We have continued to deliver our counselling for women and children in our refuges, to work through their feelings and understand the trauma they have experienced.

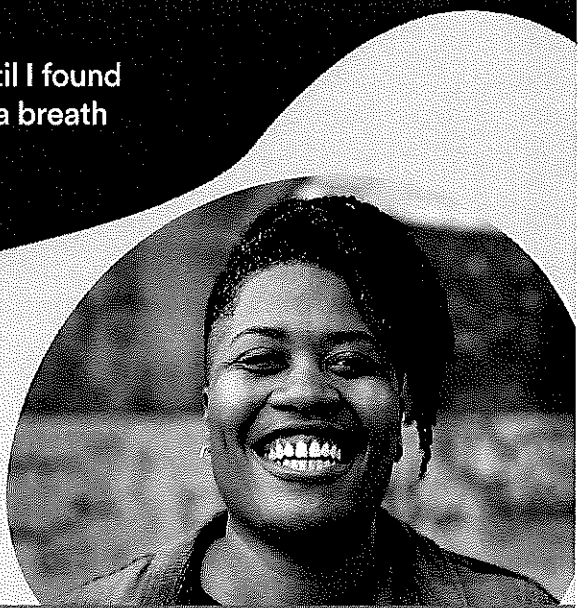
Embedding a psychologically informed framework

We are working towards psychologically informed framework (PIF) across our services and organisation. Staff have been introduced to insights and principles from psychological approaches to working with service users and each other to support them to understand, and keep in mind, the connections between thoughts, emotions and behaviour. A staff working group will be working to embed this approach across our organisation in 2024/25.

We also partnered with Furnishing Futures to develop a blueprint for a psychological informed environment for our refuges, and used the blueprint to transform the living rooms in all three of our Haringey refuges.

Survivor Case Study

I felt exhausted and hopeless trying to find the right support, until I found Solace. I was assigned a Floating Support Worker, who was like a breath of fresh air in my life and a rare and kind person. She genuinely cared about helping me and I feel that she gave me her all at all times. I needed someone to speak up for me and fight for me when I didn't know how to fight for myself and she was great at advocating for me with many organisations. She saved my life in so many ways and I will forever be grateful and remember everything she did for me.



What we achieved this year:
Strategic influencing, partnerships and leadership

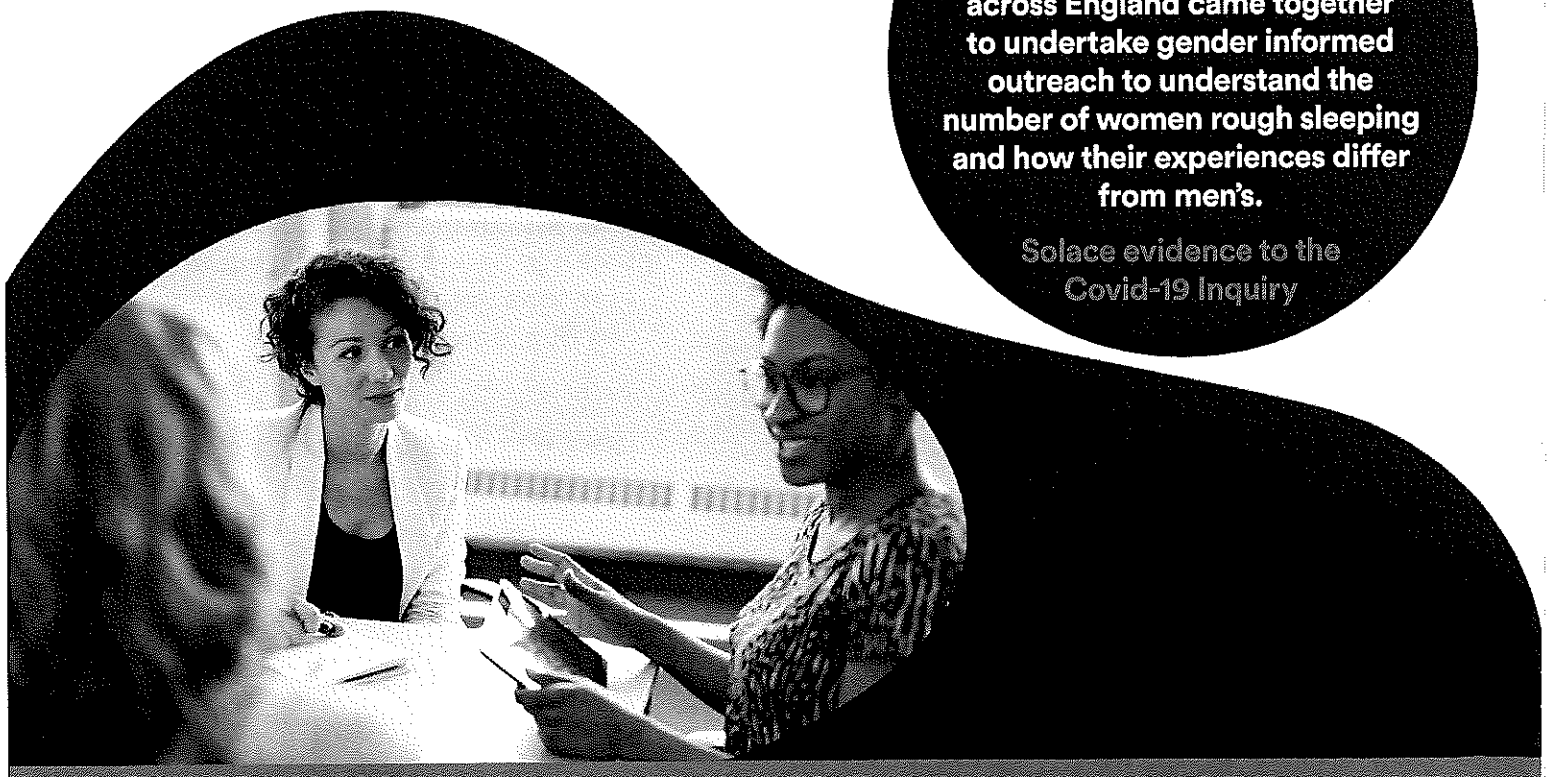
Our frontline teams deliver life changing work to survivors of VAWG, and often help them to overcome systematic barriers to help and support. Our strategic influencing at a pan-London and national level and partnerships are crucial to ensure that the specialist sector continues to provide life-saving support to all survivors and influence change to break down these barriers for good.

This year, we continued to build on our public affairs and influencing so that the voices of survivors are heard at the highest level. We raised awareness of the financial and housing challenges that survivors of domestic abuse experience, and the failings they suffer in the criminal justice system. We responded to six consultations over the year and met with 27 influential stakeholders.

Covid-19 inquiry

Solace, alongside Southall Black Sisters, represented domestic abuse survivors as a core participant in the Covid-19 Inquiry looking into the Government's decision making during the pandemic. With support from Garden Court Chambers and Public Interest Law Centre, we submitted extensive written evidence and gave oral evidence in October 2023 to highlight the experiences of survivors during the pandemic and the failings of the UK response. We await the inquiry's recommendations and lessons learned for future pandemics and emergencies in 2025.

> **For the first time, councils from across England came together to undertake gender informed outreach to understand the number of women rough sleeping and how their experiences differ from men's.**
>
> Solace evidence to the Covid-19 Inquiry





Women's Rough Sleeping Census expansion

Solace worked in coalition with Single Homeless Project, London Councils and Homeless Link to deliver the first national census into the scale of women's homelessness. For the first time, councils from across England came together to undertake gender informed outreach to understand the number of women rough sleeping and how their experiences differ from men's.

The National Women's Rough Sleeping Census Report 2023 sets out the key findings from a week-long, national census of women sleeping rough in 41 local authorities across England, and recommendations to improve the response for women. Teams conducting the census found 815 women, a far higher number than Government counts in those areas indicate.
Read the report in full: WRSC Report

> **"As a female, you feel vulnerable and I was scared to sleep outside in case anything bad happened to me. You feel people look down on you.**
>
> Women's Rough Sleeping Census Participant

2,568
calls taken from advice lines
(22/23: 2,422)

Our partnerships

Partnership is one of our three key principles that steer our organisation, and we seek to develop equitable partnerships with specialists in the male violence against women and girls sector. We are proud to lead the Ascent Advice Plus Partnership, Casa Project, Nest Project and the WiSER Project, and to be a member of the London VAWG Consortium. We continue to play an active role in the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership, Ascent Floating Support Service, and CouRAGEous Project to ensure that women and girls across London can access the specialist services they need.

44
the number of partners we worked with to support survivors of violence against women and girls
(22/23:55)

47
women supported in move on accommodation through the Casa Project
(22/23:60)

591
women provided casework support through our Ascent Advice Plus partnership
(22/23: 555).

What we achieved this year:
Organisational development - internal

Solace's staff are our biggest asset and do incredible work every day to support our survivors. We recognise that we need to do more to support our growing staff team and to foster an inclusive culture and work environment and this year we have introduced a series of new initiatives.

Wellbeing and mental health support

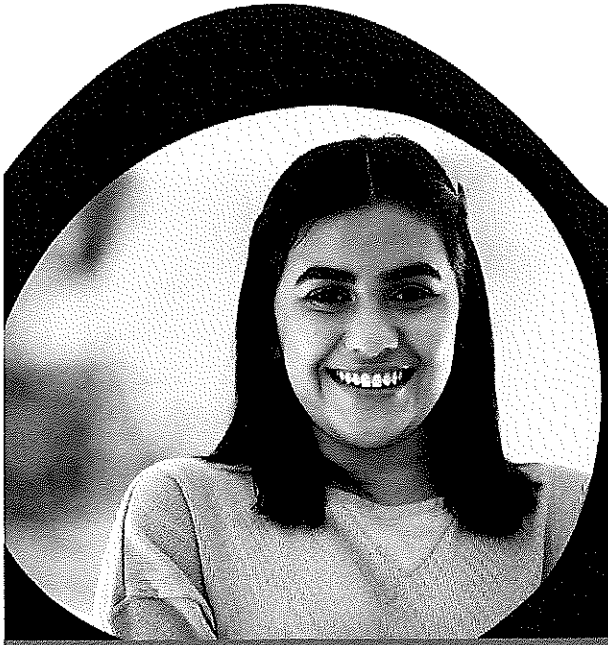
We introduced trained Mental Health Champions; staff members supporting us to become a safe workplace and to talk about our own mental health. Our Champions contribute to a mental health resources hub, support mental health anti-stigma days and conduct wellbeing assessments with staff. We deliver training for staff and managers on self-care, recruit volunteer counsellors and commissioned a new employee assistance provider which has a wider package of support. This builds on our existing provision of regular clinical supervision sessions by trained BACP supervisors, and access to daily debriefs.

Wellbeing days and flexible bank holidays

We introduced several new staff benefits including:

- Wellbeing days – In early 2024 we announced that all staff could take an extra 2 days away from work in addition to their annual leave entitlement to help them prioritise their wellbeing and mental health throughout the year.
- Switching bank holidays – Our staff team are now able to swap bank holidays set on dates for Easter and Christmas and use them for alternative faith-based events or celebrations.

200
staff attended our all staff conference



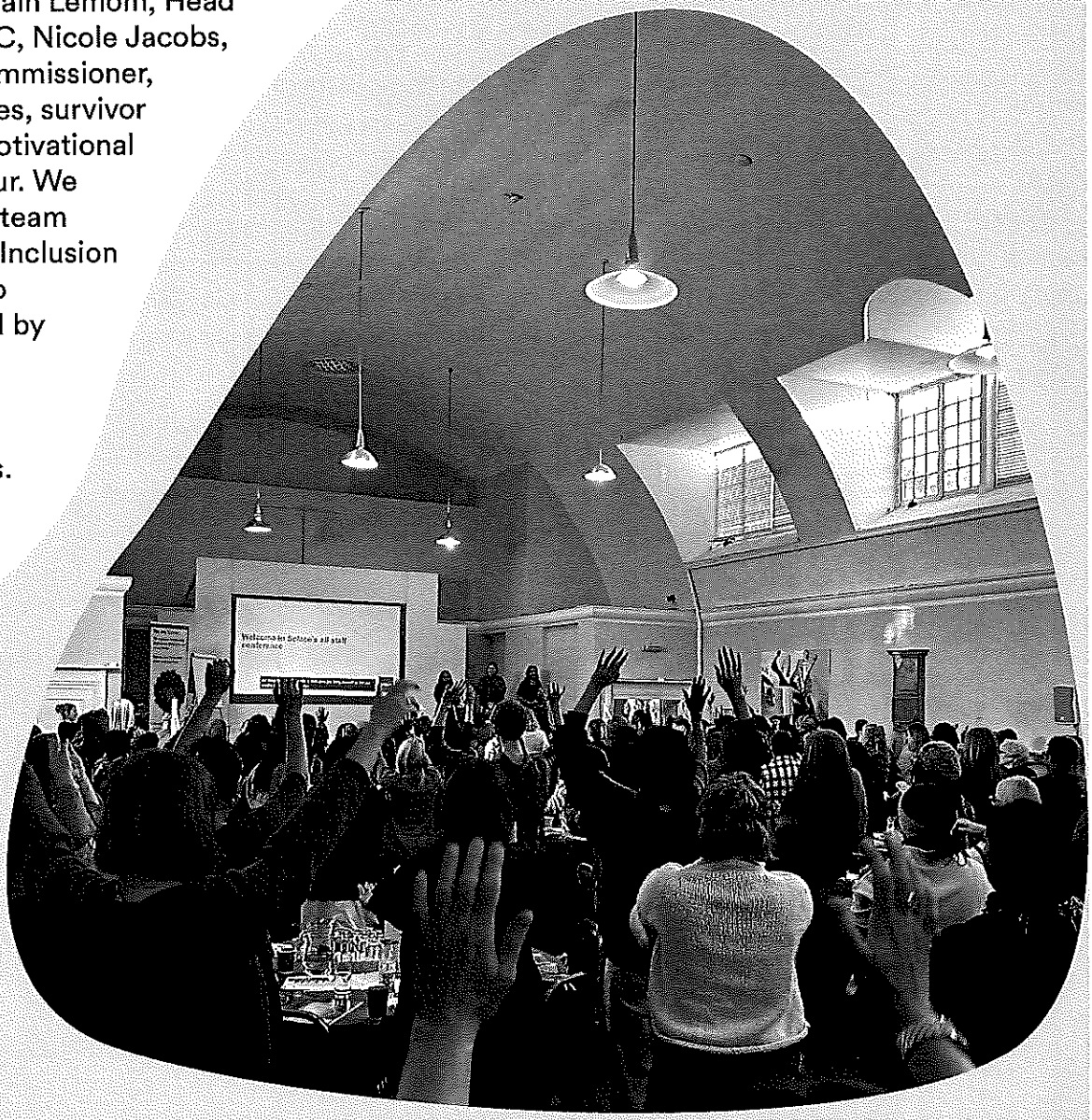
> **"Thank you so much for everything, you have no idea how much I truly appreciate your support and Solace as a whole.**
>
> Survivor

Solace Together

In 2022/23 Solace undertook an independent culture review. In response to the feedback from this review we designed and started our Solace Together sessions, running from March 2024. Our CEO, Nahar Choudhury, and members of SMT will be holding sessions with every single member of staff to gather thoughts on our culture, on being an intersectional feminist organisation and how to be a truly anti-racist organisation. Our aim to move forward together with improved culture and a united purpose.

All staff conference

In November 2023 we held our first full staff conference under our new CEO in central London. 200 staff attended and we held sessions on the theme of Survivor to Thriver. We were joined by some exceptional speakers including Jain Lemom, Head of VAWG for MOPAC, Nicole Jacobs, Domestic Abuse Commissioner, as well as our trustees, survivor ambassadors and motivational speaker April Ventour. We celebrated our staff team through our second Inclusion Awards for staff who had been nominated by their peers for going above and beyond in supporting and including colleagues.



What we achieved this year:
Organisational development - growth

As an organisation, growth is part of our mission so we can provide more services to those that need them. The cost of living crisis and increased strain on public services has meant that it is a challenging time for fundraising within our sector and beyond. However, we continue to work hard to achieve the dual aim of supporting survivors and being able to do more to support the frontline staff working for the organisation.

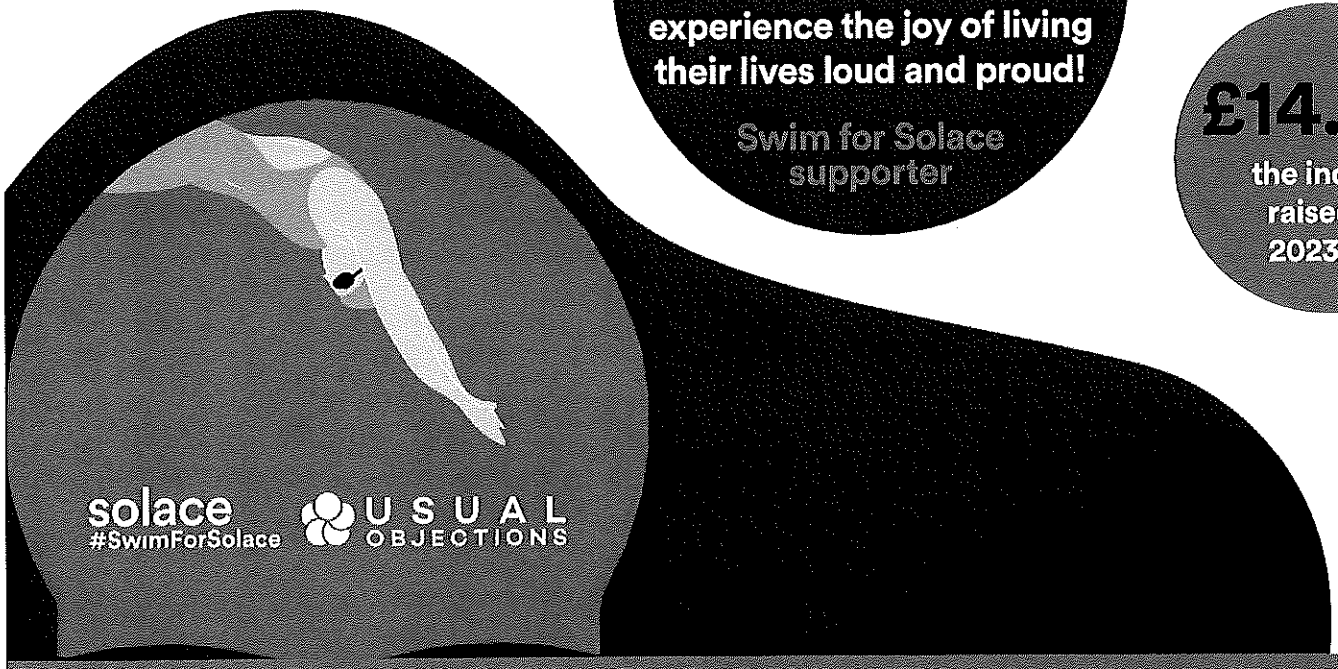
In 2023/24, we raised £14.4 million of income. The majority of our funding is from statutory funders for delivering refuge and IDVA services in addition to the generous support and donations of individual donors, community groups and companies. From marathon runners and cake bakers to jewellery sellers and gig organisers, every £1 raised has made a huge difference to the lives of survivors recovering from abuse.

Swim for Solace

We held our very first Swim for Solace fundraising event, encouraging supporters to swim 35 lengths, miles or times to highlight how women are assaulted on average 35 times before they report to the police. We were delighted that people swam to help survivors and thank all those that took part. In 2023, we also had our highest ever number of runners supporting us in events such as Hackney Half Marathon.

1,253
the number of miles ran in aid of Solace

"All women and girls should not only be safe and free from fear - but also experience the joy of living their lives loud and proud!"
Swim for Solace supporter



£14.3m
the income raised in 2023/24



Our Christmas Campaign

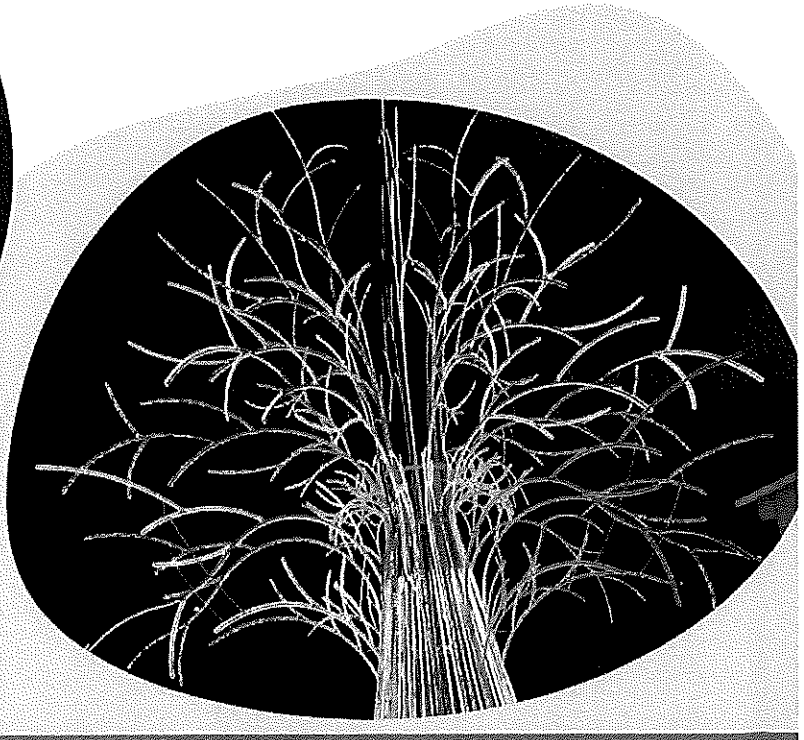
We rounded up the year with our powerful and poignant 'Safe This Christmas' campaign film featuring Eastenders actor and rising star Milly Zero as 'Amy' – a young women fleeing an abusive relationship and finding safety in a Solace refuge. The film also featured Solace staff and volunteers and members of LIPS choir, a London based trans-inclusive women's choir.

Corporate Partnerships

This year we are delighted to have strengthened our partnership with the London Designer Outlet in Wembley, who gave a pair of shoes to every woman and child in our refuge as part of their 'In Their Shoes' campaign. They also launched a Warrior Tree at the London Designer Outlet as a symbol of unity and undertook comprehensive training to foster a safer space and equip their staff to positively impact the community.

Partners also provide invaluable support to Solace through their pro bono services – this year the support provided was valued at £70,300 (2022/23: £95,407) with a large proportion attributable to Christmas donations of £18,000.

> **"Our goal is not only to gather support but to inspire empathy, solidarity, and to showcase the transformative power of small acts of kindness. LDO staff, our brands, and the Brent community all come together to support this mission.**
>
> London Designer Outlet



“My counsellor's approach and the way that I felt like I was learning things each session, as well as feeling supported and safe was incredible. Her energy made me feel something I've never felt before. Truly life changing!

Solace Service User



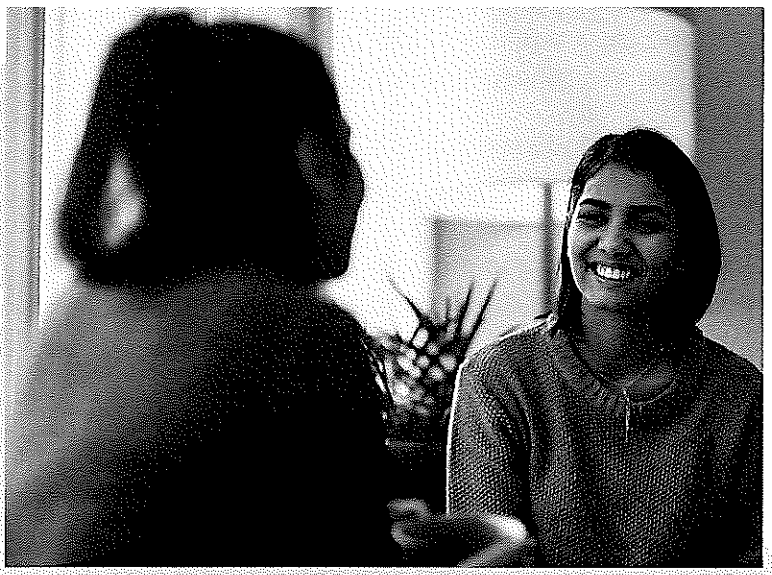


“Thank you so much to my ISVA, you have been absolutely amazing. I would say that you helped me fight as hard as I did. I am beyond thankful for all the help and support from you.

Solace Service User

“I just want to thank my Caseworker dearly for your help and support for my family, thank you for your patience and understanding and providing the help they needed. My mum is extremely grateful also and wants me to thank you greatly.

Solace Service User

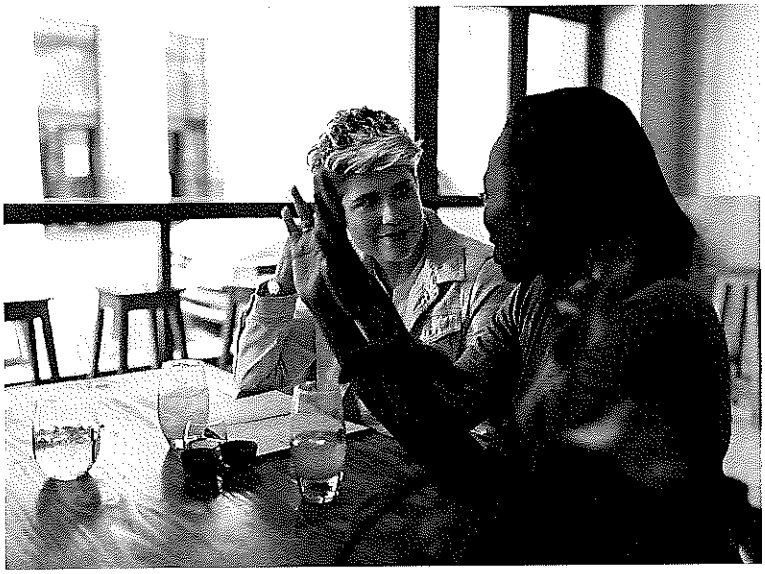


“

You did a fantastic job, you were kind yet efficient, you judged the situation and my needs perfectly and you have made a significant difference to my life.

Solace Service User





“

In an unexpected way, it has given me the self-esteem boost I need. I never knew just how amazing I actually am! Thank you so much to my Caseworker, I really do appreciate you.

Solace Service User

“

Thank you for being with me and staying in touch throughout this ordeal. You've been such a kind and helping hand and I just wanted to say how much I appreciate you throughout this whole process.

Solace Service User



What we achieved this year:
Aspirations, Education and Employment

We are all too aware of the impact that violence and abuse can have on women's employment and financial stability and also on young people's aspirations and education. We work to create more opportunities within Solace and focus on supporting survivors to financial independence – as our strategy evolves we will look to focus on creating more employment pathways for survivors in the wider job market. We achieve so much with the support of our volunteers and they continue to allow us to help more survivors, as well as create pathways into employment.

LUCE Project for visually impaired women

Through a grant from the Vision Foundation (now Fight for Sight), we launched the LUCE Project. It aims to make our Advice service more inclusive for people affected by blindness and visual impairment, who have historically rarely accessed our services, and break down barriers to employment for visually impaired survivors. Through the project, we have 3 active volunteers (2 of whom are doing an IDVA qualification) who are answering calls in our Advice Line and 2 volunteers who are looking for other opportunities within Solace.

Expanding our peer mentoring scheme

Our WiSER project for women experiencing multiple disadvantage, continues to deliver and grow its' peer mentoring scheme. Women can access support from a team of peer mentors with lived experience, in addition to their WiSER advocates. We successfully expanded this scheme to our advocacy scheme for young people in London's Major Trauma Centres. We recruited 10 peer mentors and delivered training to provide ongoing emotional and psychoeducational support to young people once advocates complete their support.



“

She was like a role model and gave me a bit of hope, because I knew if she could do it, I might be able to too.

Solace Service User supported by a Peer Mentor

13

the number of volunteers that joined Solace's staff team in 2023/24

Our volunteers

In 2023/24, we received 7,197 volunteer and professional hours from individuals and students . Our volunteers worked across 28 different projects (22/23: 5,336 hours). Based on the London Living Wage, we estimate that they contributed £94,641 to our services this year (22/23: £63,765). We hosted student placement throughout the year working with education providers to increased their understanding of supporting VAWG survivors and for our staff's mutual learning.

> **Recovery is complex but you need to keep turning up and challenge yourself. It's easy trying to find the new you but it's difficult to unlearn the old you – that's where the hard work is.**
>
> Survivor to employee

> **I am already seeing how my time here at Solace has helped prepare me for my other internship that I am in right now. My time at Solace has really helped my confidence.**
>
> Solace Volunteer



What we achieved this year:
Children and Young People

We continue to see the impact of the rise of online and technological abuse on children and young people, and the impact of domestic abuse in their homes and schools. Our work with children and young people is crucial to support them on their own journeys to recovery. With increasing levels of misogyny being seen across our society, it is more vital than ever that we continue our work alongside children and young people to prevent abuse and increase understanding of healthy relationships.

270
children and young people supported
(22/23:191)

Supporting young people in London's Major Trauma Centres

Our team of IDVAs have work in close partnership with Redthread to provide crisis intervention support to young people of all genders who present in London's Major Trauma Centres due to domestic abuse and sexual violence issues. We provide training provision to hospital practitioners to improve the identification of violence and abuse across the four London major trauma centres.

2,000
people involved in our children and young people preventative group work and projects

Working with young boys

Our Protect our Women Project delivered a newly developed 'Working with young boys' programme in three secondary schools, facilitating conversations around masculinity, identity, sexuality, and relationships through an expert, professional framework. It aims to empower boys to share their learning and help others to learn about positive and healthy models of masculinity. We are looking to expand the delivery of the programme as a vital way to tackle rising misogyny in young men and boys.



> **"You have made a tangible difference to the ways the boys are able to express themselves emotionally and are providing crucial space for them to talk as a group and learn such important life lessons.**
>
> Teacher

Our STAR Programme

Solace's STAR (Supporting Trauma Awareness and Resilience) programme is part of our whole family approach and supports trauma awareness and building resilience for mothers and children in three of our refuges. The programme provides a safe and confidential space to mothers and children in their respective groups to unpack their experiences of abuse and trauma while identifying new strategies, building resilience, healing through growing hearts and minds, and strengthening relationships.

Despite a lack of ringfenced funding for children as victims, we continue to prioritise provision to support mothers and children. We provide counselling for children and younger people in our refuges, our family support workers play a crucial role in addressing the devastating impact that domestic abuse has on mothers and children and our sessional play workers provide respite for mothers in refuge. We work with many different partner organisations to bring fun activities and new opportunities into our supported accommodation services, including music making with Wigmore Hall, songwriting with Royal Opera House and yoga with KidsinMind.

> **"I have confidence that children are taken care of and feel safe during the group so they can separate from their mums for the first time.**
>
> Survivor taking part in the STAR Programme

Supporting schools and universities

We have created a section on our website specifically for schools and universities with a range of materials including resources and posters to raise awareness of VAWG and Solace services. We provide training opportunities for schools and guides to for how young people can get involved in raising vital funds for Solace

Queen Mary University has supported Solace annually since 2022. The students and Feminist Society have organised fundraising activities including Bongo Bingo, bake sales and sports tournaments as well as taking part in our one off training course 'Building a Culture of Consent for Higher Education'.



What we achieved this year: Empowerment, Engagement and Accessibility

At Solace, we want to foster an environment of empowerment and amplify the voices of the survivors. We raise awareness of violence against women and girls and develop services which provide for survivors from intersectional backgrounds and the most hidden women.

Supporting women experiencing muliple disadvantage

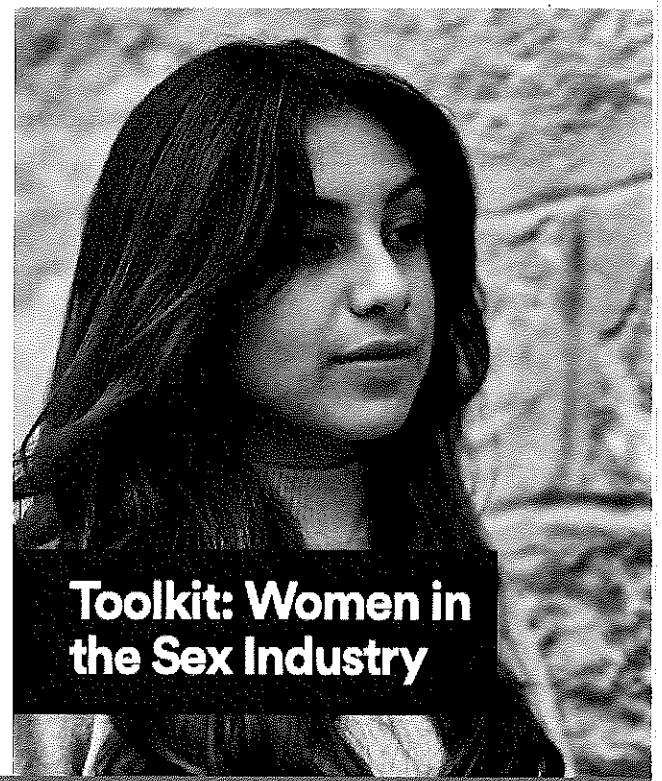
Solace specialises in providing vital support to the most vulnerable women in London including those experiencing multiple disadvantages such as domestic abuse, complex mental health, substance misuse, rough sleeping, insecure or uncertain immigration status and history of children being removed from care and/or at risk of further removals. Through our WiSER Project, two Housing First projects in Westminster and Islington and our multiple disadvantage refuge, we have supported 137 people who are frequently excluded from mainstream services and/or find it hard to engage with support (22/23:107).

> **When you've become homeless, they only see you as homeless. But with Solace they actually do take into account you are actually a person you had a life before that and you do have a life to continue and that's what they're trying to do is actually make you continue from the life you actually had before.**
>
> Survivor

We published evaluations of our Housing First VAWG Westminster Service, in partnership with Standing Together, and our WiSER Project which shows the continuing impact they have on women and the ongoing improvements we are making. A priority for Solace is to expand our services providing this critical support across London and our new Ruby Project partnership with Hopscotch Women's Centre is the next step in ensuring that Black and ethnically minoritised women are better served by our services.

Supporting with the Sex Industry Toolkit

We published a toolkit which contains guidance for staff on working with service users in the sex industry. We also recorded a webinar containing an overview of terminology, stereotypes, the law, common barriers and challenges, as well as advice and resources for how to support service users who are in the sex industry.



Survivor Ambassador launch

In May 2023, we launched our new survivor ambassador programme, a group of incredible women who have accessed Solace's services and now want to share their stories to raise awareness of sexual violence and domestic abuse, and empower other women and girls. From media appearances, to public speaking engagements and consultation on our campaigns, they use their voice, skills and passion in a range of ways to advocate not only for themselves, but other survivors.

Raising awareness of VAWG through the media

We work closely with the media to raise awareness and represent the women we support, and to reach women who need our services. We also work to ensure that VAWG is reported on responsibly and that we reach supporters and campaign for survivors. Where we can, we include our Survivor Ambassadors and the voices and views of the women we work with. This year we had more than 150 media engagements and were featured in magazines such as Cosmopolitan, Stylist as well as on TV and radio such as Channel 4 News, BBC News, ITV, Sky News, Radio 4 and LBC.

Accessibility of our services

We work to improve the accessibility of our services so more survivors can reach the help they need. We use alternative text and subtitles on all our comms, and have Recite Me on our website, which supports people in a variety of ways, including translating our information into over 100 languages and adaptations for neurodiversity and sight impairments. We created some short films about our refuges to help women and professionals understand the support, and now have a online form to help women make self-referrals. You can learn more about moving into a refuge or referring women into a refuge here and here.

Survivor Case Study

My emotional and mental wellbeing was greatly improved by having my worker by my side throughout the investigation and court case. She was extremely empathetic and was so detail-oriented that she thought of everything. I felt taken care of and it put my mind at ease knowing that someone who knew the criminal justice process inside and out was looking out for me and advocating for me. This meant that I could focus more energy on improving my wellbeing rather than worrying about the case too much.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

Solace continues to focus on advancing anti-racism practice, fostering inclusion, and ensuring the safety and appreciation of our service users and staff. We want to take a proactive approach to tackling the underrepresentation of colleagues of colour in management (and across the wider charity sector).

The inclusivity of our services continues to be a focus – 93% of survivors said our services were culturally sensitive. We deliver bespoke services for older women through the Silver Project, young women through our CYP services and rape crisis centre, Irish Traveller women, and women with no recourse to public funds. New staff training took place on meeting the needs of Bangladeshi women and supporting LGBT+ survivors.

Our work has also focused on creating a new language guide to empower and equip staff with the confidence to use respectful and sensitive language when interacting with colleagues and survivors.

We continue to upskill our staff to be upstanders rather than bystanders, providing everyone with skills to proactively challenge microaggressions and exclusionary behaviour experienced by service users and colleagues through our bespoke 'Courageous Conversations training'. This year we trained a team of staff co-facilitators to deliver these sessions, so that all staff can access this powerful course. Our second annual Inclusion Awards showcased those team members who had put this course into action through active allyship and celebrated staff who had taken broader steps to spearhead inclusion and anti-racism in their support for survivors and staff.

This year we established our EDI and Culture Steering Group, developed a mentorship programme and an aspiring leaders programme for colleagues from global majorities within the organisation. These initiatives are seeking to nurture the talent of colleagues from global majorities, pave the way for more inclusive leadership and drive tangible progress in creating an equitable and inclusive workplace in which every team member feels valued, heard and seen.

We have also worked with the EDI and Culture Steering group to design questions for our updated staff survey to help us to understand our staff's experiences and further steps to make our workplace inclusive and anti-discriminatory. We continue to provide specific support for women from the global majority through our debriefs with supervisors of colour and through our EDI open sessions which are weekly sessions for staff seeking assistance for EDI related concerns, issues and challenges.



93%
of survivors said our services were culturally sensitive

“

My main takeaway from the training was you can call people IN rather than OUT. I think this could change the narrative of challenging others in a way where they could perhaps not get so defensive about being challenged.

EDI Training Participant

“

I feel like I'm part of something great.

Steering Group Member

“

Listening to other people's stories about microaggressions they have experienced was very eye-opening as this training allows you to see the subtleties of microaggressions and how they can impact on others. I also now feel equipped to challenge others in work settings and my personal life.

EDI Training Participant

“

The mentorship allowed for me to learn, grow and develop my confidence. I was able to take questions to my session and get an alternative perspective on the management of different projects.

Mentee on the People of Colour Program 2023



Our thanks.

We're incredibly grateful for the support that Solace receives from generous individuals and organisations which help us to work towards our mission of ending the harm done through gender-based violence. A huge thank you to all our supporters during 2023/24, including those who have chosen to remain anonymous.

4 in 10 London's Child Poverty Network
Above Difference
Acaster Lloyd Consulting
Accenture
Automation Logic
Avery Dennison
Banham Security
Benevity
Blackbrook Capital
Blake Morgan LLP
Brown Rudnick
Charities Trust
City Bridge Trust
E-Cubed
Family of Ali Meadows
Financial Lifestyle Management Ldt
Financial Times
Formation Architects
Furnishing Futures
Garden Court Chambers
Glasspool Charity Trust
Goldman Sachs
Hollick Family Foundation
HSBC
Iceland Charitable Foudnation
Irish Youth Foundation
IWIRC London Network
Jack Sealey Ltd
Jade Blue
Karen Bryson
Kirsty Malcolm/Roll Nine Productions
KPMG
Lazard Asset Management
London Community Foundation
London Designer Outlet
Lucy Hansard
MBA Stack
Mills & Reeve LLP
New Look
Oak Foundation
Olwyn Foundation
Orbis Investments
Orla Kiely
Paramount
Pillars Brewery
Property Hub
Public Interest Law Centre
Rafiki Golf Society
Rehema Muthamia
Rich Support Limited
Rimes
Slaughter and May
Southwark Charitable Trust
Squire Patton Boggs
STACK Agency
Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse (STADA)
The Big Give
The Childhood Trust - Grants
The Firebird Foundation
The Football Association (FA)
The Glen Beg Foundation
The Golden Bottle Trust
The Grace Trust
The Hendonian Charitable Trust
The Rosa Fund
The Screwfix Foundation
The Wogen Anniversary Trust
Tokyo Marine HCC
Trust For London
URBN
Veeam
Vitol
Youth Endowment Fund

We continue to be grateful for our partnership with statutory funders and want to thank: the London Boroughs of Barnet, Bexley, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, Islington, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Westminster, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, Greater London Authority and London Councils.

Survivor Case Study

My emotional and mental wellbeing was greatly improved by having Sabrina by my side throughout the investigation and court case. She was extremely empathetic and was so detail-oriented that she thought of everything before I even had the chance to. I felt taken care of and it put my mind at ease knowing that someone who knew the criminal justice process inside and out was looking out for me and advocating for me. This meant that I could focus more energy on improving my wellbeing rather than worrying about the case too much.

Sabrina also did a fantastic job at managing my expectations well in advance so that there were no surprises or major disappointments. For example, she stressed how unpredictable court schedules can be and prepared me for delays and last minute changes. When, inevitably, there was a change to the schedule I was not as upset or stressed as I would have been without the prior warning.

Sabrina also helped me make better sense out of what happened to me, for example by discussing concepts such as the 5 Fs (fight, flight, freeze, flop, friend). I had never heard of this concept before but it has stuck with me ever since. It helped to better understand and accept how I acted to the assault and comforted me knowing that my response was a common one to trauma of this type.



Looking to the future

Our core focus continues to be on the continuous improvement of the support we give to survivors, providing new services that meet the complexity of survivors lives and ensuring that we have motivated and healthy staff and volunteers.

Transforming the culture of our organisation together with our staff is a key focus for the trustees and leadership team in 2024/25. Our Solace Together workshops and new EDI and Culture Steering Group will bring together staff across the organisation setting out our common purpose, what intersectional feminism means to us and how we all work collectively to become an anti-racist organisation. Our Anti-Racism Strategy will become embedded and help us all to respond to discrimination faced by staff and service users.

We will invest in our staff through improved induction and learning programmes and developing management training. We will make improvements to the ways of working in our infrastructure services such as HR, finance and business support, so they can better enable our frontline to focus on delivering for survivors.

Across our services we will be embedding a psychologically informed framework to ensure that our staff team feel confident in understanding and responding to the connections between thoughts, emotions and behaviour with survivors and towards each other. We will also look to improve the data we collect on the positive outcomes that our survivors experience and ensure we can consistently tell their stories and achievements.

Our service users should be a key voice in all that we do and we will refresh our service user strategy to ensure they have more avenues to shape and develop Solace as well as setting up a shadow board to truly embed their voices in our governance structure.

With a new fundraising team in place, we will be focusing on retention of existing services with full cost recovery, increased income generation and strengthening our reserves. This will enable us to better meet the needs of our service users, staff, and volunteers at Solace.

We will support the organisation's growth by strengthening core services and seek to grow our services around housing and preventing VAWG. We will review some of our core delivery models to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the survivors we support.



Transforming the culture of our organisation together with our staff is a key focus for the trustees and leadership team in 2024/25

Goals for 2024-25

Our 2022-27 strategy set out our ambition for the organisation to grow to achieve the dual aim of supporting more survivors but also to support the frontline staff working for the organisation. Under our new CEO and trustee board, Solace has developed some organisational goals to sit alongside our five year strategy:

Inclusion, becoming an anti-racist organisation and cultural transformation

We introduced several new staff benefits including:

- Work towards becoming an anti-racist organisation
- Deliver EDI initiatives to provide solutions for staff and services to end discrimination
- Continue our cultural transformation.

Inclusive service delivery

- Review models of service delivery
- Embed a psychologically informed framework (PIF)
- Deliver new housing models

One team of valued, diverse and skilled people

- Develop an excellent induction learning programme
- Provide management training for existing and aspiring managers
- Explore new non-staff benefits

Amplifying the service user voice

- Establish a shadow board
- Create further avenues for service users to have their say

Make prevention a priority

- Increase the use of our 'whole school approach' to tackling misogyny in young people
- Grow our partnership focusing on awareness raising and prevention
- Raise more awareness of VAWG through the media

Strengthening our infrastructure services

- Review infrastructure services to ensure they support staff to deliver excellent quality services
- Retain existing contracts with full cost recovery and an inflationary uplift

Data to measure effectiveness

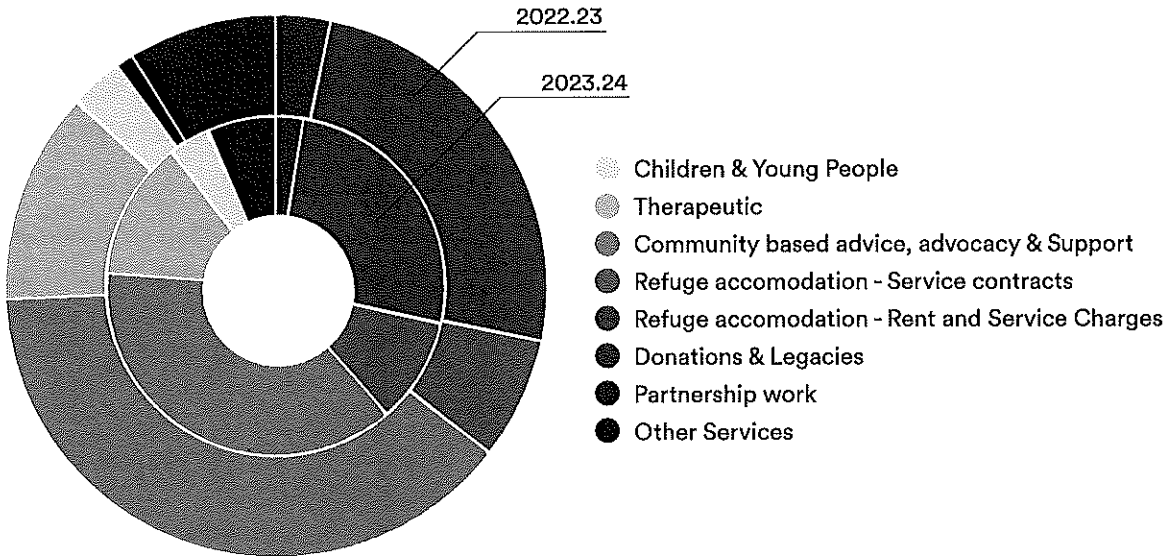
- Improve data collection across our services and increase the data literacy of our staff
- Develop set outcomes to measure success across our services
- Increase our use of storytelling to showcase our work

Financial Review

The financial results for the year ended 31 March 2024 are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities, balance sheet, cash flow statement and notes to the accounts on pages 34 onwards.

Income

For the financial year 2023/24, total incoming resources was £14,386,000 (2022/23 £15,156,000) with funding from statutory partners, trusts and foundations, corporates and the public which have helped Solace maintain essential services during the year. The total reduction in income of £770,000 (5.1%) compared to prior year is primarily due to the planned closure of the Labyrinth Project in December 2022 and cessation of services in Southwark in March 2023. The dip in activity does not capture a number of new projects which came online towards the end of the financial year which will partially rebalance activities longer term. The mix of income between services has remained relatively stable between years.



Our refuge services grew by £252,000 as funding streams awarded in 2022 were operational for the full financial year and inflationary increases in core rental income came into effect from the 1 April 2023.

Community based advice and advocacy services, which continue to represent the largest part of our funding at 37%, declined by £482,000 in the year. Our service delivery in Southwark came to an end in March 2023. This saw us transition IDVA services to our sister organisation Refuge.

Therapeutic services, which deliver counselling in a trauma informed manner to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, declined during the year by £27,000 as Southwark services ceased.

Our work with Children and Young People saw a £73,000 increase in funding due to an uplift in Ministry of Police and Crime (MOPAC) funding our team of IDVAs who work in close partnership with Redthread to provide crisis intervention support to young people of all genders who present in London's Major Trauma Centres due to domestic abuse and sexual violence issues.

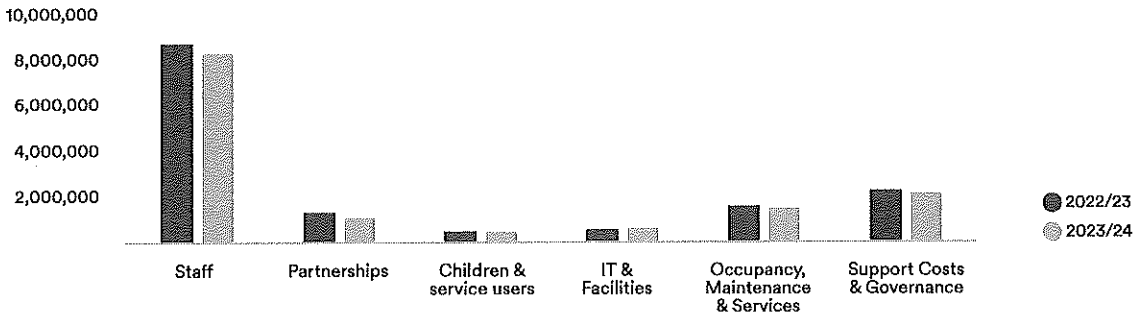
Our partnership work saw a decline in income of £420,000 as the Department for Community, Media and Sport (DCMS); Labyrinth project, which saw significant activity in VAWG sector capacity building came to an end in December 2022.

Solace has successfully retained 100% of our statutory contracts retendered during the period, providing longer term financial security for Solace to withstand the continuing challenging financial climate.

Voluntary income from donations contributed 3.1% of our funding base through the support of the public, corporates and trusts and foundations. A drop of £47,000 during the year as the team experienced a period of resource constraints due to the decline in the fundraising sector and the team was restructured.

Expenditure

Our charitable spending on activities decreased by 5.7% from £15,257,000 to £14,388,000 aligned to the fall in income as we actively managed our bottom line in response to a reduction in services and prudent management of central resources. The most sizeable drop was in partnership funding which fell from £1,348,000 to £943,000 following the closure of the Labyrinth project. Our financial position declined overall as we incurred closure costs for services in March 2023.



Our biggest expenditure is on staff, 69.5% (2023: 68.3%). Our staff are at the heart of the financial decisions we have to make. Solace continues to support the London Living Wage and all salaries meet at least this level. In January 2023 and again in January 2024 Solace implemented pay awards that recognise those on the lowest salaries have been hardest hit by cost-of-living pressures. Our most junior staff received a 3.5% pay award in Jan 2024 (2.5%: Jan 2023) at a time when our executive team received no pay increase. As a result our average salary remained relatively flat year on year at £32,393 (2023:£32,385).

Occupancy costs are our second major expenditure as we seek to maintain our portfolio of owned and leased properties. The average cost per unit of our housing stock increased year on year from £7,658 to £7,868 as we saw increased utility, maintenance and insurance costs arising from general market pressures.

During the year we invested in a new Finance system and moved to our new Head Office to resource the needs of the organisation.

Central costs as a percentage of overall expenditure have remained constant as we have managed support and governance costs in response to planned falls in income. This means that for every £1 Solace receives 85p goes directly to supporting our service users.

Financial position

After the net expenditure on restricted funds, the overall result for the year was a deficit of £2,000 (2022/23: deficit of £102,000). The current year deficit aligns with the operational objective for the year of delivering services within budget while facing a second year of higher than anticipated inflationary cost increases in costs.

Achieving a surplus remains a key performance target to enable the charity to set aside funds towards reserves for contingency requirements, further explained in our reserves policy note. We have planned to achieve a balanced budget for the coming year which we believe is achievable due to recent renewals and extensions of contracts and a more targeted approach towards fundraising combined with tight management of costs.

Total fund balances as of 31 March 2024 were £1,999,000 (2022/23: £2,001,000) of which £1,021,000 (2022/23: £909,000) were designated funds and the remaining £978,000 (2022/23: £1,092,000) represented general funds. Designated funds as at the balance sheet date represent the net book value of tangible fixed assets.

Reserves policy and going concern

The reserves fund represents unrestricted general funds which are not committed or tied to any tangible fixed assets held by Solace.

It is Solace's policy to retain sufficient reserves to safeguard its financial commitments and to continue to provide essential services to women and children who are experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence, in the event of unforeseen financial problems for a length of time to enable those problems to be resolved.

The trustees have reviewed its reserves policy in March 2024 and agreed to build Solace's reserves based on an analysis of the risks facing the charity. In determining the level of reserves required by Solace, the following factors are taken into account by the Board of Trustees:

- key strategic risks as described in Solace's risk register;
- our strategic goals;
- financial strategy and sustainability;
- liquidity management;
- commitments to staff and other contractual obligations; and
- needs of services and beneficiaries.

This level of reserves is to protect the charity from having to make quick structural changes arising from the sudden loss of income, for example when contracts are not renewed or other unforeseen circumstances, to enable the charity to function during unexpected periods of financial difficulties. The Finance and Resources sub-committee reviews the level of reserves required by Solace annually and recommends the appropriate level to the trustees.

Based on the analysis of risks, the trustees have set a satisfactory reserve level and a target reserve level for the charity. A minimum satisfactory general reserves level of £1,004,000 was agreed as being adequate. The current unrestricted free reserves of £978,000 (unrestricted reserves less those related to tangible fixed assets and designations) are just below the satisfactory reserve level.

The desired target reserves level was set at £1,113,000 and at March 2024, there is a shortfall of £134,000. The need to increase reserves to achieve the desired target levels will be a focus of the charity in the median term. In the coming financial year Trustees have weighed the need to increase reserves against our ongoing commitment to support staff and service users during a period where both have experienced significant cost of living increases. In the coming year we have set a breakeven budget with the plan to generate surpluses over the next 5 years to achieve both satisfactory and desired target reserve levels.

Further notes on our reserves are outlined in note 15 of the financial statements.

The trustees have considered the material uncertainties which may cast doubts on the appropriateness of the going concern assumption with regards to the 2023/24 financial statements. As noted above, these uncertainties are continually monitored by the board and the senior management team, and remedial actions are implemented in a timely manner. Having considered the risks of these uncertainties, the trustees have concluded that the going concern assumption remains appropriate for the coming year.

Risk management and principal risks

Trustees have overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the system of risk management at Solace. The charity maintains a charity risk register which tracks key risks to Solace and is reviewed by trustees at quarterly sub-committee meetings and full board meeting. Unexpected and sudden changes in risks would be scrutinised by trustees over and above planned meetings.

The principal risks facing the charity which operates in a challenging and demanding sector are financial, operational, reputational, people and culture and regulatory and these are detailed below.

Financial

Solace operates in a challenging and demanding sector with uncertainties over longer term funding, due to the commissioning of services by local and central government and the cuts to public spending. Payments by local authorities, government bodies, trusts and foundations are based on the achievement and add further pressures on cash flow and overall financial management.

External risks to funding have been reduced by reaching and maintaining the standards required by commissioners and funding bodies and implementing a strategy to diversify our funding base through income generation from fundraising.

Financial risks arising from any contract renewals in 2024/25 are mitigated through TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment) arrangements and the maintenance of adequate reserves to absorb central costs covered by these contracts. This has been significantly reduced as Solace has retained and renewed several key contracts for a new term of three to five years.

The ongoing cost-of-living crisis has added greater financial pressures and creates additional risks through the need to increase salaries at a higher rate and the need to pay more for goods and services.

Overall financial risks are monitored through regular reporting to the Finance and Resources sub-committee and trustees with scrutiny of annual budgets, reforecasts, management accounts and cash flow projections. Scenario planning with prudent income generation activities has been prepared and reviewed with trustees to ensure that Solace continues to have sufficient resources to deliver its services and remain solvent in the foreseeable future.

Operational

The nature of our service delivery which provides support to vulnerable women and children suffering from domestic and sexual violence increases our operational risks which could result from services providing inadequate support for our service users caused by unclear priorities, lack of quality oversight and inadequate staff resources.

Operational risks are managed through implementation of suitable policies and procedures including good practices for case management, appropriate caseloads, rigorous staff training, staff supervision and support and regular reporting to senior management. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, risks assessments and data protection regulations in respect of service users, staff, trustees, volunteers, and visitors. Appropriate insurance cover is in place.

Risks on IT systems and cybercrime are managed through the use of accredited managed IT providers using secure cloud-based technology. Monthly review of performance and IT risks are undertaken with senior management and reported to trustees. Staff receive regular training on IT and cyber security and induction training is provided to all new employees.

Reputational

In line with our operational risks, reputational risks are heightened as we engage with vulnerable people in difficult circumstances. Service audits are conducted annually to review compliance with funder agreements and reported to trustees. The senior management team works closely with boroughs and other funder leads and attend meetings and events which enable issues to be dealt with promptly and manage reputational risks.

People and culture

Solace is committed to being an actively inclusive charity and has reviewed its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan with trustees, staff and volunteers as outlined in the earlier sections of this report. Specialist inclusive training and awareness programmes are being delivered to all staff.

Risks and challenges on staff recruitment and retention are managed through continuous staff learning and development. Like others in the charity sector, we continue to see high turnover of staff and a priority is to improve our retention rates. For some roles, we have experienced challenges in recruiting and have had to undertake multiple rounds of recruitment. Our expert peripatetic team help to reduce the impact of gaps created by challenges in recruitment.

We undertake benchmarking of staff turnover and analyse leaver exit information to learn from the changing needs of our employee lifecycle. We continue to work with our teams to adopt agile working practices without compromising on the quality of client services.

Regulatory and compliance

Safeguarding is at the heart of our operational services and a key governance priority, keeping women and their children safe is our primary responsibility and we take all appropriate steps to protect everyone from harm.

We deliver robust safeguarding training to all our staff and volunteers, as part of their induction training. This includes the legal framework, how to spot signs and symptoms, how to respond and what makes a good referral to social care. We also explain our whistle blowing policies to all staff and volunteers during the training. Annual refresher training on safeguarding is mandatory for all staff.

We have a suite of policies and procedures designed to manage this risk including those covering acceptance of donations, unauthorised fundraising, procurement, IT security, anti-fraud, data protection and social media. We undertake regular training on compliance and continue to review and strengthen our training to staff and volunteers.

Reference and Administrative Information

The financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the memorandum, and articles of association, the Companies Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Company number	03376716
Country of incorporation	United Kingdom
Charity number	1082450
Country of registration	England & Wales
Registered office	9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP
Website	www.solacewomensaid.org

Board of Trustees
Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Ms. Priyanka Devani	Chair (co-opted 19 July 2023, appointed 14 September 2023)
Ms. Kirsty Telford	Interim Chair (retired 22 June 2023)
Ms. Hannah Cane	Vice Chair (19 June 2024)
Ms. Madeline Church	Interim Vice Chair (stepped down as Interim Vice Chair 19 June 2024)
Ms. Kerri Hartwell (nee Podobnik)	Treasurer
Ms. Emily Florence Hutchings	
Ms. Vivien Ma	
Ms. Natalie Lopez	
Ms. Meghan Roach	
Ms. Amy Pritchard	
Ms. Jo Jengo	(appointed 7 August 2023)

Principal staff

Ms. Nahar Choudhury	Chief Executive Officer (appointed June 2023)
Ms. Bernadette Keane	Interim Chief Executive Officer (Jan to Jun 2023)
Ms. Retna Thevarajah	Chief Operating Officer (resigned December 2023)
Ms Arati Patel	Interim Director of Finance and Business Support (Nov 2023 to May 2024)
Ms. Julia Rank	Director of Finance and Business Support (appointed June 2024)
Ms. Jane Jutsum	Director of Business Development (left April 2023)
Ms. Paula Murphy	Interim Director of Business Development (appointed Nov 2023)
Dr. Jennifer Cirone	Director of Services

Bankers	HSBC plc 1 Aldermans Hill London, N13 4YE
Auditor	Moore Kingston Smith 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP

Structure, governance and management

Solace is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 28 May 1997, and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 16 September 2000. The charity is formed under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

The Charity undertook an exercise in 2018 to assess ourselves against the Charity Governance Code. Following this we expanded our trustees recruitment to ensure the board was more diverse and inclusive. We will perform a further review in 2024/25 to ensure we continue to have the skills to meet the strategic needs of the organisation and to ensure our governance reflects the voice of our service users.

Recruitment and appointment of members for the Board of Trustees

Solace welcomes women to the Board of Trustees who have the skills, dedication, and enthusiasm to take overall responsibility for the organisation. The charity advertises for members in a number of ways including recruitment websites and other relevant publications.

Trustees serve for a period of six years in aggregate, Officers may serve for a period of 9 years, and the maximum number of trustees at any time will be no more than twelve.. Solace has a diverse Board, ensuring that our trustees represent the women we support. One third of members must resign each year, with the longest standing members resigning first. In this the first year of our new CEO, and following a number of Trustee changes in the preceding year 2022/23 we have not asked a third of Trustees to resign.

Induction and training for the Board of Trustees

All prospective members receive information regarding Solace including the most recent annual report and audited accounts, as well as copies of relevant policies and procedures. They meet with the CEO who carries out an induction that includes training on key policies (including equality, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, confidentiality, complaints, whistle blowing, financial regulation, risk assessments, data protection and DBS checks), a tour of our services and meetings with both staff and service users.

A skills audit is conducted annually, and any gaps identified are met through training, guidance from the CEO and other members of the trustees and staff, as well as targeted recruitment.

Trustees are encouraged to attend relevant training in areas such as governance, human resource management and financial management. The cost of this training is met by the organisation.

Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 6 to the accounts.

Public benefit

The trustees have referred to the guidance provided by the Charity Commission regarding public benefit, including its guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity (PB2)', when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In setting the annual plan each year, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives of the charity.

Fundraising

We continue to be so grateful to all our supporters during 2023/24, including those that would prefer to remain anonymous.

in 2023/24 we were successful in raising £451,093 (2022/23: £498,178) in donations. Our work is made possible by the generous support and donations of individual donors, community groups and companies. The income raised during the year reflects the continuing difficult socioeconomic landscape and we continue to work closely with our existing supporters and look at ways to increase income generation to benefit the impact of our work with beneficiaries.

With a cost of living crisis affecting survivors and those that donate to us, it continues to be a challenging fundraising climate and that is why we are so grateful to all those that have donated or fundraised for us.

Volunteer group, eCubed, once again held some fantastic events for Solace including Rock Against Violence and Jazz Against Violence which raised over £10,000. We were proud to have been selected for a second year as retail giant New Look's 2023 charity partner as part of their 'Kind to the Core' mission. Our sincere thanks also go to the London Designer Outlet who generously provided us with a free pair of shoes for every woman and child in our refuges at the end of last year as part of their 'In Her Shoes' campaign. We were so grateful to also benefit from their financial and in-kind support including advent calendars, hair care kits, homewares and more.

Our approach to fundraising

Solace is a member of the fundraising regulator. We do not employ the services of any fundraising agencies or third parties, nor have we run a telephone or door to door fundraising campaign. Our relationship with our supporters is especially important to us and the charity does not wish for our supporters to feel under any pressure to donate to the charity. We have a close relationship with our fundraisers and support them in delivering their events and complying with relevant codes of practice.

Where we work with commercial participators, contracts are exchanged so that we can ensure compliance with the code of fundraising practice, applicable laws, and adherence to best practice.

We received no complaints about our fundraising practices in 2023/24.

Quality Management

Solace prides itself on high quality support to our service users. Our staff team are committed to providing a high standard of support to our service users and we continually look at how we can improve our services. We continue to invest in accredited training for our staff and have a comprehensive internal training programme to ensure we deliver quality services. The organisation is supported by our business development, business support, HR and finance teams who have been introducing new systems and procedures to better support our frontline services and the wider organisation. This helps us to continue to deliver excellent services and ensure value for money for our funders.

In 2023/24, we achieved and retained several accreditations and quality marks, demonstrating the high standard of Solace's work, including:

- Rape Crisis National Service Standards;
- Disability Confident Committed Employer;
- Advice Quality Standards;
- ISO 9001; and
- CHAS (The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme).

Organisational structure

The trustees meet every quarter and are responsible for the organisation's overall management and strategic direction. The trustees also meet twice a year for Board Away Days. These women are drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to our work including those who have been impacted by domestic or sexual abuse. We are also committed to diversity and have a trustee board representative of our service users and staff.

The trustees delegate appropriate functions to the sub-committees listed below, of which at least two members must be from the Board.

Business Development sub-committee: Oversees the overall strategy and business development plans for the charity, as well as Training and Consultancy, Fundraising, and Communications. Chair – Ms. Hannah Cane.

Finance and Resources sub-committee: Oversees financial management to ensure optimum use of resources. It scrutinises income and expenditure and regularly reports to, makes recommendations, and clarifies options available to the trustees. Chair – Ms. Kerri Hartwell.

Human Resources and Governance sub-committee: Oversees staffing issues including recruitment, retention, pay, equality and diversity, health and safety and environmental issues. It acts as the appeal body for any disciplinary and capability matters and is responsible for overall board governance. Chair – Ms. Natalie Lopez.

Services sub-committee: Scrutinises operational top-level reports and internal audits; discusses policy, devises, and reviews the service operations strategy. Chair – Ms. Madeline Church.

Expert Advisors are selected to provide specialist advice to the sub-committees. They attend and scrutinise reports together with trustees at sub-committee meeting. We currently have three Expert Advisors: Ms. Judy Kawaguchi (Finance and Resources), Ms Rachel Galvin (HR and Governance) and Ms Sian Elliot (HR and Governance).

Overall management is delegated to the CEO and Directors who are responsible for ensuring that Solace delivers high quality services, meets contractual obligations and conditions of grant aid. Principal staff are the CEO, Director of Services, Director of Finance and Business Support and Director of Business Development who convene regularly to oversee the organisational management of Solace. The Directors report to the CEO.

The wider Senior Management Team includes a Deputy Director of Services, Deputy Director of People and Culture and nine Heads of Services who meet with the Directors and CEO on a monthly basis.

Team and Service Managers run the day-to-day activities with their staff teams delivering services in refuge, community-based services and from our Head Office. They report to Heads of Services and meet with the CEO and Directors each quarter.

Related party transactions

Related party transaction during the year related to professional pro bono services and valued at Nil (2022/23: Nil), and donations from one trustee totaled £676 (2022/23: £518).

Remuneration policy or key management personnel

Solace awards a fair remuneration package to all staff including key management personnel. Both the Human Resources and Finance and Resources sub-committees undertake an annual review of salaries, and the trustees are responsible for setting the CEO salary, and with the CEO set the salaries of Directors. The salary of the highest and lowest salaries in the organisation does not exceed 1:4.

Statement of responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Solace for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic 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 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 these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 operation.

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.

As 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.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2024 was 10 (2022/23 - 13). The trustees are members of the charity, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors

Moore Kingston Smith LLP were appointed as auditors in 2018 and are deemed to be reappointed to under Section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The report of the Board of Trustees has been approved by the trustees on 12 December 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Priyanka Devani - Chair

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Solace Women's Aid

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Solace Women's Aid ('the charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the Summary Income and Expenditure Account), the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement 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 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 charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 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 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 there is 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 trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual 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 company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

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.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 42, 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 aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement 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 purposes 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.

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

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.

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 charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council.
- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance 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.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

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 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 any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Neil Finlayson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

Date: 20 December 2024
9 Appold Street
London
EC2A 2AP

Statement of Financial Affairs

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	451,093	-	**451,093**	498,178	-	498,178
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	3	3,712,652	1,434,959	**5,147,611**	3,791,608	1,103,632	4,895,240
Community based advice, advocacy and support	3	4,016,559	1,362,948	**5,379,507**	4,267,107	1,594,258	5,861,365
Therapeutic	3	164,700	1,727,647	**1,892,347**	-	1,919,511	1,919,511
Children and Young People	3	67,078	494,098	**561,176**	63,551	425,022	488,573
Other services	3	22,061	-	**22,061**	108,053	42,497	150,550
Partnership work							
Ascent Plus and other partnership work	3	-	920,648	**920,648**	-	1,340,854	1,340,854
Investment income		11,467	-	**11,467**	1,411	-	1,411
Total income		**8,445,610**	**5,940,300**	**14,385,910**	**8,729,908**	**6,425,774**	**15,155,682**
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	284,854	-	**284,854**	393,143	-	393,143
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	4	3,648,345	1,434,959	**5,083,304**	3,604,802	1,166,185	4,770,987
Community based advice, advocacy and support	4	4,215,315	1,362,948	**5,578,263**	4,576,286	1,609,814	6,186,100
Therapeutic	4	155,060	1,727,647	**1,882,707**	4,357	1,930,044	1,934,401
Children and Young People	4	61,485	512,465	**573,950**	58,664	436,014	494,678
Other Services	4	42,154	-	**42,154**	87,618	41,948	129,566
Partnership work							
Ascent Plus and other partnership work	4	-	942,512	**942,512**	-	1,348,447	1,348,477
Total expenditure		**8,407,213**	**5,980,531**	**14,387,744**	**8,724,870**	**6,532,452**	**15,257,322**
Net (Expenditure) / Income for the year	5	**38,397**	**(40,231)**	**(1,834)**	**5,038**	**(106,678)**	**(101,640)**
Transfers between funds		(40,231)	40,231	-	(106,678)	106,678	-
Net movement in funds		**(1,834)**	-	**(1,834)**	**(101,640)**	-	**(101,640)**
Reconciliation of funds: Total funds brought forward		2,001,101	-	**2,001,101**	2,102,741	-	2,102,741
Total funds carried forward		**1,999,267**	-	**1,999,267**	**2,001,101**	-	**2,001,101**

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities unless noted otherwise.
There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Notes on pages 52 to 68 form part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

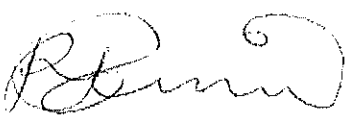
Company no. 3376716

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets:	10a		**963,053**		825,339
Tangible fixed assets					
Intangible assets	10b		**57,728**		83,409
			1,020,781		908,748
Current assets: Debtors	11	**1,842,492**		2,605,070	
Cash at bank and in hand		**2,074,933**		1,325,211	
		3,917,425		3,930,281	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	**2,938,939**		2,772,274	
Net current assets			**978,486**		1,158,007
Total assets less current liabilities			**1,999,267**		2,066,755
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	13		**-**		65,654
Total net assets	**14**		**1,999,267**		**2,001,101**
Represented by:					
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds	15	**1,020,781**		908,748	
General funds	15	**978,486**		1,092,353	
Total unrestricted funds			**1,999,267**		2,001,101
Total charity funds			**1,999,267**		2,001,101

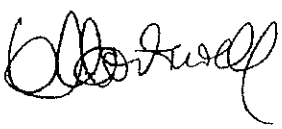
Notes on pages 52 to 68 form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the trustees on 12 December 2024 and signed on their behalf by



Ms Priyanka Devani

Chair



Ms Kerri Hartwell

Treasurer

Statement of Cash Flows

	Note	2024		2023	
Cash flows from operating activities:		£	£	£	£
Net cash flows provided by / (used in) operating activities	16		**1,222,278**		(1,299,284)
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		**11,466**		1,411	
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		**(216,744)**		(99,155)	
Net cash flows (used in) investing activities			**(205,278)**		(97,744)
Cash flows from financing activities:					
Interest paid		**(11,893)**		(20,139)	
Repayments of borrowing		**(255,385)**		(180,319	
Net cash flows (used in) /provided by financing activities			**(267,278)**		(200,458)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			**749,722**		(1,597,486)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			**1,325,211**		2,922,697
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			**2,074,933**		1,325,211

Analysis of cash and changes in net debt

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	1 April 2023	Cash flows	31 March 2024
Cash in hand	31,560	5,795	**37,355**
Cash in bank	535,763	720,191	**1,255,954**
Immediate notice deposits	757,888	23,736	**781,624**
Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	1,325,211	749,722	**2,074,933**
BORROWINGS			
CBILS loan falling due within one year	(254,027)	189,731	**(64,296)**
CBILS loan falling due after one year	(65,654)	65,654	**-**
Total	1,005,530	1,005,107	**2,010,637**

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information
Solace Women's Aid is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address is 6th floor, 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP.

b) 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 in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.
Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.
The presentation currency of the Charity is British Pounds Sterling. The amounts in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound.

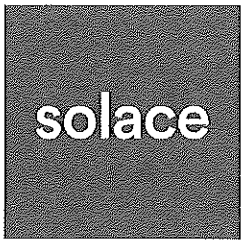
c) Key judgements and Assumptions
In the application of the company's accounting policies, trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis and actual results may differ from these estimates.

d) Public benefit entity
The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

e) Going concern
The trustees have considered the principal risks of the charity and the potential financial impact of these risks materialising in a range of adverse and worse case scenarios. The detailed cash flow forecast and the adequacy of cash resources under these scenarios have been reviewed by trustees. Based on these detailed scrutiny, the trustees have concluded that there is reasonable expectation that the charity is able to meet its obligations as they fall due for at least 12 months following approval of the financial statements. There are no material uncertainties which may impact on the going concern assumption. Accordingly the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

f) Income
Income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis once 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' grants 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 and is not deferred.
Personal charges from service users are recognised on a receipts basis as this is the most reliable form of measurement.
Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for performance related or other conditions of income recognition have been met.

g) Intangible assets
Computer software are capitalised when direct expenditure enhances or extends the performance of the software beyond its specifications and can be reliably measured as a capital improvement. These costs are amortised using a straight line method over the estimated useful lives of three to five years.



h) Donations of gifts, services and facilities
Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised. The trustees' annual report describes thier contributions in more detail.
On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

i) Financial instruments
Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument to meet the requirements of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102. Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, where 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.

j) 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.

k) Fund accounting
Restricted funds are accounted for in accordance with the express or implied wishes of donors in so far as these are intended to be binding on the charity. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.
Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes which are not subject to any special restrictions and are classed as unrestricted within the General fund.
Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

l) Irrecoverable VAT
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:
- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make donations.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services and other charitable activities undertaken Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

m) Allocation of support costs
Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.
Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure based on costs incurred with the publicity event.
Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

n) Operating leases
Rentals under operating lease charges are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

o)Tangible fixed assets
Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000 or groups of similar assets purchased in bulk exceeds £7,500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.
Freehold land and buildings are carried at cost.
Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its useful economic life

• Freehold land	Not depreciated
• Freehold buildings	2% on cost
• Leasehold property	Over the life of the lease
• Office equipment, fixtures and fittings and play area	25% on cost

p) Stocks
Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. In general, cost is determined on a first in first out basis

q) Debtors
Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

r) Cash at bank and in hand
Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

s) Creditors
Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present or constructive 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 are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due. Provisions are made for obligations when there is a legal or other obligation as a result of past events. It is more likely than not that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and a reliable estimate of the amount can be made for the provision based on the expected settlement amount.

t) Pensions Solace Women's Aid operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions. It provides a contribution at 3% of annual basic pay for those staff who have joined the scheme. The pension charge recorded in these accounts is the amount of contributions payable in the accounting year.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Individuals	241,738	-	**241,738**	206,981
Community fundraising and events	9,230	-	**9,230**	25,207
Corporates	64,534	-	**64,534**	91,256
Trust and Foundations	65,291	-	**65,291**	79,327
Donated services	70,300	-	**70,300**	95,407
	451,093	-	**451,093**	498,178

3a Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Provision and Prevention				
Local Boroughs	1,317,742	112,622	**1,430,364**	1,533,924
Core Rents	2,283,105	-	**2,283,105**	2,170,452
Personal Charges	103,543	-	**103,543**	99,957
MOPAC	-	539,428	**539,428**	494,477
London Councils via Ashiana (note 3b)	-	272,047	**272,047**	249,816
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	153,034	**153,034**	161,007
REFUGE	-	102,969	**102,969**	85,808
Greater London Authority	-	60,529	**60,529**	30,538
Walcot Foundation	-	-	-	24,968
L&Q Foundation	-	-	-	24,055
Hollick Foundation	-	11,218	**11,218**	7,638
Southall Black Sisters	-	-	-	10,410
Gallaher	-	45,000	**45,000**	-
The Youth Endowment Fund	-	54,615	**54,615**	-
London Community Foundation (MOPAC PIE)	-	79,116	**79,116**	-
Other	8,262	4,381	**12,643**	2,190
Sub-total for Refuge Accommodation	3,712,652	1,434,959	**5,147,611**	4,895,240

Prior year income from charitable Refuge Accommodation activities included £3,791,608 attributable to unrestricted activities and £1,103,632 to restricted activities.

Local Boroughs	4,013,187	16,764	**4,029,951**	4,285,954
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	886,396	**886,396**	869,312
Southall Black Sisters	-	160,592	**160,592**	173,112
Women and Girls Network	-	188,562	**188,562**	176,625
The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Fields	-	-	-	82,023
Bruno Schroder Trust	-	-	-	80,258
London Councils via Ashiana (note 3b)	-	-	-	36,506
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Emigrant	-	35,000	**35,000**	35,000
Trust For London	-	-	-	13,500
Olwyn Foundation	-	18,356	**18,356**	35,000
3i Foundation	-	-	-	42,567
Irish Youth Foundation	-	8,715	**8,715**	11,000
City of London	-	-	-	17,856
City Bridge	-	19,293	**19,293**	-
Vision	-	24,984	**24,984**	-
Other	3,372	4,286	**7,658**	2,652
Sub-total for Community based advice, advocacy and support	4,016,559	1,362,948	**5,379,507**	5,861,365

Prior year income from charitable Community based advice, advocacy and support activities included £4,267,107 attributable to unrestricted activities and £1,594,258 to restricted activities.

3a Income from charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	1,138,777	**1,138,777**	1,118,954
Local Boroughs	164,700	100,000	**264,700**	279,147
Women and Girls Network	-	425,578	**425,578**	234,785
NHSE	-	-	-	90,154
Tri-borough Angelou	-	44,300	**44,300**	44,300
BBC Children in Need	-	-	-	23,199
3i Foundation	-	-	-	74,100
Ruth and David Foundation	-	-	-	12,857
Cloudesley	-	16,042	**16,042**	14,375
Big Give		-	-	27,640
Other		2,950	**2,950**	-
Sub-total for Therapeutic	164,700	1,727,647	**1,892,347**	1,919,511

Prior year income from charitable Therapeutic activities was fully attributable to restricted funds.

Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	380,793	**380,793**	298,091
Local Boroughs	67,078	-	**67,078**	63,551
Women and Girls Network	-	89,972	**89,972**	88,823
Big Give	-	-	-	19,212
Firebird Foundation	-	-	-	15,000
Banham Family Fund	-	23,333	**23,333**	-
Other	-	-	-	3,896
Sub-total for Children and Young People	67,078	494,098	**561,176**	488,573

Prior year income from charitable Children and Young People activities included £63,551 attributable to unrestricted activities and £425,022 to restricted activities.

External training	21,711	-	**21,711**	87,053
Local Boroughs	-	-	-	20,000
The Youth Endowment Fund	-	-	-	11,723
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	-	-	30,225
Other	350	-	**350**	1,549
Sub-total for Other services	22,061	-	**22,061**	150,550

Prior year income from charitable Other services included £108,053 attributable to unrestricted activities and £42,497 to restricted activities.

Partnership work				
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	695,722	**695,722**	695,721
Department of Culture, Media and Digital	-	-	-	473,203
Greater London Authority	-	224,926	**224,926**	171,930
Sub-total for Partnerships	-	920,648	**920,648**	1,340,854

Prior year income from charitable Partnership activities were fully attributable to restricted services

Total income from charitable activities	7,983,050	5,940,300	**13,923,350**	14,656,093

Total income from charitable activities in 2023 included £8,230,319 attributable to unrestricted activities and £6,425,774 to restricted activities.

4 Analysis of expenditure

	Charitable activities										
			Provision and Prevention				Partnership				
	Cost of raising funds £	Refuge accomo-dation £	Community advice, advocacy and support £	Therapeutic £	Children and Young People £	Other services (*) £	Partnerships £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Staff (Note 6)	189,230	2,466,248	3,933,580	1,239,188	433,275	18,798	145,390	1,482,484	96,302	10,004,495	10,416,711
Partnerships	-	93,606	235,686	42,410	-	-	719,206	-	-	1,090,908	1,305,602
Children and service users	29,027	128,116	249,351	51,929	4,496	1,563	498	705	-	465,685	451,656
IT and Facilities	11,396	187,095	259,098	99,937	31,494	3,550	9,043	233,466	24,097	859,176	706,826
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	5,718	1,282,502	144,666	70,189	3,798	1,191	5,382	46,076	38,555	1,598,077	1,726,389
Professional Fees and Other	60	60,584	54,816	(1,672)	180	14,238	7,790	178,066	55,341	369,403	650,138
	235,431	4,218,151	4,877,197	1,501,981	473,243	39,340	887,309	1,940,797	214,295	14,387,744	15,257,322
Support costs	46,509	790,722	615,321	354,223	92,356	2,120	39,546	(1,940,797)	-	-	-
Governance costs	2,914	74,431	85,745	26,503	8,351	694	15,657	-	(214,295)	-	-
Total expenditure 2024	**284,854**	**5,083,304**	**5,578,263**	**1,882,707**	**573,950**	**42,154**	**942,512**	**-**	**-**	**14,387,744**	15,257,322
Total expenditure 2023	393,143	4,770,987	6,186,100	1,934,401	494,678	129,566	1,348,447	-	-	15,257,322	

Of the total expenditure, £8,407,213 was unrestricted (2023: £8,724,870) and £5,980,531 was restricted (2023: £6,532,452).

4. Analysis of expenditure (prior year comparative information)

	Charitable activities									
		Provision and Prevention					**Partnership**			
	Cost of raising funds	Refuge accomo-dation	Community advice, advocacy and support	Therapeutic	Children and Young People	Other services (*)	Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships	Support costs	Governance costs	2023 Total	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff (Note 6)	186,496	2,253,809	4,444,782	1,250,540	395,272	50,809	202,642	1,504,487	127,874	10,416,711	10,363,938
Partnerships	-	91,323	291,507	21,061	-	-	901,711	-	-	1,305,602	2,531,493
Children and service users	606	73,198	181,713	42,455	3767	30,742	118,164	1,011	-	451,656	763,849
IT and Facilities	31,234	154,995	238,823	89,252	22,872	3,691	12,637	127,747	25,575	706,826	779,022
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	10,055	1,355,559	173,531	113,113	1,858	3,175	6,115	22,063	40,920	1,726,389	1,667,674
Professional Fees and Other	74,486	12,666	46,251	3,868	85	26,479	26,016	425,811	34,476	650,138	821,436
	302,877	3,941,550	5,376,607	1,520,289	423,854	114,896	1,267,285	2,081,119	228,845	15,257,322	16,927,412
Support costs	89,128	771,991	724,676	389,242	62,014	7,405	36,663	(2,081,119)	-	-	-
Governance costs	1,138	57,446	84,817	24,870	8,810	7,265	44,499	-	(228,845)	-	-
Total expenditure 2023	393,143	4,770,987	6,186,100	1,934,401	494,678	129,566	1,348,447	-	-	15,257,322	16,927,412

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5 Net (expenditure)/income for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation	104,711	103,669
Interest payable	11,893	20,139
Operating lease rentals:		
• Property	876,727	776,247
• Other	17,416	60,610
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit (statutory audit)	28,000	30,997

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries and wages	7,680,157	8,064,069
Social security costs	714,277	794,994
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	212,352	224,838
Redundancy and termination payments	12,055	-
Staff training, supervision, travel and volunteer costs	292,838	275,052
Sessional counsellors and self employed	292,926	367,128
Agency & locum staff	749,637	636,415
Other forms of employee benefits	50,253	54,215
	10,004,495	10,416,711

Staff costs above have been allocated to expenditure as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cost of raising funds	189,230	186,496
Refuge accommodation	2,466,248	2,253,809
Community advice, advocacy and support	3,933,580	4,444,782
Therapeutic	1,239,188	1,250,540
Children and Young People	433,275	395,272
Other services	18,798	50,809
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	145,390	202,642
Support and governance	1,578,786	1,632,361
	10,004,495	10,416,711

The following number of employees received emoluments exceeding £60k (excl pension contributions) during the year, between:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
£60,000 - £69,999	1	3
£70,000 - £79,999	2	1

All higher paid staff are members of the key management personnel.

The total employee benefits paid to the key management personnel (Chief Executive Officer, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Services and Director of Business Development) were £273,929 (2023: £343,071). Employee benefits included employer pension contributions, on call payments and employer's NI. Pensions costs paid in respect of the higher paid employees above amounted to £6,536 (2023: £8,896).

No charity trustee received a payment for other services supplied to the charity (2023: £150). Reimbursement of travel and other expenses to trustees in 2023 was £nil (2022: £253).

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Cost of raising funds	**2.5**	5.0
Refuge accommodation	**68.3**	56.7
Community advice, advocacy and support	**101.4**	125.9
Therapeutic	**24.8**	30.7
Children and Young People	**12.1**	13.3
Other services	**0.6**	1.3
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	**4.0**	5.7
Support and governance	**52.0**	41.9
	265.7	280.5

8 Related party transactions

Total donations from 2 trustee were £ 676 (2023: £518).

9 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10a Tangible fixed assets

Cost or valuation	Play area £	Freehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Head Office £	Total £
At the start of the year	51,908	961,662	278,515	-	**1,292,085**
Additions in year	-	-	49,509	141,995	**191,504**
At the end of the year	51,908	961,662	328,024	141,995	**1,483,589**
Depreciation					
At the start of the year	51,908	182,451	232,387	-	**466,746**
Charge for the year	-	11,381	27,274	15,135	**53,790**
At the end of the year	51,908	193,832	259,661	15,135	**520,536**
Net book value					
At the end of the year	-	767,830	68,363	126,860	**963,053**
At the start of the year	-	779,211	46,128	-	**825,339**

Land with a value of £480,831 (2023: £480,831) is included within freehold property and not depreciated. All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

10b Intangible fixed assets

	Software £
Cost or valuation	
At the start of the year	**392,643**
Additions in year	**25,240**
At the end of the year	**417,883**
Depreciation	
At the start of the year	**309,234**
Charge for the year	50,921
At the end of the year	**360,155**
Net book value	
At the end of the year	**57,728**
At the start of the year	**83,409**

11 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts due from Local Authorities and government agencies	**980,024**	1,794,867
Other debtors	**96,087**	147,106
Prepayments	**111,150**	106,407
Accrued income	**655,231**	556,690
	1,842,492	2,605,070

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
CBILS Loan payable (see note 13 below)	**64,296**	254,027
Trade creditors	**348,240**	570,301
Taxation and social security	**236,379**	252,712
Other creditors	**96,978**	29,757
Provision- see 12a below	**250,000**	250,000
Funds held on behalf of clients	**15,379**	22,286
Accruals	**825,066**	672,356
Deferred income – (see 12b below)	**1,102,601**	720,835
	2,938,939	2,772,274

12a Provision

The provision at the balance sheet date was the estimated settlement cost relating to the planned exit at one of our services. The timing of the settlement has not yet been agreed with the funder.

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	**250,000**	105,000
Amount released to expenditure in the year	**-**	(105,000)
Amount charged to expenditure in the year	**-**	250,000
Balance at the end of the year	**250,000**	250,000

12b Deferred income

Deferred income comprises income received in advance on contracts and projects which are delivered in the following year.

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	**720,385**	1,309,558
Amount released to income in the year	(720,385)	(1,309,558)
Amount deferred in the year	**1,102,601**	720,835
Balance at the end of the year	**1,102,601**	720,835

13 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	2024 £	2023 £
CBILS Loan payable	**-**	65,654

13a Loans payable

Loans payable includes £64,296 (2023: £319,681) relating to the government backed Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, which carries interest at 6.5% and a final Scheme payable to Social Investment Business FM Limited (SIB).
Interest is charged at 6.5% and monthly capital and interest payments commenced in July 2022 and is planned to end by June 2024.

	2024 £	2023 £
Capital repayments are due as follows:		
- up to one year (see note 12)	**64,296**	254,027
- two to five years (see note 13)	**-**	65,654
Balance at the end of the year	**64,296**	319,681

The loan is secured with a debenture charge over the charity's assets in favour of SIB.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	963,053	-	963,053
Intangible fixed assets	-	57,728	-	57,728
Net current assets	978,486	-	-	978,486
Net assets at the end of the year	**978,486**	**1,020,781**	**-**	**1,999,267**

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	825,339	-	825,339
Intangible fixed Assets	-	83,409		83,409
Net current assets	1,158,007	-	-	1,158,007
Non current liabilities	(65,654)	-	-	(65,654)
Net assets at the end of the year	1,092,353	908,748	-	2,001,101

15 Movements in funds (current year)

	At the start of the year	Income & gains	Expenditure & losses	Transfers	At the end of the year
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds:					
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	-	1,434,959	(1,434,959)	-	-
Community advice, advocacy & support	-	1,362,948	(1,362,948)	-	-
Therapeutic	-	1,727,647	(1,727,647)	-	-
Children and Young People	-	494,098	(512,465)	18,367	-
Other services	-	-	-	-	-
Partnership work					
Ascent Plus and other partnership	-	920,648	(942,512)	21,864	-
Total restricted funds	**-**	**5,940,300**	**(5,980,531)**	**40,231**	**-**
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	908,748	-	(104,711)	216,744	1,020,781
Total designated funds	**908,748**	**-**	**(104,711)**	**216,744**	**1,020,781**
General funds	1,092,353	8,445,610	(8,302,502)	(256,975)	978,486
Total unrestricted funds	**2,001,101**	**8,445,610**	**(8,407,213)**	**(40,231)**	**1,999,267**
Total funds	**2,001,101**	**14,385,910**	**(14,387,744)**	**-**	**1,999,267**

15a Movements in funds (prior year)

	At the start of the year	Income & gains	Expenditure & losses	Transfers	At the end of the year
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds:					
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	-	1,103,632	(1,166,185)	62,553	-
Community advice, advocacy & support	-	1,594,258	(1,609,814)	15,556	-
Therapeutic	-	1,919,511	(1,930,044)	10,533	-
Children and Young People	-	425,022	(436,014)	10,992	-
Other services	-	42,497	(41,948)	(549)	-
Partnership work					
Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership	-	1,340,854	(1,348,447)	7,593	-
Total restricted funds	-	6,425,774	(6,532,452)	106,678	-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	913,262	-	(103,669)	99,155	908,748
Total designated funds	913,262		(103,669)	99,155	908,748
General funds	1,189,479	8,729,908	(8,621,201)	(205,833)	1,092,353
Total unrestricted funds	2,102,741	8,729,908	(8,724,870)	(106,678)	2,001,101
Total funds	2,102,741	15,155,682	(15,257,322)	-	2,001,101

15b Purposes of restricted funds

Refuge services: This fund is dedicated to help the women and children staying in our refuges. Restricted funding was received from London Councils (via Ashiana lead partner) for the complex needs refuge in Camden; MHCLG funding for Family Support and Resettlement workers across our London boroughs. The MOPAC Tier 1 Accommodation funding supported several multiple disadvantage workers at our refuges. The GLA and L&Q Foundation funded the new move on accommodation NEST project across three London boroughs. The Youth Endowment Fund was used to pilot an emotional coaching program to mothers living in refuges to exercise positive parenting skills and build healthy relationship with their children. London Community Foundation has been a pilot to transform the Haringey refuge into a psychologically trauma informed environment. Part of the work has been to create a multi-functional area in the lounge space for both the women to have a relaxing space, and the children to have a safe play area.

Community advice, advocacy and support: This fund is for the advice, advocacy and outreach work to survivors of domestic violence. Women and Girls Network have channeled London Councils funding for our Advice hub. Other funders include Southall Black Sisters for women with no recourse to public funds, London Council for a Women's Homelessness project, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Program, together with the Irish Youth Foundation for the Irish and Irish Traveller communities and Trust for London towards the Immigration advice lawyer. The Olywn Foundation provides service user grants.

Therapeutic: The counselling service is free to residents and service users of the organisation and is accessed through Ascent counselling and the North London Rape Crisis services. The funders are MOPAC, Women and Girls Network, Tri-borough Angelou, and Richard Cloudesley.

Children and Young People (CYP): Our work in partnership with VRU is to provide crisis intervention support to young people in hospital emergency departments is funded by MOPAC. WGN fund our work with Black and minoritised young women who have experienced domestic and sexual abuse. The Banham Family Fund has funded counselling for children and young people in communities and schools.

Ascent Plus and other partnership: This fund was for the provision of Violence against Women and Girls services delivered through the partners from the Ascent Plus project funded by London Councils. Greater London Authority has funded our Casa Project giving women second stage accommodations delivered through different partners.

A total of £218,578 unrestricted general funds was transferred, of which £216,744 was used towards designated funds as explained below and £1,834 was used towards supporting restricted charitable activities.

Purposes of designated funds

Capital: This fund represents the net book value of all tangible and intangible fixed assets. The expenditure reflect the movements in depreciation charges and transfers from unrestricted funds made to align the tangible and intangible fixed assets to net book value.

16 Reconciliation of net (expenditure) to net cash flows (used in) / provided by operating activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net (expenditure) for the reporting period	**(1,834)**	(101,640)
Investment income	**(11,466)**	(1,411)
Loan interest paid	**11,893**	20,139
Depreciation charges	**104,711**	103,669
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	**762,578**	(559,642)
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	**356,396**	(760,399)
Net cash flows provided by (used in) operating activities	**1,222,278**	(1,299,284)

17 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Property		Equipment	
	2024	2023	**2024**	2023
	£	£	£	£
Up to one year	865,504	827,151	32,398	12,749
Two to five years	211,656	65,932	40,065	22,440
Over five years	-	3,375	-	-
	1,077,160	896,458	**72,463**	35,189

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.

"Thank you so much for everything. You have no idea how much I truly appreciate your support and Solace as a whole."

Solace Women's Aid
Registered Address
Moore Kingston Smith LLP,
9 Appold Street
London, EC2A 2AP

Advice line freephone | 0808 802 5565
Administrative phone | 020 7619 1350
For press and media email | media@solacewomensaid.org
Website | solacewomensaid.org
Social media| @SolaceWomensAid

Professional Advisors Auditors | Moore Kingston Smith LLP Solicitors | Anthony Collins LLP

To protect our service users, names & photos of service users have been changed.

Solace Women's Aid is a charity registered in England and Wales. Charity number 1082450. Company number 03376716

solace

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

SOLACE WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1082450

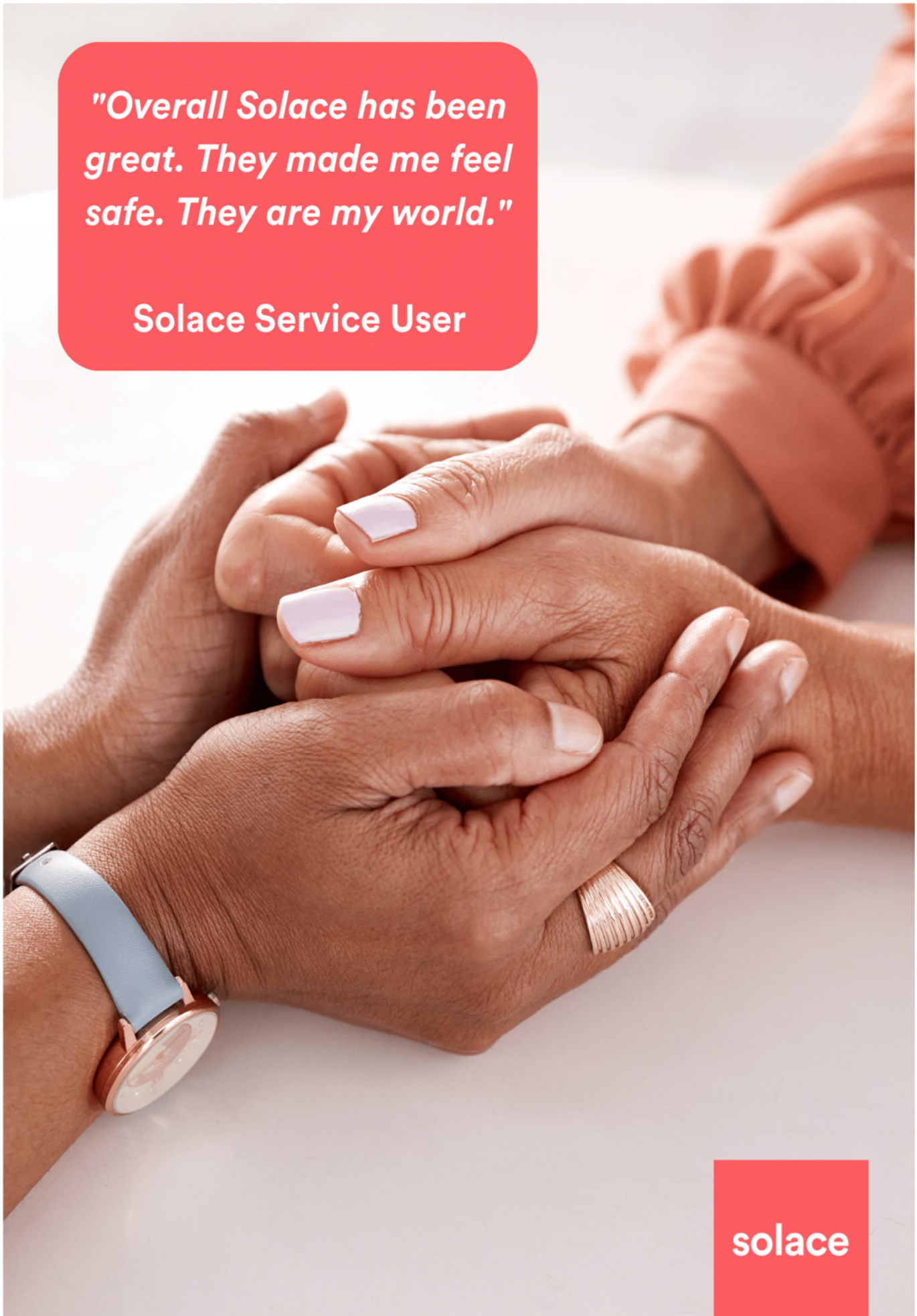
Accounts



Company number: 3376716
Charity number: 1082450

Annual Report and Financial Statements

31 March 2023


"Overall Solace has been great. They made me feel safe. They are my world."
Solace Service User
solace

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SOLACE AT A GLANCE

For the year ended 31 March 2023, Solace Women's Aid's (Solace) services touched the lives of 21,254 survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

During the year, we continued delivering our charitable activities covering refuge accommodation, community support advocacy and advice, and therapeutic counselling services. We also delivered specialist services for children and younger people, and women experiencing multiple disadvantages. We continued to deliver our first national project through our Labyrinth Project. Over 18 months the partnership of organisations across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland supported 33,889 women and trained 992 professionals – all this helped women and women's organisations recover from the impact of the covid-19 pandemic.

We have been implementing and building on our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan with new anti-racism training and four inclusion networks led by and for staff to provide safe spaces for staff as well as helping inform future progress in policies, consultation and communications responses. We progressed work on our organisational development including commissioning an independent culture review and completing an independent review of our grievance processes.

Housing remained one of the largest issues for the survivors we support, and the increasing housing crisis in London is exacerbating this challenge. To help meet this increasing need, we established a new move on accommodation project, joined a pan-London partnership to deliver floating housing support and have employed specialist refuge workers to support women with more complex needs. Additionally, we launched a new report looking at the impact of the Domestic Abuse Act on the experience of survivors accessing housing and made recommendations on necessary further improvements.

The external environment remains challenging for the sector, with high staff turnover, difficult recruitment, and a lack of sustainable funding. Solace raised income of £15.2 million from statutory funders and the public for the year ended March 2023 (2022: £16.4 million). Our dedicated 281 strong staff team and the 5,336 hours contributed by volunteers allowed us to carry on providing our life-saving services. We increased the awareness of our services with the public and reached out to more women and supporters, including reaching 34,000 followers on our social media and delivering several award winning campaigns and films. Throughout 2022/23, we have continued to support women and children and raised awareness to help us in our mission to end the harm done through gender-based violence.

Equity Diversity, and Inclusion

Solace is committed to putting the values of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at the very centre of our organisation to best support our service users and staff, and doing so in visible, measurable and accountable ways.

Over the last year, we have created, initiated, and established a range of new ways to ensure that EDI is at the heart of all we do. We are now working hard to embed these initiatives, with the aim of implementing our EDI Strategy in every area of our organisation. This includes:

- Offering therapeutic support to staff with our daily debriefs and clinical supervision including specific sessions for Black and minoritised women with supervisors of colour.

- Piloted EDI drop-in sessions with our Head of EDI and embedded a new Employee Assistance Programme.

- Launched a new confidential reporting system called 'Tell Jane' where staff can safely and confidentially raise any concerns.

- Undertaken a full external culture review and sought advice from external consultants on our complaints, grievances, and HR policies.

- Established four inclusion networks (people of colour, diverse abilities, LGBTQ+ and allies) to bring together staff who share protected characteristics, building and expanding on the strengths of existing communities at Solace. The networks are run by our staff for our staff, with plenty of opportunity to get involved as hosts, co-hosts and active participants.

- Our Inclusion Networks have spearheaded our new Inclusion Awards and our Future Leaders Programme aimed primarily at supporting women from the global majorities to work towards achieving greater parity in the workplace. We are looking at other specialist inclusion groups to be introduced in the coming year.

- Championing and supporting 'by and for' organisations including a commitment to not bid for funding for specific services for Black and minoritised women or for other groups such as Deaf and disabled women and LGBT+ survivors.

- Secured funding from the Vision Foundation for a new project to support women living with sight loss to volunteer with the advice team. The project will include a comprehensive training programme, mentoring and support into employment.

Solace is a signatory of the VAWG Sector Anti-Racism Charter and we are seeking to incorporate its recommendations into our work.

We continue to support and represent trans women and non-binary people. We are reviewing how we best support this group, and developing guidance and training to staff on supporting trans survivors in their services, in addition to the LGBT+ and Domestic Abuse training that Galop currently provide us.

STRATEGIC REPORT

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. The reference and administrative information set out on page 24 forms part of this report.

The trustees review the aims, objectives, and activities of Solace each year. This report looks at what Solace has achieved and the outcomes and benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people Solace is established to assist during the reporting period. The review also helps ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

Key objectives

The purpose of Solace is 'the promotion of the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being and safety of victims of domestic, sexual, and associated abuse, in particular women, young people and children'.

Vision and mission

Solace's vision and mission were reviewed in the development of our 2022-2027 strategy and are:

A world where everyone is able to live safe and independent lives which are free from gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation.

Solace exists to end the harm done through gender-based violence. Our aim is to work to prevent violence and abuse as well as providing services to meet the individual needs of survivors particularly women and children. Our work is holistic and empowering, working alongside survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse.

Solace has an inclusive definition of women including trans women. Our services seek to support and represent trans women and non-binary people. We understand that trans women and non-binary people are affected by misogyny and the patriarchal frameworks that cause harm to cis women and girls.

Values

Solace core values reflect our history and were developed in consultation with staff and service users. We are working to be:

- Feminist and intersectional in our understanding of male violence against women and girls (MVAWG)
- Survivor led, trauma informed and empowering
- Diverse, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory to create a fully inclusive environment for staff and service users.

We are committed to:

- Social justice and human rights
- Service users having a central voice within the organisation
- Working in collaboration with other agencies
- Continuous improvement.

Public benefit

The trustees have referred to the guidance provided by the Charity Commission regarding public benefit, including its guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity (PB2)', when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In setting the annual plan each year, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives of the charity.

Strategy

Following the launch of Solace's 2022-27 strategy last year, we have started to work towards our six strategic objectives to drive forward our ambitions of supporting more survivors on their journeys to recovery and beyond. Our six strategic objectives are:

S – Strategic Influencing, Partnerships & Leadership

O – Organisational Development & Growth

L – Long-term Recovery and & Lasting Change

A – Accessibility, Education & Employment

C – Children & Young People

E – Empowerment, Engagement & Aspirations

The overarching aim of the strategy is to be bold as we feel this is what is necessary to really tackle MVAWG now and in the future. We will continue to build on our partnerships and our service user-led projects and ensure survivors are at the heart of all our work. To support survivors to achieve long-term recovery and lasting change, we are also ensuring our staff team feel supported and empowered.

To deliver this strategy, in 2022-23 we have:

- Launched our Service User Advisory Board to help shape our strategic influencing, approach to fundraising and service delivery.
- Started to review our development opportunities for staff and launched our people of colour leadership programme including a mentoring scheme.
- We began embedding a trauma informed approach to relevant policies and procedures.
- Developed a suite of wellbeing resources for staff.
- Improved our corporate partnership approach and seen a growth in this income source.
- Grown our move on accommodation offer with the expansion of the Casa Project and launch of the Nest Project.
- Expanded our therapeutic offer to ensure that both women and children in our refuge can receive counselling support.
- Started the development of new children and young people service models including a programme for young boys showing signs of unhealthy behaviours.
- Supported our Young Change Makers to develop two powerful awareness raising campaigns 'Dear Dads' and '#RefametheBlame'
- Secured funding for a new project to support visually impaired women into volunteer positions within our advice team, and into future employment in the VAWG sector.
- Launched Recite Me, an inclusive digital technology that allows individuals to access the information on our website in a way that suits their individual needs including over 100 languages and features to support people with learning disabilities.
- Led by Trustees, we undertook an independent culture review with all staff.

Beneficiaries of our services

Solace's main beneficiaries are women, young people and children as outlined in our aims, vision, and mission. A small number of beneficiaries are men who access our community support services.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Our work has a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the women and children we work with, which is frequently expressed by them as 'life saving' or 'life changing'.

We support survivors to achieve long-term recovery and change. Each year, we measure our success annually via our service user survey, exit questionnaires and analysis of the impact of our services through outcomes achieved with our service users. Successful outcomes are demonstrated through increased autonomy, independence and capability, better mental health and self-care, and better parenting and relationships with children.

93% rated there was a continued need for Solace services **(2021/22: 93%)**
91% of respondents found it easy or very easy to make initial contact with their services **(2021/22: 91%)**
88% rated the service as good, very good or excellent **(2021/22: 88%)**

Our work is also evaluated in accordance to agreed quality frameworks which are monitored through regular reviews with staff, the senior management team, trustees, and funders. We renewed the ISO 9001 accreditation, the CHAS Health and Safety Quality Standard and maintained our SafeLives Leading Lights accreditation and Advice Quality Mark.

Charitable activities and outcomes

For the year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, our core provision services including refuge, advocacy, casework, therapeutic counselling and groups, and holistic support at Solace supported 13,361 women and children. Some of the women and children we help use just one of Solace's services, while many seek holistic assistance by accessing multiple support services. Our outcomes for provision services compared to the prior year reflects occupancy patterns at refuges and the end of delivery on some projects.

Over the last year, our prevention services continued to deliver preventive group work for children and young people, and we trained professionals and other groups. We had a slower delivery of training with IRIS professionals and fewer awareness programmes at schools partly due to the completion of the 'Hear to Change' project funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. This explains the reduction in the number of beneficiaries we supported with group and awareness programmes. We will be looking at our preventive strategy and assessing how this could be improved in the future.

SERVICE DELIVERY	2022/23	2021/22
PROVISION		
Refuge and specialist accommodation	949	1,049
Community based advice, advocacy and support	10,023	10,689
Therapeutic	2,198	2,426
Children and young people	191	301
Total provision	13,361	14,465
PREVENTION		
Children and Young People Preventive Group Work and Projects	4,954	9,610
Professional and External Training	2,898	5,083
Perpetrator Programmes	41	47
Total prevention	7,893	14,740
TOTAL	21,254	29,205

Refuge and specialist accommodation-based services

Solace runs 22 refuges offering 178 rooms across seven London boroughs for women and children fleeing abuse who need a safe place to stay in order to recover from their trauma and rebuild independent lives.

Our skilled refuge workers create a supportive environment, providing practical and emotional support on a range of areas including finances and debt, housing, family and criminal justice processes, immigration and health. Following recent funding from MOPAC, we have introduced multiple disadvantage refuge workers who can support women with their mental health needs, and wider complex needs.

Supporting women into move on accommodation and helping them to resettle is a key part of our support. This year we were delighted to launch our second move on accommodation project in partnership with L&Q. We have 10 new affordable properties for women leaving refuges across London which are provided with two years of support to help with ongoing needs and move towards independent living.

Solace delivers a 'whole family' approach in our accommodation services and specialist family support workers together with sessional play workers provide vital support to mothers and children during their time in refuge. Family support workers work with mothers and children to ensure that they are supported with their physical and mental health, emotional well-being and development and accessing education opportunities and resources. We have also developed a Specialist Family Support Project in Haringey, Islington, and Enfield to provide holistic support to mothers and children through a psycho-educational group work programme.

Specialist safe accommodation

We continue to run one of London's few specialist accommodation services for women experiencing multiple disadvantage. Our refuge in Camden offers 24-hour support to women with mental health needs and problematic substance use. We also run two second stage dispersed accommodation and specialist support services: The **Amari Project** provides second stage accommodation for women who have been sexually exploited through prostitution or trafficking and the **Rhea Project** provides immediate temporary, crisis emergency accommodation for women and children in Southwark.

Refuge accommodation outcomes

- 58% (2021/22: 58%) felt safer since accessing refuge.
- 63% (2021/22: 58%) felt more confident since entering refuge.
- 73% (2021/22: 72%) of service users felt an overall improvement to their wellbeing after accessing refuge.

Community based advice, advocacy, and support

Advocacy and Support

Our Advocacy and Support teams offer support to those affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence in their community across eight London boroughs. Our Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) and specialist caseworkers work to increase the safety of survivors of domestic abuse and meet a range of needs – these can include ongoing safety concerns, emotional or housing support, legal options, reporting to the police, help around child contact, benefits and financial advice. IDVAs usually hold cases for 3 months but can work with clients for up to 6 months.

Solace runs Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) services across five London boroughs. Our IRIS advocates work in partnership with GP surgeries and offer tailored training on the public health issue of

domestic abuse. This service enables support to be offered to domestic abuse victims at an early stage before the abuse becomes a serious risk to mental, emotional and physical health.

Advice line

Solace's advice line supports those who are women, trans and non-binary aged 14+ who have experienced any form of male violence against women and girls across 16 London boroughs. The line is a first point of contact and empowers service users by exploring their rights and options to make independent decisions about their future. Our advice service provides support to service users who have been assessed as being at medium risk but have not been able to receive support from other domestic abuse services, and risk falling through the gaps. The advice line and casework are part of two pan-London partnerships, Ascent Advice and Counselling (led by Women and Girls Network) and Ascent Advice Plus (led by Solace).

Specialist advice and support projects

- **Irish Traveller Project -** This project provides long-term, holistic support to Irish & Irish Traveller (including those of Irish descent) survivors of abuse across all London boroughs, and who have experienced domestic/sexual abuse at any point in their lives.
- **Immigration Service –** Our immigration project supports women, trans and non-binary service users who have no recourse to public funds. We provide casework, accommodation and subsistence support for up to 16 weeks, and 1:1 immigration advice to help the service user to regularise their status in the UK.
- **Silver Project -** The Silver Project works across London to provide longer term advocacy support for women over 55 who have experienced domestic abuse. This year the project has also supported over 400 practitioners through training to raise awareness of domestic abuse in older women and the barriers to reporting and support for this group.

Advice, Advocacy, and specialist services outcomes

- 64% (2021/22: 69%) felt more confident since accessing advice and advocacy support
- 73% (2021/22: 63%) felt safer since accessing advice and advocacy support
- 67% (2021/22: 47%) of service users felt an overall improvement to their wellbeing after accessing support

> *"You reassured me, you have guided me throughout this process. You make sure me and my family are safe. You gave continuous support, check in regularly, keep updating us, referred me to the right people, like solicitors. I felt really reassured by Solace. I'm so grateful for your help from the bottom of heart. I would like to volunteer and give back if I can."*

Multiple Disadvantage Services

Solace is one of the few violence against women and girls organisations to have specialist services that support women experiencing multiple disadvantage. We run services for women who have experienced violence against women and girls as well wider issues in their life including significant mental health issues and/or problematic substance use, potential involvement in the criminal justice system leading to additional barriers in finding and maintaining housing, and/or No Recourse to Public Funds.

Solace runs specialist **Housing First Projects in Islington and Westminster** for women experiencing multiple disadvantage in partnership with Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse. Across our two Housing First services we supported 46 women in 2022-23.

As the Women's Safe Engagement and Recovery (**WiSER) project** enters its fifth year, it continues to support women who find it very hard to access/engage with support and who are facing severe and multiple disadvantage. The project is delivered across eight London boroughs in partnership with Against Violence and Abuse (AVA), SHP, Hopscotch, IMECE Women's Centre, NIA and IKWRO and Ashiana. WiSER uses assertive outreach in a trauma and psychologically informed way and provides holistic wrap around support methods.

Integral to the support are a team of peer mentors who are women with lived experience that now support other women accessing the WiSER service. This year 9 new peer mentors were recruited and have provided emotional and practical support to 12 women.

We have also ran the **Southwark Women's Assessment Hub** which is our intensive accommodation project, primarily focused on supporting women affected by rough sleeping, the criminal justice system, or in many cases, both. We offer flexible, assertive, trauma-informed support to help residents to achieve their goals and aspirations, and provide up to one year of resettlement support in the community.

Multiple Disadvantage outcomes

- 54% (2021/22: 51%) had accessed various health services and were better able to manage their health and wellbeing.

Therapeutic Services

Solace provides a range of therapeutic services to help survivors of domestic abuse and wider forms of male violence against women and girls to recover from their experiences and make choices for themselves. We provide a person-centred approach which allows survivors to focus on their strengths, whilst helping them to recover from the long-term impact of physical and emotional abuse. In 2022/23 we provided 3,344 hours of counselling support to 404 women and children through the pan-London Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership and specific services for Southwark, Waltham Forest, and Islington.

- 82% of survivors supported by Ascent Counselling felt an increase in their emotional or mental wellbeing
- 82% of survivors supported by Ascent Counselling had an increased understanding of their rights and choices

Therapeutic support in our refuges

We are proud to have extended our therapeutic support for both women and children within our refuge through new funding from MOPAC. We now provide a bespoke counselling programme for women in refuge and during their resettlement which provides a safe space to work through their feelings and understand their trauma they have experienced. We also have a new creative play therapy service for children within our refuge.

> *[My therapist] is amazing and has helped me so much with counselling. She might not know but she made me feel more able to express my feelings as understand them also. I'm grateful for all the support and her patience*

Rape Crisis

Solace runs one of the four rape crisis centres in London supporting survivors of sexual violence. We support women and girls in North London aged over 13 who have experienced any form of sexual violence. We work

alongside the three other London rape crisis centres, Galop, SurvivorsUK and the Havens to form the London Survivors Gateway (led by Women and Girls Network). In 2022/23, our service took 894 calls, supported 540 service users and provided 272 women with therapeutic support.

Our North London Rape Crisis team run:

- A **helpline** for women and girls to provide emotional support regarding the sexual violence they have experienced, regardless of when the violence occurred.
- An **advocacy service** through a team of ISVAs who work with survivors of sexual violence in a trauma-informed way using a person-centred empowerment model to support them to make informed choices from reporting to the police to court.
- A new pilot **casework service** sits alongside our ISVA service to provide support for women and girls who are not engaged in the criminal justice system, which focuses on providing practical support.
- A specialist **counselling service** to help women understand the impact of abuse and to recover from trauma. We also run a safeguarding hub for women who are at risk of self-harm or are experiencing deteriorating mental health through a series of stabilisation sessions.
- **Training for professionals** as well as staff and volunteers at local community groups to increase understanding of sexual violence.

North London Rape Crisis outcomes

- 68% (2021/22: 56%) felt safer after support from North London Rape Crisis.
- 54% (2021/22: 53%) felt more confident after support from North London Rape Crisis.
- 82% (2021/22: 78%) felt an increase in emotional and mental wellbeing.
- 82% of survivors had an increased understanding of their rights and choices.

> *Thank you for all your efforts and incredible support throughout this. I couldn't have gone through that day in court if it wasn't for you! Keep doing what you do because you are amazing.*

Children and Young People

Solace delivers a 'whole school approach' through our Protect Our Women Project which provides healthy relationships and sex education to 10-25 year olds in primary and secondary schools in Haringey. Our AQA accredited programme teaches pupils about the root causes and strands of VAWG, through age-appropriate interactive workshops. Through our children and young people IDVA we are also able to provide holistic trauma informed support to young people who experienced VAWG.

Our team of IDVAs works in close partnership with Redthread to provide crisis intervention support to young people of all genders who present in London's Major Trauma Centres due to domestic abuse and sexual violence issues. We provide training provision to hospital practitioners to improve the identification of violence and abuse across the four London major trauma centres.
Through the CouRAGEous Project, Solace provides a specialised service for Black and Minoritised young women aged between 14-24 who are worried about or have experienced violence, abuse or exploitation.

Young Change Makers

Our Young Change Makers continue to raise awareness of VAWG through the co-production of empowering and educational campaigns. This year they developed two powerful campaigns:

- Dear Dads campaign – The campaign calls for fathers to have a better understanding of what it is to be a young girl in today's world, challenges they are overcoming on a daily basis while asking them for support and guidance to show their feelings more and be role models to young boys.
- #Reframetheblame campaign - Commissioned by Haringey Council, our Young Change Makers developed and produced a series of campaign videos in response to the high prevalence of sexual abuse disclosures in schools/colleges/universities. Working closely with the Rank&File company, three campaigns were developed targeting young girls, young boys and professionals.

Children and Young People outcomes

- Helped and supported 191 (2021/22: 301) children and young people in our community services, helping to build their resilience and dealing with the impact of domestic violence.
- Preventive strategies included workshops, talks and seminars with groups of young people in schools impacting 4,954 (2021/22: 9,610) lives.

Other services – Training and Consultancy

Across Solace, our training team deliver in person and remote training to professionals across the statutory sector and corporate partners. Solace has 32 unique training packages available and has worked with organisations to develop bespoke training packages. The training team has implemented new measures to ensure that training sessions are more trauma-informed, both for learners and for our associate trainers. Alongside these we have delivered training to smaller grassroots organisations through our Labyrinth Project and specialist training on women's homelessness through our Women's Development Unit.

Training outcomes

- We have trained 2,898 (2021/22: 5,083) learners during the year.
- 93% of learners strongly felt that the training was engaging, inclusive and helpful.
- 95% said that they will be able to apply what they've learned in their work.

Partnership work

Some of Solace's best work has been achieved by working collaboratively and in partnership with other organisations both big and small. In 2022/23, we worked with 55 partners including 20 'by and for' partners who provide much needed tailored support for marginalised groups.

This year, Solace has continued to build upon our existing successful partnerships, as well as developing new ones, such as:

- The Nest Project, working with L&Q and funded by the Greater London Authority to provide 10 new move on properties for women leaving refuge. Women are provided with affordable tenancies for up to two years with ongoing support.
- Ascent Pan London Floating Support Service, a London VAWG Consortium project which provides high-quality domestic abuse support, 'by-and-for' services and counselling for those in safe accommodation.

Ascent Advice Plus

Ascent Advice Plus has secured further funding from MOPAC for continuation into 2024. This funding expands support provided by two advice hubs and Rights of Women's Family Law Line, provides longer term advice

casework and incorporates the expertise of four additional Equity & Diversity (E&D) partners to provide training and casework support. In 2022/23, the partnership supported:

- 1,810 women supported through the East and West London Advice hubs
- 612 women were supported by the London Family Law Line
- 555 women were provided with specialist casework support

Labyrinth Project

2022/23 saw the continuation and completion of our first national project, the Labyrinth Project. It was a partnership of 14 women's organisations contributing to a strengthened women's sector in 8 areas across England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland by building capacity and forging stronger networks of support and shared learning locally and nationally. Labyrinth's three main strands of work were:

- Local capacity building through 'Navigators' hosted by local women's organisations in London, Hampshire, Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Manchester, Glasgow, and Northern Ireland, supported by training and consultancy from specialist training partners.
- The Empowering Women Fund, a grants scheme providing both small 'seed funding' and larger women's sector grants to 40 organisations led by and for women in order to build their capacity and develop sustainable ways of empowering women in their local area.
- Developing a 'Centre for Excellence' to pilot a range of approaches to networking and sharing learning across the women's sector - including a website of information and resources.

Despite being operational for only 18 months and working within the context of Covid-19, the Labyrinth Project successes included engaged over 33,889 women through the project, trained 992 women and delivered 463 group work sessions.

> *The Labyrinth sessions were brilliant and the women really bonded... We are a small, local project and being able to tap into knowledge and networks really expanded things for us and also directly for the women in that group."*

Casa Project

Solace continues to lead the Casa Project, a partnership within the London Violence against Women and Girls Consortium. The Casa Project enables women to move on from refuge to high quality, self-contained accommodation with affordable rents, for up to 2 years with specialist resettlement support attached. Support is provided throughout the tenancy by our partners Ashiana Network, EACH Counselling and Support, IKWRO Women's Rights Organisation, Latin American Women's Aid and The Nia Project. In 2022/23 the project supported 60 women including 19 women entering training and education and 13 women securing paid employment.

Women's Development Unit

Solace delivered a second year of the Women's Development Unit in partnership with The Connection at St Martin's, working across the capital to improve access to support for women experiencing homelessness and multiple disadvantage.

The Unit worked with partners to design and deliver the first London Women's Rough Sleeping Census in October 2022. The Census aimed to bring visibility to the experiences of women who are rough sleeping by collecting anonymised data through a census survey. The census was delivered across London and resulted in a published report, Making Women Count, and launched at an event with the Deputy Mayor for Housing Tom Copley.

The Unit published best practice guidance on Women's Spaces within Homelessness Settings, designed to encourage homelessness services (which are often primarily used by men) to create protected and trauma-informed spaces for women.

Over its two years, the project has had:

- 300 people attend training
- 109 people participate in women's homelessness focused workshops
- 165 people take part in interviews and surveys to support our evidence gathering
- 61 people with lived experience help shape the project.

Putting survivors at the heart of our organisation

Service User Involvement

At Solace we place our service users at the heart of what we do, and we fundamentally believe in amplifying the voices of women and supporting them to take ownership of their own journeys. Our Service User Involvement strategy was developed last year and has been created in collaboration with service users to provide a framework to involve them meaningfully in the planning, delivery, evaluation and direction of all our work.

Solace's overall aim is to embed a co-production approach to service user involvement in all areas of its work. This means going beyond service user consultation and seeking meaningful collaboration from the outset and throughout projects. Co-production is the long-term aim of this strategy and is focused on sharing power and influence with service users.

During 2022/23, we continued to embed our service user involvement strategy through the launch of our Service User Advisory Board, a group of former and current service users who meet quarterly to discuss a range of topics to shape Solace's policies and strategies. We have also developed service user involvement training for all staff to allow them to improve participation in their local services, trained service users to lead audits of our services and supported service users to be involved in recruitment.

Solace Ambassadors

Our Ambassadors are all survivors who can draw on their experiences to help us raise awareness and campaign for change. We offer all media training and ongoing support. Our current charity ambassadors are trustee Emily Florence Hutchings, former Miss England Rehema, actor Karen Bryson and film director and founder, Kirsty Malcolm. They are supported to speak up for women on issues as experts by experience including sharing our awareness campaigns, speaking at our events, and supporting our fundraising campaigns.

We are also planning the launch of a new programme of survivor ambassadors in 2023/24 which will be women who have accessed Solace's services and now want to share their stories to raise awareness of sexual violence and domestic abuse and empower other women and girls.

Volunteers

The trustees would like to thank all our volunteers, supporters, and staff for their invaluable work throughout the year, as their support is essential to help Solace achieve its aims.

Volunteers play an integral role in the life saving services we can provide to women and children and are a source of inspiration and support to our staff.

We received 5,336 volunteer and professional hours (2021/22: 4,588) from individuals and students who help us with our service delivery, alongside pro bono corporate supporters who contribute to various projects and awareness campaigns. Our dedicated volunteers work across 28 different projects.

We provide women volunteers with specialist training to enhance their skills to allow them to help with our services, especially our advice line, North London Rape Crisis Service, refuges and our therapeutic services. We have also been expanding our peer mentoring schemes where people who have previous, lived experience of VAWG and/ or multiple disadvantage provide support or a listening ear to current service users. We hope to continue to expand this service and have already seen peer mentors move into paid roles within the organisation.

In accordance with charity reporting regulations, we have not accounted for the time provided by these volunteers in the financial statements, however, based on London's Living Wage rate of pay, this is estimated at £63,765 (2021/22: £50,697).

The value of professional pro bono services provided to Solace was valued at £87,282 (2020/21: £90,391) with a large proportion attributable to free advertising provided by Financial Times and apprentice levy funding received from corporate supporters National Grid and Chelsea Football Club. We also received many gifts for our service users from our numerous corporate supporters.

Being the voice of survivors - public affairs

We have continued to develop our public affairs function which seeks to ensure that key decisions in Westminster and London are shaped by the powerful voices and experiences of the survivors that we support. In 2022-23 there was an increased focus on the urgent reform needed in the police response to VAWG and to police perpetrated abuse, following the case of David Carrick and the publication of the Casey Review.

We shared our views and made recommendations on key developments in the response to VAWG particularly on housing, criminal justice and sustainable funding for MVAWG services. This included contributions and commentary on the Draft Victims Bill, Angiolini Inquiry into the police response to MVAWG, women and housing in London, policing priorities and housing reform related to domestic abuse.

Through this work we:

- Met with 23 key stakeholders across the UK and London Government
- Were mentioned in 39 UK Parliament and London Assembly reports.

Domestic abuse and housing

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 sought to improve access to housing for survivors of domestic abuse however it continues to be one of the biggest challenges for the survivors we support. In November 2022, Solace launched a new report looking at the impact of the Act on the experience of survivors accessing housing and

made recommendations on necessary further improvements. We launched the report with a roundtable of London councillors and continue to engage with stakeholders on our key recommendations.

Covid-19 inquiry

As the provider of the largest crisis accommodation for domestic abuse survivors during the pandemic, we successfully called for domestic abuse victims to be included in the final terms of reference for the covid-19 inquiry. To ensure that survivors voices were properly represented in the inquiry, we applied and succeeded in becoming a core participant to the inquiry alongside our partner Southall Black Sisters. We are being supported by Public Interest Law Centre and Garden Court Chambers and have submitted written evidence ahead of the public hearings in October 2023.

Fundraising

We continue to be so grateful to all our supporters during 2022/23, including those that would prefer to remain anonymous.

In 2022/23, we have been successful in raising a combined value of £498,178 (2021/22: £735,597) in voluntary income. Our work is made possible by the generous support and donations of individual donors, community groups and companies over the past year. The income raised during the year reflects the continuing difficult funding landscape and we continue to work closely with our existing supporters and look at ways to increase income generation to benefit the impact of our work with beneficiaries.

With a cost of living crisis affecting survivors and those that donate to us, it continues to be a challenging fundraising climate and that is why we are so grateful to all those that have donated or fundraised for us. From marathon runners and cake bakers to jewellery sellers and gig organisers, every £1 raised has made a huge difference to the lives of survivors recovering from abuse. We are proud that we have had:

- Over 1,000 miles ran for Team Solace
- £18,000 worth of Christmas gifts donated
- 100 volunteers helped transform our refuges.

Volunteer group, eCubed, once again held some fantastic events for Solace including Rock Against Violence and Jazz Against Violence.

We are proud to have been selected as retail giant New Look's 2022 and 2023 charity partner as part of their 'Kind to the Core' mission. In our first year of working together they raised an incredible £15,000 through till point donations and fundraising activities. They have also generously donated clothing, easter eggs, sanitary products and ran an incredible employability and wellbeing day for our service users.

'A massive thank you to New Look for their very generous donation. I work at Solace in a service who supports some of the most vulnerable women who experience abuse, homelessness, addiction and mental health issues. They are living in poverty and usually have very low self-esteem and do not have much. It is incredible to be able to give them brand new clothes from New Look for practical reasons and to show them that they deserve nice things and that they are worthy!' A WiSER Project Advocate

Our approach to fundraising and compliance

Solace is a member of the fundraising regulator. Our income is generated predominately thanks to the support of individual fundraisers raising income at our events or their own events. We do not employ the services of any fundraising agencies or third parties, nor have we run a telephone or door to door fundraising campaign. Our relationship with our supporters is especially important to us and the charity does not wish for our supporters to feel under any pressure to donate to the charity. We have a close relationship with our fundraisers and support them in delivering their events and complying with relevant codes of practice. Where we work with commercial participators, contracts are exchanged so that we can ensure compliance with the code of fundraising practice, applicable laws, and adherence to best practice.

We received no complaints about our fundraising practices in 2022/23.

Quality Management

Solace prides itself on providing high quality support to our service users. Our staff team are committed to providing a high standard of support to our service users and we continually look at how we can improve our services. We continue to invest in accredited training for our staff and have a comprehensive internal training programme to ensure we deliver quality services. The organisation is supported by our business development, business support, HR and finance teams who have been introducing new systems and procedures to better support our frontline services and the wider organisation. This helps us to continue to deliver excellent services and ensure value for money for our funders.

In 2022/23, we achieved and retained several accreditations and quality marks, demonstrating the high standard of Solace's work, including:

- SafeLives Leading Lights;
- Rape Crisis National Service Standards;
- Disability Confident Employer;
- Advice Quality Standard;
- ISO 9001; and
- CHAS (The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme).

Raising awareness – media, campaigns and communications

It has been another busy year for our award-winning media and communications, campaigns and community teams. As always, we continue to look for creative and innovative ways to reach women and girls and to support and promote our services both externally and internally.

We want to support more women and children in London to live free from violence and that means raising awareness of what abuse and violence is, what help is out there and how people can support those around

them. It is also crucial that we challenge misogynistic, racist, ableist and homophobic attitudes in our society and institutions, and our communications are a key tool to doing this.

We continue to work to improve internal communications across the organisation, so that our staff team feel informed, empowered and engaged. We have continued to develop our intranet, Solace Space, and are setting up new ways to share information across the organisation.

- 213,000 unique visits to our website
- 35,000 followers across our social media platform
- 180 media requests.

Recite Me

In September, we launched Recite Me, an inclusive digital technology that allows individuals to access the information on our website in a way that suits their individual needs. It has over 100 languages available and a wide range of features to support people with learning disabilities. This will help us to reach more women and girls that need our support. 560 people used our Recite Me tool to access our website in the first 8 months.

Seven Years of Christmas

In November 2022, we launched our #7YearsofChristmas appeal which included a short animation following the life of 'Maya' over seven years of Christmas, based on the Twelve Years of Christmas theme. The campaign awareness that it takes on average 7 years to leave an abusive relationship raised over £60,000. We were so honoured to be supported by Self Esteem who provided the vocals to our film and special thanks to MBAStack and Roll Nine for bringing our appeal to life.

The campaign won Crisis Response Content of the Year at the UK Content Awards and was nominated for Best Fundraising Campaign in Purpose Awards and Best Marketing Campaign in Drum Awards.

Not Here for Your Entertainment and the Solace Test

For International Women's Day, we focused on the sexism and stereotypes that heavily features within our entertainment, particularly through TV and film. Our campaign highlighted the way in which stories of violence against women and girls in the media are often victim-blaming and a part of why so many women feel shame about experiencing abuse and feel fear talking about it or asking for help.

We launched our Solace Test to guide those writing about VAWG in the arts as part of our "Not Here for Your Entertainment" event hosted at Rich Mix Cinema with a panel discussion featuring writers, directors and actors.

Plans for the future

We are delighted that since 2022-23, Solace has appointed a permanent CEO, Nahar Choudhury in June and permanent Chair of Trustees, Priyanka Devani in July. Solace looks forward to starting a new chapter under their leadership and thanks Judith Banjoko, Bernadette Keane and Kirsty Telford for their work over the last year.

Our focus continues to be on constantly improving the support we give to survivors, providing new services that meet the complexity of survivors' lives when they reach us and ensuring that we have a motivated and healthy workforce. Our 2022-27 strategy set out that our ambition is for the organisation to grow to achieve the dual aim of supporting more survivors but also to support the frontline staff working for the organisation.

Our staff are committed to supporting survivors of male violence against women and girls. Their wellbeing is crucial to the organisation and ensuring that we provide the support needed to undertake this challenging work continues to be a key focus for trustees and the leadership team. As well as maintaining a physically and psychologically safe workforce, we want to empower staff to be involved in the future direction of the organisation so we ensure we provide the best possible services for survivors of male violence.

Noting the challenges across around recruitment and retention with the in VAWG sector, we are also looking at our staff benefits and development pathways. We will focus on how we can bring teams together for meaningful collaboration, including through our move to a new Head Office and our approach to flexible and agile working.

With an independent organisational culture review having taken place in 2022-23, trustees and the executive will be reviewing the learnings from this review and will focus on making crucial internal changes to improve the culture and experience of working at Solace. Fostering a positive and healthy culture will help us live our values, build a strong and supported workforce, and provide strong outcomes for the women and children we support.

As part of this work, we are working on how to embed a trauma informed approach into all aspects of our organisation and the work we do. Our initial focus will be on ensuring a trauma informed approach is embedded into services and we are in the process of acquiring our trauma informed quality mark, to ensure that we run services that are healthy, mindful and reflective.

We are looking to refresh and rescope our work on equity, diversity and inclusion to follow on from our 2021-23 plan. As part of this work, we will develop further plans on embedding an anti-racism approach throughout the organisation including in our training and working practices through a specific anti-racism plan. We recognise that needs to be a continual commitment to anti-racism within the organisation, which needs to reflect our actions both internally and externally.

To ensure that we are continuously developing our services, it is crucial that the voices and experiences of survivors shapes our work. We will continue to implement our new service user involvement strategy which aims to take us on the important journey from engagement to true co-production.

We are also looking to review our approach to support provision from our mainly non-clinical staff team. We are reassessing our use of psychological frameworks to look for a better response to women and children with complex needs.

To give further strength to our governance, we will be assessing our performance against the Charity Governance Code on an annual basis and commit to an external review every three years.

Our business development focus will be on supporting income generation and strengthening our reserves, with the goal to achieve our desired target reserve levels of £1,125,000 to enable us to meet the varied needs of our service users, staff, and volunteers at Solace.

We will support the organisation's growth by strengthening core services and seek to grow our services around housing for VAWG survivors, including looking at the feasibility of becoming a registered social landlord. We will continue to develop new models for children and young people and secure funding to test and refine these.

Our business development strategy will also look at how we can improve the sustainability of our services including through campaigning for better funded services that can meet the needs of service users and ensure we can fairly remunerate our staff for the tireless work they do. We will also focus on developing further partnerships across the VAWG sector and beyond with a particular focus on housing and children and young

people. We will look to support and work alongside 'by and for' organisations supporting marginalised groups, and will review our partnership working to ensure that we are operating in an equitable way.

To work towards our mission of a world free of gender based abuse, we will continue to speak out about violence against women and girls in the public arena. We will do this through our awareness raising and fundraising campaigns, creating opportunities for allies to support our work and pushing for change in policy, legislation and funding.

Financial review

The financial results for the year ended 31 March 2023 are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities, balance sheet, cash flow statement and notes to the accounts on pages 33 onwards.

Income

For the financial year 2022/23, total incoming resources was £15,156,000 (2021/22 £16,361,000) with funding from statutory partners, trusts and foundations, corporates and the public which have helped Solace maintain essential services during the year. The total reduction in income of £1,205,000 compared to prior year is primarily due to the planned closure of three large partnership projects. The majority of our statutory contracts reported within our charitable activities have been renewed and this provides longer term financial security for Solace to withstand the continuing challenging financial climate.

Our refuge services grew by £705,000 through new funding streams and inflationary increases in core rental income. The Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) Tier 1 Accommodation funding enhanced our work in refuges with multiple disadvantage refuge workers, the Greater London Authority and L&Q Foundation provided funding for our new 'NEST' move on accommodation project. Community based advice and advocacy services remained stable with a smaller growth of £73,000 during the year with changes in funders outlined in notes 3a of the accounts.

Therapeutic services, which deliver counselling in a trauma informed manner to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, increased during the year by a total amount of £209,000 attributable to higher funding received from MOPAC towards our North London Rape Crisis services.

Our work with Children and Young People saw a reduction in income of £100,000 due to the completion of the Hear to Change project which was funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

The largest reduction was recorded in our partnership work with a decline in income of £1,851,000, which is matched by a similar reduction in our partnership expenditure as outlined in note 4 of the accounts. Solace completed its tenure on leading the Ascent partnership work previously funded by London Councils; this accounted for a reduction in partnership income of £1,034,000. The remaining reduction is due to the planned end of our partnership work through the Labyrinth project and Emergency COVID 19 project.

Our advice and advocacy work in the community, which includes specialist services and work with women with multiple needs represented the largest source of incoming resources at 38.6% of our funding base, followed by refuge provision 32.3%, therapeutic at 12.7% and partnership work at 8.9%. Children and young people services focussed on prevention activities was at 3.2% and remains a core strategic goal for Solace.

Voluntary income from donations contributed 3.3% of our funding base through the support of the public, corporates and trusts and foundations.

Further details on our incoming resources are in notes 2 and 3 of the financial statements.

Expenditure

Our charitable spending on activities has correspondingly decreased by 9.8% from £16,927,000 to £15,257,000. Due to the reasons mentioned in the above paragraphs on partnership work, there was a reduction in payments to partners amounting to £1,226,000 which explains the year on year change in total expenditure.

The number of staff to deliver our charitable services have reduced by an average of 18 over the year, however salary increases and initiatives for stronger employee engagement and staff wellbeing recorded an overall increase in staff expenditure of £53,000. The closure of COVID 19 projects resulted in less expenditure and grants towards our beneficiaries amounting to £312,000.

Solace remains focused on tight cost management and supplier contracts are reviewed periodically for better value for money propositions, some of these savings are reflected across expenditure for IT, facilities and professional and other fees totalling £243,000. Maintenance and services have increased by £59,000 predominantly through uncontrollable inflationary rises.

The blended average annual cost per service user at £718 (2021/22: £580) is higher reflecting inflationary and other cost increases against the previous year.

Further details on our expenditure are in note 4 of the financial statements.

Financial position

After the net expenditure on restricted funds, the overall result for the year was a deficit of £102,000 (2021/22: deficit of £566,000). The current year deficit is explained predominantly by lower than planned voluntary income generation. A key reason for this is the cost of living crisis resulting in reduced donations received from individual donors as noted in note 2 of the financial statements.

Achieving a surplus remains a key performance target to enable the charity to set aside funds towards reserves for contingency requirements, further explained in our reserves policy note. We have planned to achieve a balanced budget for the coming year which we believe is achievable due to recent renewals and extensions of contracts and a more targeted approach towards fundraising combined with tight management of costs.

Total fund balances as of 31 March 2023 were £2,001,000 (2011/22: £2,103,000) of which £909,000 (2021/22: £913,000) were designated funds and the remaining £1,092,000 (2021/22: £,1,189,000) represented general funds. Designated funds as at the balance sheet date represent the net book value of tangible and intangible fixed assets.

Reserves policy and going concern

The reserves fund represents unrestricted general funds which are not committed or tied to any tangible fixed assets held by Solace.

It is Solace's policy to retain sufficient reserves to safeguard its financial commitments and to continue to provide essential services to women and children who are experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence, in the event of unforeseen financial problems for a length of time to enable those problems to be resolved.

The trustees have reviewed its reserves policy in March 2023 and agreed to build Solace's reserves based on an analysis of the risks facing the charity. In determining the level of reserves required by Solace, the following factors are taken into account by the Board of Trustees:

- key strategic risks as described in Solace's risk register;
- our strategic goals;
- financial strategy and sustainability;
- liquidity management;
- commitments to staff and other contractual obligations; and
- needs of services and beneficiaries.

This level of reserves is to protect the charity from having to make quick structural changes arising from the sudden loss of income, for example when contracts are not renewed or other unforeseen circumstances, to enable the charity to function during unexpected periods of financial difficulties. The Finance and Resources sub-committee reviews the level of reserves required by Solace annually and recommends the appropriate level to the trustees.

Based on the analysis of risks, the trustees have set a reserve range from of £1,069,000 to £1,125,000. As at the end of March 2023, the current unrestricted free reserves of £1,092,000 (unrestricted reserves less those related to tangible fixed assets, intangible fixed assets and designations) are within the desired reserve range agreed by trustees.

To achieve the higher target of £1,125,000, there is a shortfall of £33,000 in current unrestricted free reserves. The trustees intend to achieve the target level of £1,125,000 by generating adequate surpluses through the annual financial planning cycles over the next two years.

Further notes on our reserves are outlined in note 15 of the financial statements.

The trustees have considered the material uncertainties which may cast doubts on the appropriateness of the going concern assumption with regards to the 2022/23 financial statements. As noted above, these uncertainties are continually monitored by the board and the senior management team, and remedial actions are implemented in a timely manner. Having considered the risks of these uncertainties, the trustees have concluded that the going concern assumption remains appropriate for the coming year.

Risk management and principal risks

Trustees have overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the system of risk management at Solace. The charity maintains a charity risk register which tracks key risks to Solace and is reviewed by trustees at quarterly sub-committee meetings and full board meeting. Unexpected and sudden changes in risks would be scrutinised by trustees over and above planned meetings.

The principal risks facing the charity which operates in a challenging and demanding sector are financial, operational, reputational, people and culture and regulatory and these are detailed below.

Financial

Solace operates in a challenging and demanding sector with uncertainties over longer term funding, due to the commissioning of services by local and central government and the cuts to public spending. Payments by local authorities, government bodies, trusts and foundations are based on the achievement of outcomes or payment by results add further pressures on cash flow and overall financial management.

External risks to funding have been reduced by reaching and maintaining the standards required by commissioners and funding bodies and implementing a strategy to diversify our funding base through income generation from fundraising.

Financial risks arising from any contract renewals in 2023/24 are mitigated through TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment) arrangements and the maintenance of adequate reserves to absorb central costs covered by these contracts. This has been significantly reduced as Solace has retained and renewed several key contracts for a new term of three to five years.

The recent cost-of-living crisis has added greater financial pressures and creates additional risks through the need to increase salaries at a higher rate and the need to pay more for goods and services.

Overall financial risks are monitored through regular reporting to the Finance and Resources sub-committee and trustees with scrutiny of annual budgets, reforecasts, management accounts and cash flow projections. Scenario planning with prudent income generation activities has been prepared and reviewed with trustees to ensure that Solace continues to have sufficient resources to deliver its services and remain solvent in the foreseeable future.

Operational

The nature of our service delivery which provides support to vulnerable women and children suffering from domestic and sexual violence increases our operational risks which could result from services providing inadequate support for our service users caused by unclear priorities, lack of quality oversight and inadequate staff resources.

Operational risks are managed through implementation of suitable policies and procedures including good practices for case management, appropriate case loads, rigorous staff training, staff supervision and support and regular reporting to senior management. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, risks assessments and data protection regulations in respect of service users, staff, trustees, volunteers, and visitors. Appropriate insurance cover is in place for unexpected losses.

Risks on IT systems and cyber crime are managed through the use of accredited managed IT providers using secure cloud based technology. Monthly review of performance and IT risks are undertaken with senior management and reported to trustees. Staff receive regular training on IT and cyber security and induction training is provided to all new employees.

Reputational

In line with our operational risks, reputational risks are heightened as we engage with vulnerable people in difficult circumstances. Service audits are conducted annually to review compliance with funder agreements and reported to trustees. The senior management team works closely with boroughs and other funder leads and attend meetings and events which enable issues to be dealt with promptly and manage reputational risks.

People and culture

As other charities operating in the sector, Solace has been challenged with equity, diversity and inclusiveness and has been in the spotlight with negative publications on racism. Solace is committed to being an actively inclusive charity and has reviewed its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan with trustees, staff and volunteers as outlined in the earlier sections of this report. Specialist inclusive training and awareness programmes are being delivered to all staff.

Risks and challenges on staff recruitment and retention are managed through continuous staff learning and development. Staff wellbeing initiatives have been strengthened and we are committed to becoming a fully trauma informed charity to support with overall staff safety and retention.

Regulatory and compliance

Safeguarding is at the heart of our operational services and a key governance priority, keeping women and their children safe is our primary responsibility and we take all appropriate steps to protect everyone from harm.

We deliver robust safeguarding training to all our staff and volunteers, as part of their induction training. This includes the legal framework, how to spot signs and symptoms, how to respond and what makes a good referral to social care. We also explain our whistle blowing policies to all staff and volunteers during the training. Annual refresher training on safeguarding is mandatory for all staff.

We have a suite of policies and procedures designed to manage this risk including those covering acceptance of donations, unauthorised fundraising, procurement, IT security, anti-fraud, data protection and social media. We undertake regular training on compliance and continue to review and strengthen our training to staff and volunteers.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the memorandum, and articles of association, the Companies Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Company number	3376716
Country of incorporation	United Kingdom
Charity number	1082450
Country of registration	England & Wales
Registered office	9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP
Website	www.solacewomensaid.org

Board of Trustees
Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Ms. Priyanka Devani	Chair (co-opted 19 July 2023)
Ms. Kirsty Telford	Interim Chair (retired 22 June 2023)
Ms. Madeline Church	Interim Vice Chair (since 8 Dec 2022)
Ms. Kerri Hartwell (nee Podobnik)	Interim Treasurer (since 29 June 2022)
Ms. Jasbir Sandhu	Treasurer (up to 29 June 2022)
Ms. Yasmin Becker	(resigned 15 September 2022)
Ms. Maureen Hopcroft	(resigned 15 September 2022
Ms. Emily Florence Hutchings	
Ms. Vivien Ma	
Ms. Natalie Lopez	(appointed 5 August 2022)
Ms. Madeline Church	(appointed 5 August 2022)
Ms. Meghan Roach	(appointed 5 August 2022)
Dr. Amy Pritchard	(appointed 5 August 2022)
Ms. Hannah Cane	(appointed 30 March 2023)

Principal staff

Ms. Nahar Choudhury	Chief Executive Officer (appointed June 2023)
Ms. Bernadette Keane	Interim Chief Executive Officer (Jan to Jun 2023)
Ms. Judith Banjoko	Interim Chief Executive Officer (resigned Dec 2022)
Ms. Retna Thevarajah	Chief Operating Officer
Ms. Jane Jutsum	Director of Business Development (left April 2023)
Dr. Jennifer Cirone	Director of Services

Bankers	HSBC plc 1 Aldermans Hill London, N13 4YE
Solicitors	Bates Wells & Braithwaite London LLP 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE
Auditor	Moore Kingston Smith 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP

Structure, governance & management

Solace is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 28 May 1997, and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 16 September 2000. The charity is formed under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

Recruitment and appointment of members of the Board of Trustees

Solace welcomes women to the Board of Trustees who have the skills, dedication, and enthusiasm to take overall responsibility for the organisation. The charity advertises for members in a number of ways including recruitment websites and other relevant publications.

Trustees serve for a maximum period of six years in aggregate and the total number of trustees are twelve members. Solace has a diverse Board, ensuring that our trustees represent the women we support.

Induction and training for the Board of Trustees

All prospective members receive information regarding Solace including the most recent annual report and audited accounts, as well as copies of relevant policies and procedures. They meet with the CEO who carries out an induction that includes training on key policies (including equality, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, confidentiality, complaints, whistle blowing, financial regulation, risk assessments, data protection and DBS checks), a tour of our services and meetings with both staff and service users.

A skills audit is conducted annually, and any gaps identified are met through training, guidance from the CEO and other members of the trustees and staff, as well as targeted recruitment.

Trustees are encouraged to attend relevant training in areas such as governance, human resource management and financial management. The cost of this training is met by the organisation.

Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 5 to the accounts.

Organisational structure

The trustees meet every quarter and are responsible for the organisation's overall management and strategic direction. The trustees also meet twice a year for Board Away Days. These women are drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to our work including those who have been impacted by domestic or sexual abuse. We are also committed to diversity and have a trustee board representative of our service users and staff.

The officers of the charity are:

Chair	Ms Priyanka Devani (since 19 July 2023)
Interim Chair	Ms. Kirsty Telford (retired 22 June 2023)
Interim Vice Chair	Ms. Madeline Church (since 8 December 2022)
Interim Treasurer	Ms. Kerri Hartwell (appointed 29 June 2022) (nee Podobnik)
Treasurer	Ms. Jasbir Sandhu (up to 29 June 2022)
Chair of HR & Governance	Ms. Natalie Lopez (since 8 December 2022)

The trustees delegate appropriate functions to the sub-committees listed below, of which at least two members must be from the Board.

Business Development sub-committee: Oversees the overall strategy and business development plans for the charity, as well as Training and Consultancy, Fundraising, and Communications. Chair – Ms. Kirsty Telford (up to June 2023).

Finance and Resources sub-committee: Oversees financial management to ensure optimum use of resources. It scrutinises income and expenditure and regularly reports to, makes recommendations, and clarifies options available to the trustees. Interim Chair – Ms. Kerri Hartwell.

Human Resources and Governance sub-committee: Oversees staffing issues including recruitment, retention, pay, equality and diversity, health and safety and environmental issues. It acts as the appeal body for any disciplinary and capability matters and is responsible for overall board governance. Chair – Ms. Natalie Lopez. Services sub-committee: Scrutinises operational top-level reports and internal audits; discusses policy, devises, and reviews the service operations strategy. Chair – Ms. Madeline Church.

In the summer of 2021, the Board of Trustees set up an Oversight sub-committee that was led by the Chair and had Chairs of all sub-committees and the CEO working together to monitor and manage the increased risks faced by the charity since allegations around racism were published in the media. The committee met twice in 2022 and has worked closely with the interim CEOs to drive forward changes in the culture and management of the charity. The committee has now completed its scrutiny on all matters relating to staffing, in particular staff from the global majority, ED&I action plan and oversight of the culture review. Since 2023, the ongoing monitoring of organisational culture changes are considered in depth at sub-committee and Board meetings.

Expert Advisors are selected to provide specialist advice to the sub-committees. They attend and scrutinise reports together with trustees at sub-committee meeting. We currently have four Expert Advisors: Ms. Judy Kawaguchi (Finance and Resources); Ms Debbie Peel (Services); Ms Rachel Galvin (HR and Governance) and Ms Sian Elliot (HR and Governance).

Overall management is delegated to the CEO and Directors who are responsible for ensuring that Solace delivers high quality services, meets contractual obligations and conditions of grant aid. Principal staff are the CEO, COO, Director of Services and Director of Business Development who convene regularly to oversee the organisational management of Solace. The Directors report to the CEO.

The wider Senior Management Team includes eight Heads of Services and one Deputy Head of Services who meet with the Directors and CEO on a monthly basis.

Team and Service Managers run the day-to-day activities with their staff teams delivering services in refuge, community-based services and from our Head Office. They report to Heads of Services and meet with the CEO and Directors each quarter.

Related party transactions

Donations from one trustee totalled £518 (2021/22: £658).

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

Solace awards a fair remuneration package to all staff including key management personnel. Both the Human Resources and Finance and Resources sub-committees undertake an annual review of salaries, and the trustees are responsible for setting the CEO salary, and with the CEO set the salaries of Directors. The salary of the highest and lowest salaries in the organisation does not exceed 1:5.

Statement of responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Solace for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic 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 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 these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 operation.

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.

As 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.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2023 was 13 (2021/22 - 12). The trustees are members of the charity, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors
Moore Kingston Smith LLP were appointed as auditors in 2018 and are deemed to be reappointed to under Section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The report of the Board of Trustees has been approved by the trustees on 14 September 2023 and signed on their behalf by



Ms Madeline Church
Interim Vice Chair

Date Signed: 24th October 2023

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SOLACE WOMEN'S AID

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Solace Women's Aid ('the charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the Summary Income and Expenditure Account), the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement 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 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 charitable company's affairs as at 31 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 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 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 there is 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 trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual 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 company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

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.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 28, 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 aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement 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 purposes 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.

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

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.

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 charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act

2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council.

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.

- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.

- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance 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.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

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 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 any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Date: 13 November 2023

Neil Finlayson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

9 Appold Street
London
EC2A 2AP

Solace Women's Aid

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	498,178	–	**498,178**	735,597	–	735,597
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	3	3,791,608	1,103,632	**4,895,240**	3,702,854	487,743	4,190,597
Community based advice, advocacy and	3	4,267,107	1,594,258	**5,861,365**	5,022,474	766,094	5,788,568
Therapeutic	3	–	1,919,511	**1,919,511**	–	1,710,618	1,710,618
Children and Young People	3	63,551	425,022	**488,573**	57,349	531,142	588,491
Other services	3	108,053	42,497	**150,550**	107,009	48,253	155,262
Partnership work							
Ascent Plus and other partnership work	3	171,930	1,168,924	**1,340,854**	121,467	3,070,654	3,192,121
Investment income		1,411	–	**1,411**	168	–	168
Total income		**8,901,838**	**6,253,844**	**15,155,682**	**9,746,918**	**6,614,504**	**16,361,422**
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	393,143	–	**393,143**	291,306	–	291,306
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	4	3,604,802	1,166,185	**4,770,987**	3,655,295	542,599	4,197,894
Community based advice, advocacy and	4	4,576,286	1,609,814	**6,186,100**	5,441,389	756,677	6,198,066
Therapeutic	4	4,357	1,930,044	**1,934,401**	17,031	1,800,380	1,817,411
Children and Young People	4	58,664	436,014	**494,678**	63,378	580,395	643,773
Other services	4	87,618	41,948	**129,566**	478,896	48,253	527,149
Partnership work							
Ascent Plus and other partnership work	4	172,522	1,175,925	**1,348,447**	162,556	3,089,257	3,251,813
Total expenditure		**8,897,392**	**6,359,930**	**15,257,322**	**10,109,851**	**6,817,561**	**16,927,412**
Net (expenditure) for the year	**5**	**4,446**	**(106,086)**	**(101,640)**	**(362,933)**	**(203,057)**	**(565,990)**
Transfers between funds		(106,086)	106,086	**–**	(203,057)	203,057	–
Net movement in funds		**(101,640)**	**–**	**(101,640)**	**(565,990)**	**–**	**(565,990)**
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		2,102,741	–	**2,102,741**	2,668,731	–	2,668,731
Total funds carried forward		**2,001,101**	**–**	**2,001,101**	**2,102,741**	**–**	**2,102,741**

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities unless noted otherwise.
There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15 to the financial statements.
Notes on pages 36 to 47 form part of these financial statements.

Solace Women's Aid

Balance sheet

Company no. 3376716

As at 31 March 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible fixed assets	10a		**825,339**		913,262
Intangible assets	10b		**83,409**		–
			908,748		913,262
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	**2,605,070**		2,045,428	
Cash at bank and in hand		**1,325,211**		2,922,697	
		3,930,281		4,968,125	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	**2,772,274**		3,460,664	
Net current assets			**1,158,007**		1,507,461
Total assets less current liabilities			**2,066,755**		2,420,723
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	13		**65,654**		317,982
Total net assets	14		**2,001,101**		**2,102,741**
The funds of the charity:					
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds	15	**908,748**		913,262	
General funds	15	**1,092,353**		1,189,479	
Total unrestricted funds			**2,001,101**		2,102,741
Total charity funds			**2,001,101**		2,102,741

Notes on pages 36 to 47 form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the trustees on 14 September 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Ms Madeline Church
Interim Chair

Ms Kerri Hartwell
Interim Treasurer

Date Signed: 24th October 2023

Solace Women's Aid

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:					
Net cash (used in) operating activities	16		**(1,299,284)**		(190,833)
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		**1,411**		168	
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		**(99,155)**		(62,780)	
Net cash (used in) investing activities			**(97,744)**		(62,612)
Cash flows from financing activities:					
Interest paid		**(20,139)**		–	
Receipt of CBILS loan		**–**		500,000	
Repayments of borrowing		**(180,319)**		–	
Net cash (used in) /provided by financing activities			**(200,458)**		500,000
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			**(1,597,486)**		246,555
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			**2,922,697**		2,676,142
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			**1,325,211**		2,922,697

Analysis of cash and changes in net debt

	1 April 2022	Cash flows	Other movements	31 March 2023
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS				
Cash in hand	77,799	(46,239)	–	31,560
Cash in bank	1,417,474	(881,711)	–	535,763
Immediate notice deposits	1,427,424	(669,536)	–	757,888
Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**2,922,697**	**(1,597,486)**	**–**	**1,325,211**
BORROWINGS				
CBILS loan falling due within one year	(182,018)	180,319	(252,328)	(254,027)
CBILS loan falling due after one year	(317,982)		252,328	(65,654)
Total	**2,422,697**	**(1,417,167)**	**–**	**1,005,530**

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Solace Women's Aid is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address is 6th floor, 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP.

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

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The presentation currency of the Charity is British Pounds Sterling. The amounts in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound.

c) Key judgements and Assumptions

In the application of the company's accounting policies, 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. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis and actual results may differ from these estimates.

d) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

e) Going concern

The trustees have considered the principal risks of the charity and the potential financial impact of these risks materialising in a range of adverse and worse case scenarios. The detailed cash flow forecast and the adequacy of cash resources under these scenarios have been reviewed by trustees. Based on these detailed scrutiny, the trustees have concluded that there is reasonable expectation that the charity is able to meet its obligations as they fall due for at least 12 months following approval of the financial statements. There are no material uncertainties which may impact on the going concern assumption. Accordingly the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

f) Income

Income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis once 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' grants 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 and is not deferred.

Personal charges from service users are recognised on a receipts basis as this is the most reliable form of measurement.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for performance related or other conditions of income recognition have been met.

g) Intangible assets

Computer software are capitalised when direct expenditure enhances or extends the performance of the software beyond its specifications and can be reliably measured as a capital improvement. These costs are amortised using a straight line method over the estimated useful lives of three to five years.

h) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised. The trustees' annual report describes thier contributions in more detail.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

i) Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument to meet the requirements of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102. Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, where 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.

j) 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.

k) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are accounted for in accordance with th express or implies wishes of donors in so far as thse are intended to be binding on the charity. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes which are not subject to any special restrictions and are classed as unrestricted within the General fund.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

l) Irrecoverable VAT

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:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services and other charitable activities undertaken

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

m) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure based on costs incurred with the publicity event.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

n) Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases charges are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

o) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000 or groups of similar assets purchased in bulk exceeds £7,500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Freehold land and buildings are carried at cost.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its

● Freehold land	Not depreciated
● Freehold buildings	2% on cost
● Leasehold property	Over the life of the lease
● Office equipment, fixtures and fittings and play area	25% on cost

p) Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. In general, cost is determined on a first in first out basis

q) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are

r) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three

s) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present or constructive 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 are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due. Provisions are made for obligations when there is a legal or other obligation as a result of past events. It is more likely than not that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and a reliable estimate of the amount can be made for the provision based on the expected settlement amount.

t) Pensions

Solace Women's Aid operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions. It provides a contribution at 3% of annual basic pay for those staff who have joined the scheme. The pension charge recorded in these accounts is the amount of contributions payable in the accounting year.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted	Restricted	**2023 Total £**	2022 Total £
Individuals	206,981	-	**206,981**	373,019
Community fundraising and events	25,207	-	**25,207**	53,503
Corporates	91,256	-	**91,256**	73,058
Trust and Foundations	79,327	-	**79,327**	75,680
Government CJRS grant	-	-	-	4,946
Donation in kind - Government CBILS Loan	-	-	-	65,000
Donated services	95,407	-	**95,407**	90,391
	498,178	**-**	**498,178**	735,597

3a Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**2023 Total £**	2022 Total £
Provision and Prevention				
Local Boroughs	1,521,199	12,725	**1,533,924**	1,559,323
Core Rents	2,170,452	-	**2,170,452**	2,040,609
Personal Charges	99,957	-	**99,957**	102,520
MOPAC	-	494,477	**494,477**	-
London Councils via Ashiana (note 3b)	-	249,816	**249,816**	249,816
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	161,007	**161,007**	136,858
REFUGE	-	85,808	**85,808**	-
Greater London Authority	-	30,538	**30,538**	-
Walcot Foundation	-	24,968	**24,968**	-
L&Q Foundation	-	24,055	**24,055**	-
Hollick Foundation	-	7,638	**7,638**	3,256
Southall Black Sisters	-	10,410	**10,410**	6,542
The Masonic Foundation	-	-	**-**	49,500
Other	-	2,190	**2,190**	42,173
Sub-total for Refuge Accommodation	**3,791,608**	**1,103,632**	**4,895,240**	4,190,597

Prior year income from charitable Refuge Accommodation activities included £3,702,854 attributable to unrestricted activities and £487,743 to restricted activities.

Local Boroughs	4,267,107	18,847	**4,285,954**	5,022,474
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	869,312	**869,312**	43,850
Southall Black Sisters	-	173,112	**173,112**	154,664
Women and Girls Network	-	176,625	**176,625**	-
The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Fields	-	82,023	**82,023**	57,311
Bruno Schroder Trust	-	80,258	**80,258**	42,978
London Councils via Ashiana (note 3b)	-	36,506	**36,506**	226,863
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Emigrant	-	35,000	**35,000**	35,000
Trust For London	-	13,500	**13,500**	52,296
Olwyn Foundation	-	35,000	**35,000**	24,595
3i Foundation	-	42,567	**42,567**	23,333
Irish Youth Foundation	-	11,000	**11,000**	14,500
City of London	-	17,856	**17,856**	8,928
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	-	**-**	7,359
National Lottery Fund (Reaching Communities)	-	-	**-**	32,271
Cripplegate Foundation	-	-	**-**	15,030
Marion Malcapine	-	-	**-**	10,000
Other	-	2,652	**2,652**	17,116
Sub-total for Community based advice, advocacy and support	**4,267,107**	**1,594,258**	**5,861,365**	5,788,568

Prior year income from charitable Community based advice, advocacy and support activities included £5,022,474 attributable to unrestricted activities and £766,094 to restricted activities.

3a Income from charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	1,118,954	**1,118,954**	770,748
Local Boroughs	-	279,147	**279,147**	335,609
Women and Girls Network	-	234,785	**234,785**	151,718
NHSE	-	90,154	**90,154**	107,736
Tri-borough Angelou	-	44,300	**44,300**	56,602
BBC Children in Need	-	23,199	**23,199**	46,010
3i Foundation	-	74,100	**74,100**	20,000
Ruth and David Foundation	-	12,857	**12,857**	17,143
Cloudesley	-	14,375	**14,375**	15,000
Big Give	-	27,640	**27,640**	-
London Councils (note 3b)	-	-	**-**	190,052
Sub-total for Therapeutic	**-**	**1,919,511**	**1,919,511**	1,710,618

Prior year income from charitable Therapeutic activities included restricted activities only totalling £1,710,618.

Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	298,091	**298,091**	185,001
National Lottery Community Fund	-	-	**-**	100,449
NSPCC	-	-	**-**	121,069
Local Boroughs	63,551	-	**63,551**	57,349
Women and Girls Network	-	88,823	**88,823**	92,124
Big Give	-	19,212	**19,212**	-
Firebird Foundation	-	15,000	**15,000**	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	**-**	28,200
Other	-	3,896	**3,896**	4,299
Sub-total for Children and Young People	**63,551**	**425,022**	**488,573**	588,491

Prior year income from charitable Children and Young People activities included £57,349 attributable to unrestricted activities and £531,142 to restricted activities.

External training	87,053	-	**87,053**	86,465
Local Boroughs	20,000	-	**20,000**	-
The Youth Endowment Fund	-	11,723	**11,723**	-
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	30,225	**30,225**	-
Other	1,000	549	**1,549**	68,797
Sub-total for Other services	**108,053**	**42,497**	**150,550**	155,262

Prior year income from charitable Other services included £107,009 attributable to unrestricted activities and £48,253 to restricted activities.

Partnership work				
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	695,721	**695,721**	1,098,110
Department of Culture, Media and Digital	-	473,203	**473,203**	906,474
MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local	-	-	**-**	-
Greater London Authority	171,930	-	**171,930**	121,467
London Councils (Ascent, note 3b)	-	-	**-**	1,033,846
Wansworth Councils	-	-	**-**	21,623
St Mungos	-	-	**-**	10,601
Sub-total for Partnerships	**171,930**	**1,168,924**	**1,340,854**	3,192,121

Prior year income from charitable Partnership activities included arttributable £nil to unrestricted activities and £3,192,121 to restricted activities.

Total income from charitable activities	**8,402,249**	**6,253,844**	**14,656,093**	15,625,657

Total income from charitable activities in 2022 included £9,011,153 attributable to unrestricted activities and £6,614,504 to restricted activities.

3b. Section 37 Statement

Grant funding of £Nil was received in 2023 (2022 £1,425,238) from London Councils for the Ascent partnership delivering advice, counselling and other work funded under Priority 2 Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence. The table below shows how the funding was allocated across the partnership and that it has been used for the purposes outlined in the funding agreement.

*

	2023 Grant awarded	2023 Grant spent	2022 Grant awarded	2022 Grant spent
	£	£	£	£
Ascent Advice and Counselling				
Solace lead partner	–	–	463,150	463,150
Rights of Women	–	–	67,555	67,555
Women and Girls Network	–	–	296,272	296,272
Ashiana Network	–	–	81,777	81,777
Nia	–	–	36,849	25,831
IMECE	–	–	69,583	69,583
IKWRO	–	–	76,267	76,267
LAWRS	–	–	72,861	72,861
Jewish Women's Aid	–	–	23,674	23,674
EACH counselling	–	–	90,489	90,489
Southall Black Sisters	–	–	53,619	53,619
RASASC	–	–	19,184	19,184
Asian Women's Resource Centre	–	–	36,979	36,979
CIAC	–	–	36,979	36,979
	–	–	1,425,238	1,414,220
Breakdown by expenditure:				
Staff costs	–	–	1,205,254	1,199,803
Beneficiary costs	–	–	56,221	50,654
Other costs	–	–	163,763	163,763
	–	–	1,425,238	1,414,220
Ascent Refuges	286,322	286,322	286,339	286,339
	286,322	286,322	286,339	286,339
TOTAL LONDON COUNCIL FUNDING	286,322	286,322	1,711,577	1,700,559

As per note 3a) for all London Council funding:	2023	2022
	£	£
Refuge services	249,816	249,798
Community advice advocacy and support	36,506	226,863
Therapeutic	–	190,052
Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership	–	1,033,846
	286,322	1,700,559

4 Analysis of expenditure

	Charitable activities										
		Provision and Prevention					Partnership				
	Cost of raising funds £	Refuge accomo-dation £	Community advice, advocacy and support £	Therapeutic £	Children and Young People £	Other services (*) £	Ascent Plus and other Partnerships £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	**2023 Total £**	2022 Total £
Staff (Note 6)	186,496	2,253,809	4,444,782	1,250,540	395,272	50,809	202,642	1,504,487	127,874	**10,416,711**	10,363,938
Partnerships	–	91,323	291,507	21,061	–	–	901,711	–	–	**1,305,602**	2,531,493
Children and service users	606	73,198	181,713	42,455	3,767	30,742	118,164	1,011	–	**451,656**	763,849
IT and Facilities	31,234	154,995	238,823	89,252	22,872	3,691	12,637	127,747	25,575	**706,826**	779,022
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	10,055	1,355,559	173,531	113,113	1,858	3,175	6,115	22,063	40,920	**1,726,389**	1,667,674
Professional Fees and Other	74,486	12,666	46,251	3,868	85	26,479	26,016	425,811	34,476	**650,138**	821,436
	302,877	3,941,550	5,376,607	1,520,289	423,854	114,896	1,267,285	2,081,119	228,845	15,257,322	16,927,412
Support costs	89,128	771,991	724,676	389,242	62,014	7,405	36,663	(2,081,119)	–	–	–
Governance costs	1,138	57,446	84,817	24,870	8,810	7,265	44,499	–	(228,845)	**–**	–
Total expenditure 2023	**393,143**	**4,770,987**	**6,186,100**	**1,934,401**	**494,678**	**129,566**	**1,348,447**	–	–	**15,257,322**	**16,927,412**
Total expenditure 2022	291,306	4,197,894	6,198,066	1,817,411	643,773	527,149	3,251,813	–	–	**16,927,412**	

Of the total expenditure, £8,897,392 was unrestricted (2022: £10,109,851) and £6,359,930 was restricted (2022: £6,817,561).

4 Analysis of expenditure (prior year comparative information)

	Charitable activities									
		Provision and Prevention					Partnership			
	Cost of raising funds	Refuge accomo-dation	Community advice, advocacy and support	Therapeutic	Children and Young People	Other services (*)	Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships	Support costs	Governance costs	**2022 Total**	2021 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	**£**	£
Staff (Note 6)	62,255	1,896,844	4,422,506	1,390,751	491,186	283,386	430,537	1,300,627	85,846	**10,363,938**	8,907,668
Partnerships	–	91,323	279,722	–	–	–	2,160,448	–	–	**2,531,493**	2,398,804
Children and service users	517	107,000	216,956	25,277	10,577	52,207	351,315	–	–	**763,849**	1,178,702
IT and Facilities	25,929	204,988	249,501	72,552	29,019	50,342	24,033	105,504	17,154	**779,022**	958,033
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	29,149	1,228,656	174,975	82,902	16,699	7,031	9,931	90,885	27,446	**1,667,674**	1,630,598
Professional Fees and Other	84,024	6,150	46,938	2,424	14,031	28,058	91,825	525,986	22,000	**821,436**	518,360
	201,874	3,534,961	5,390,598	1,573,906	561,512	421,024	3,068,089	2,023,002	152,446	16,927,412	15,592,165
Support costs	86,274	624,329	750,471	226,792	76,341	104,975	153,820	(2,023,002)	–	–	–
Governance costs	3,158	38,604	56,997	16,713	5,920	1,150	29,904	–	(152,446)	**–**	–
Total expenditure 2022	**291,306**	**4,197,894**	**6,198,066**	**1,817,411**	**643,773**	**527,149**	**3,251,813**	**–**	**–**	**16,927,412**	**15,592,165**
Total expenditure 2021	627,761	3,770,426	5,139,602	1,492,002	645,578	227,040	3,689,756	**–**	**–**	**15,592,165**	

Of the total expenditure, £10,109,851 was unrestricted (2021: £8,273,102) and £6,817,561 was restricted (2021: £7,319,063).
(*) Other services includes prior year designated COVID-19 appeal funds amounting to £350,000 which was expended on staff and other costs relating to the pandemic in 2021/22.

5 Net (expenditure)/income for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Depreciation	103,669	100,190
Interest payable	20,139	-
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	776,247	1,031,292
Other	60,610	22,828
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit (statutory audit)	23,200	13,115
Prior year underaccrual (statutory audit)	7,797	-
Other services	-	1,390

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries and wages	8,064,069	7,899,261
Social security costs	794,994	735,849
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	224,838	223,406
Redundancy and termination payments	-	73,376
Staff training, supervision, travel and volunteer costs	275,052	250,005
Sessional counsellors and self employed	367,128	559,980
Agency & locum staff	636,415	594,098
Other forms of employee benefits	54,215	27,963
	10,416,711	10,363,938

Staff costs above have been allocated to expenditure as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cost of raising funds	186,496	62,255
Refuge accommodation	2,253,809	1,896,844
Community advice, advocacy and support	4,444,782	4,422,506
Therapeutic	1,250,540	1,390,751
Children and Young People	395,272	491,186
Other services	50,809	283,386
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	202,642	430,537
Support and governance	1,632,361	1,386,473
	10,416,711	10,363,938

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) during the year between:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
£60,000 - £69,999	3	1
£70,000 - £79,999	1	2

All higher paid staff are members of the key management personnel.

The total employee benefits paid to the key management personnel (Chief Executive Officer, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Services and Director of Business Development) were £343,071 (2021: £381,471). Employee benefits included employer pension contributions, on call payments and employer NI.

Pensions paid in respect of the key management personnel above amounted to £8,896 (2022: £15,528).

One charity trustee received a payment of £150 for other services supplied to the charity (2022: £nil). Reimbursement of travel and other expenses to trustees in 2023 was £253 (2022: £75).

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Cost of raising funds	**5.0**	2.0
Refuge accommodation	**56.7**	60.7
Community advice, advocacy and support	**125.9**	136.2
Therapeutic	**30.7**	35.5
Children and Young People	**13.3**	16.1
Other services	**1.3**	2.0
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	**5.7**	8.6
Support and governance	**41.9**	36.5
	280.5	297.6

8 Related party transactions

Total donations from 1 trustee was £518 (2022: £658).

9 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10a Tangible fixed assets

	Play area £	Freehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	**Total £**
Cost or valuation				
At the start of the year	51,908	961,662	256,943	**1,270,513**
Additions in year	–	–	21,572	**21,572**
At the end of the year	51,908	961,662	278,515	**1,292,085**
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	51,908	171,068	207,004	**429,980**
Charge for the year	–	11,383	25,383	**36,766**
At the end of the year	51,908	182,451	232,387	**466,746**
Net book value				
At the end of the year	**–**	**779,211**	**46,128**	**825,339**
At the start of the year	–	790,594	49,939	**840,533**

Land with a value of £480,831 (2021: £480,831) is included within freehold property and not depreciated.
All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

10b Intangible fixed assets

	Software £	**Total £**
Cost or valuation		
At the start of the year	315,060	**315,060**
Additions in year	77,583	**–**
At the end of the year	392,643	**392,643**
Depreciation		
At the start of the year	242,331	**242,331**
Charge for the year	66,903	**66,903**
At the end of the year	309,234	**309,234**
Net book value		
At the end of the year	**83,409**	**83,409**
At the start of the year	72,729	**72,729**

11 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts due from Local Authorities and government agencies	**1,794,867**	1,276,622
Other debtors	**147,106**	78,709
Prepayments	**106,407**	95,896
Accrued income	**556,690**	594,201
	2,605,070	2,045,428

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	**570,301**	834,570
Taxation and social security	**252,712**	275,249
Other creditors	**29,757**	94,199
Provision- see 12a below	**250,000**	105,000
Funds held on behalf of clients	**22,286**	21,174
CBILS Loan payable (see note 13 below)	**254,027**	182,018
Accruals	**672,356**	638,896
Deferred income - see 12b below	**720,835**	1,309,558
	2,772,274	3,460,664

12a Provision

The provision at the balance sheet date was the estimated settlement cost relating to the planned exit at one of our services. The timing of the settlement has not yet been agreed with the funder.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Balance at the beginning of the year	**105,000**	-
Amount released to expenditure in the year	**(105,000)**	105,000
Amount charged to expenditure in the year	**250,000**	
Balance at the end of the year	**250,000**	**105,000**

12b Deferred income

Deferred income comprises income received in advance on contracts and projects which are delivered in the following year.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Balance at the beginning of the year	**1,309,558**	1,078,618
Amount released to income in the year	**(1,309,558)**	(1,078,618)
Amount deferred in the year	**720,835**	1,309,558
Balance at the end of the year	**720,835**	**1,309,558**

13 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
CBILS Loan payable	**65,654**	317,982

13a Loans payable

Loans payable includes £319,681 (2022: £500,000) relating to the government backed Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, which carries interest at 6.5% and a final Scheme payable to Social Investment Business FM Limited (SIB).

Interest is charged at 6.5% and monthly capital and interest payments commenced in July 2022 and is planned to end by March 2024.

The government paid interest of £45,000 and an arrangement fee of £20,000 to SIB on behalf of Solace, this has been recognised as a donation in kind in note 2 of the financial statements in prior year 2022.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Capital repayments are due as follows:		
- up to one year (see note 12)	254,027	182,018
- two to five years (see note 13)	65,654	317,982
Balance at the end of the year	**319,681**	**500,000**

The loan is secured with a debenture charge over the charity's assets in favour of SIB.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	–	825,339	–	**825,339**
Intangible fixed assets		83,409	–	**83,409**
Net current assets	1,158,007	–	–	**1,158,007**
Non current liabilities	(65,654)	–	–	**(65,654)**
Net assets at the end of the year	**1,092,353**	**908,748**	**–**	**2,001,101**

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	–	913,262	–	**913,262**
Net current assets	1,507,461	–	–	**1,507,461**
Non current liabilities	(317,982)	–	–	**(317,982)**
Net assets at the end of the year	**1,189,479**	**913,262**	**–**	**2,102,741**

15 Movements in funds (current year)

	At the start of the year	Income & gains	Expenditure & losses	Transfers	At the end of the year
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds:					
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	–	1,103,632	(1,166,185)	62,553	**–**
Community advice, advocacy & support	–	1,594,258	(1,609,814)	15,556	**–**
Therapeutic	–	1,919,511	(1,930,044)	10,533	**–**
Children and Young People	–	425,022	(436,014)	10,992	**–**
Other services	–	42,497	(41,948)	(549)	**–**
Partnership work					
Ascent Plus and other partnership	–	1,168,924	(1,175,925)	7,001	**–**
Total restricted funds	–	6,253,844	(6,359,930)	106,086	**–**
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	913,262	–	(103,669)	99,155	**908,748**
Total designated funds	**913,262**	**–**	**(103,669)**	**99,155**	**908,748**
General funds	1,189,479	8,901,838	(8,793,723)	(205,241)	1,092,353
Total unrestricted funds	**2,102,741**	**8,901,838**	**(8,897,392)**	**(106,086)**	**2,001,101**
Total funds	**2,102,741**	**15,155,682**	**(15,257,322)**	**–**	**2,001,101**

15a Movements in funds (prior year)

	At the start of the year	Income & gains	Expenditure & losses	Transfers	At the end of the year
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds:					
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	–	487,743	(542,599)	54,856	**–**
Community advice, advocacy & support	–	766,094	(756,677)	(9,417)	**–**
Therapeutic	–	1,710,618	(1,800,380)	89,762	**–**
Children and Young People	–	531,142	(580,395)	49,253	**–**
Other services	–	48,253	(48,253)	–	**–**
Partnership work					
Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership	–	3,070,654	(3,089,257)	18,603	**–**
Total restricted funds	– –	6,614,504	(6,817,561)	203,057	–
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	950,672	–	(100,190)	62,780	**913,262**
COVID-19 appeal	350,000	–	(350,000)	–	**–**
Total designated funds	1,300,672 –	–	(450,190)	62,780	**913,262**
General funds	1,368,059	9,746,918	(9,659,660)	(265,837)	**1,189,479**
Total unrestricted funds	**2,668,731** –	**9,746,918**	**(10,109,850)**	**(203,057)**	**2,102,741**
Total funds	**2,668,731** –	**16,361,422**	**(16,927,411)**	**–**	**2,102,741**

Purposes of restricted funds

Refuge services: This fund is dedicated to help the women and children staying in our refuges. Restriced funding was received from London Councils (via Ashiana lead partner) for the complex needs refuge in Camden; MHCLG funding for Family Support and Resettlement workers across our London boroughs. The MOPAC Tier 1 Accomodation funding supported several multiple disadvantage workers at our refuges. The GLA and L&Q Foundation funded the new move on accommodation NEST project across three London boroughs.
Community advice, advocacy and support: This fund is for the advice, advocacy and outreach work to survivors of domestic violence. Women and GIrls Network have channeled London Councils funding for our Advice hub. Other funders include Southall Black Sisters for women with no recourse to public funds, Bruno Schroder Trust for a specialist programme, The Connections at St Martin-in -the Fields for a Women's Homelessness project, 3i Foundation for a multiple disadvantage worker, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Programme, together with the Irish Youth Foundation for the Irish and Irish Traveller communities and Trust for London towards the Immigration advice lawyer. The Olywn Foundation provides service user grants.
The Emigrant Support Programme included 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 which was deferred from 2021/22 and utilised in 2022/23. 9 months of the grant income received in 2022/23 was utilised in the period to 31 March 2023 and 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 has been deferred to the 2023/24 financial year and will be utilised by 30th June 2023.
Therapeutic: The counselling service is free to residents and service users of the organisation and is accessed through Ascent counselling and the North London Rape Crisis services. The funders are MOPAC, Women and Girls Network with London Councils funding, Tri-borough Angelou, Women and Girls Network, 3i Foundation for a wellbeing worker, BBC for child play therapy and more recently Richard Cloudesley and Big Give funding for these projects.

15 Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)
Children and Young People (CYP): Our work in partnership with Redthread provide crisis intervention support to young people in hospital emergency departments is funded by MOPAC. WGN fund our work with Black and minoritised young women who have experienced domestic and sexual abuse.
Ascent Plus and other partnership: This fund was for the provision of Violence against Women and Girls services delivered through the partners om the Ascent Plus project funded by London Councils. DCMS funded our Labyrinth project.

A total of £205,241 unrestricted general funds was transferred, of which £99,155 was used towards designated funds as explained below and £106,086 was used towards supporting restricted charitable activities.

Purposes of designated funds

Capital: This fund represents the net book value of all tangible and intangible fixed assets. The expenditure reflect the movements in depreciation charges and transfers from unrestricted funds made to align the tangible and intangible fixed assets to net book value.

16 Reconciliation of net (expenditure) to net cash flows (used in) / provided by operating activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	**(101,640)**	(565,990)
Interest received	**(1,411)**	(168)
Loan interest paid	**20,139**	-
Depreciation charges	**103,669**	100,190
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	**(559,642)**	50,033
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	**(760,399)**	225,102
Net cash (used in) operating activities	**(1,299,284)**	(190,833)

17 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Property		Equipment	
	2023	2022	**2023**	2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Up to one year	**827,151**	775,122	**12,749**	15,214
Two to five years	**65,932**	1,125	**22,440**	45,396
Over five years	**3,375**	-	**-**	-
	896,458	776,247	**35,189**	60,610

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.

SOLACE WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1082450

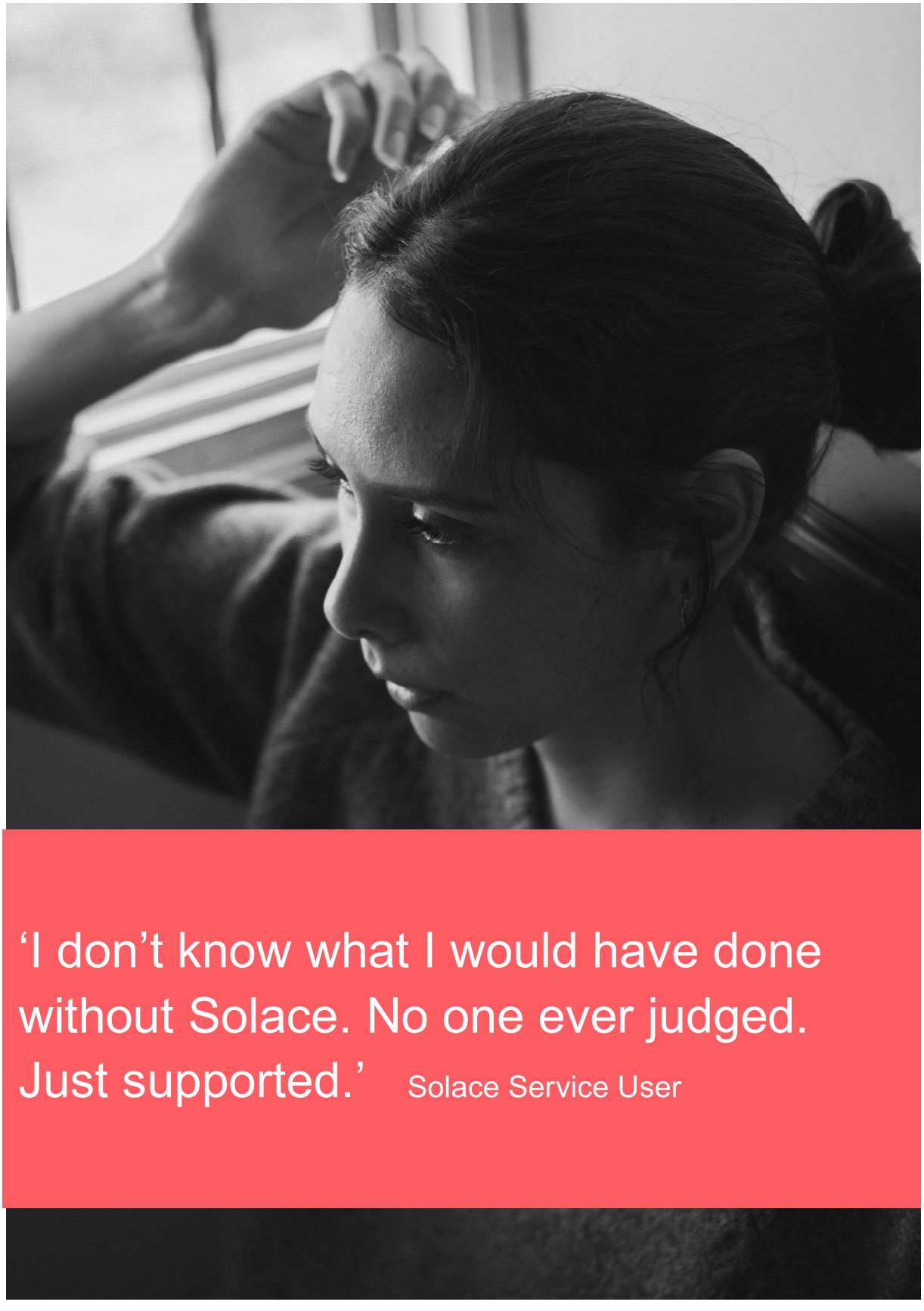
Accounts



Company number: 3376716
Charity number: 1082450

Annual Report and Financial Statements

31 March 2022



'I don't know what I would have done without Solace. No one ever judged. Just supported.' Solace Service User

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SOLACE AT A GLANCE

For the year ended 31 March 2022, Solace Women's Aid's (Solace) life-changing services touched the lives of 29,205 survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

The pandemic continued to have an enormous impact on our services and our Advice Helpline saw an increase in calls of 31% from the previous year. Our emergency accommodation project in partnership with Southall Black Sisters was extended from last year up to September 2021 and supported a further 34 women fleeing domestic abuse and seeking crisis accommodation.

During the year, we continued delivering our charitable activities covering refuge accommodation, community support advocacy and advice and therapeutic counselling services. We grew our partnership networks to include other women sector organisations in England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland through our Labyrinth project to join up women's centred outcomes across women's centres, children's centres, and older women's spaces, providing holistic support to women to untangle the complexities within their lives.

Our provision to women with specialist needs and multiple disadvantaged backgrounds continued with our Housing First projects in Westminster, Islington, and the WISER project in eight boroughs in London. As the largest service provider for survivors of male violence against women and girls (MVAWG) in London and one of the largest in the country, we recognised that our mission to end MVAWG will not be achieved without also tackling the intersecting and overlapping barriers and discrimination that women and girls from marginalised backgrounds experience.

Homelessness is closely intertwined with MVAWG. Through our partnership with the charity Connection at St Martin's we launched the Women's Development Unit, a collaborative project to work with women, services and stakeholders across London to improve access to holistic support services to help rebuild their lives from abuse and out of homelessness. We published the pan London women's homelessness strategy after gathering evidence and analysis from a wealth of organisations which included London Councils, the Greater London Authority, MOPAC, as well as representatives from London Boroughs, the VAWG and homelessness voluntary sectors.

We formalised our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion plans for the year which set out the actions we are taking across the core areas to make tangible changes and on which we will build each year to become a truly anti-racist organisation. The sections below on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion addresses this in more detail.

Solace continued to receive funding from statutory funders and the public and maintained its total income at £16 million for the year ended March 2022. Our staff team continued to grow in numbers from an average of 266 staff to 298 staff in the year. Our volunteers contributed 4,588 of hours; together they made all the difference to help us provide our life-saving services.

We increased the awareness of our services to the public and reached out to more women and supporters: with over a quarter of million unique website page views and more than 30,000 followers on our social media.

Equity Diversity, and Inclusion

Solace is committed as an organisation to living our values on equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of our work and service provision. Solace understands its responsibilities for everyone to feel supported and live our values of intersectionality and inclusion at all levels.

Our Journey to Become Actively Inclusive

We have engaged with our staff teams and reflected as an organisation on the need to become an actively inclusive organisation. The creation of an Equity Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) action plan together with employees, volunteers and trustees has been a key milestone for us in the last year. We are committed to ensuring that our beneficiaries who access our services experience the same values that we uphold within the charity.

Our EDI plan is a living document and we have determined it shall remain the driver of all that we do to meet the challenges of enhancing equity and fairness across our charity.

The 2021/22 plan sets out the actions we have taken across the core areas through which we will make tangible changes, and on which we will build each year:

- Our leadership and governance
- Our people
- Our services
- Our partnerships
- Our communications and campaigns.

Public Affairs

Our new public affairs function seeks to ensure that key decisions in Westminster and London are influenced by the voices of the survivors we support.

2021/22 saw a significant political and public focus on the issues relating to violence against women and girls following the increased prevalence of domestic abuse during the pandemic and the recent tragic femicides including Sarah Everard, Bibaa Henry, Nicole Smallman and Sabina Nessa.

The year also saw the passing of the landmark Domestic Abuse Act in May 2021, which defined domestic abuse in law for the first time, recognised children as victims, enshrined the role of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner and introduced a duty on local authorities to assess the need for and provide safe accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse. Whilst positive, we continue to be concerned about the lack of protection for migrant victims under the Act and the need for all survivors to be able to access support in the community.

We also saw the Government launch a new VAWG Strategy which introduced a National Policing Lead for VAWG and the Government committed to VAWG being a priority in its first ever Women's Health Strategy.

As the first full year of a dedicated public affairs function for Solace, we sought to ensure that the voice of the survivors we support and our frontline workers were represented in key developments around the VAWG response, particularly around housing and the criminal justice process. We submitted 17 consultation responses or written evidence on topics including the:

- Government's VAWG Strategy
- Government's Women's Health Strategy
- Government's upcoming Victim's Bill
- Government's review of the Human Rights Act
- Government's consultation on banning so-called conversion therapy
- Guidance related to the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act
- London Police and Crime Plan

- Mayor's Safe Accommodation Strategy
- Metropolitan Police's Action Plan
- Mayor's refreshed VAWG strategy.

As the provider of the largest crisis accommodation for domestic abuse survivors during the pandemic, we felt it was crucial to lobby for the inclusion of their voices and experiences in the Government's upcoming Covid-19 inquiry and submitted evidence to recommend this.

We met with 26 key stakeholders across the UK Government, UK Parliament, London Deputy Mayors, the London Assembly and Metropolitan Police. We were mentioned 29 times in the UK Parliament, and London Assembly, and received two invitations to give evidence to the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee.

We are pleased that Solace has been appointed to the Ministry of Justice's Women in the Criminal Justice Expert Group and MOPAC's Safe Accommodation Partnership Board.

In London, we saw a new Mayoral term start and ahead of this Solace set out our priorities for the new Mayor through our London Mayoral Election Pledge campaign which focused on the need for action on housing, supporting migrant victims, sustainable funding, and the priorities for a new VAWG strategy. Five of the six main Mayoral candidates and several London Assembly candidates supported the campaign publicly. We also got a supportive quote from the winning candidate Sadiq Khan reflecting a number of our priorities which we will seek to work with him to implement during his term.

STRATEGIC REPORT

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022. The reference and administrative information set out on page 27 forms part of this report.

The trustees review the aims, objectives, and activities of Solace each year. This report looks at what Solace has achieved and the outcomes and benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people Solace is established to assist during the reporting period. The review also helps ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

Key Objectives

The purpose of Solace is 'the promotion of the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being and safety of victims of domestic, sexual, and associated abuse, in particular women, young people and children'.

Strategy

Solace Futures is designed to deliver our strategic vision starting from today and for the next five years. We are building on Solace's 48 years of providing specialist, holistic support services for women and children. We are ambitious and want to drive change at every level to ensure that everyone lives healthy lives free from violence, abuse, and exploitation.

We will work together with our service users, staff, volunteers, trustees and the wider world to make a tangible difference to women and children's lives, both individually and collectively, as a movement of women committed to jointly ending male violence against us.

We shall create lives based on our right to safety and freedom from oppression for all women, ensuring we can equally contribute to social justice and have respect for cultural understanding.

As we have grown as an organisation, we have become more visionary about what we want to do to support survivors of all forms of violence and abuse. We have diversified and strengthened our services to provide holistic support packages to women, children and men who need them. We have started to strengthen and build on our existing partnerships and develop our influencing work at all levels – amplifying the voices of the nearly 30,000 women we work with each year.

Vision and mission

A world where everyone is able to live safe and independent lives which are free from gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation

Solace exists to end the harm done through gender-based violence. Our aim is to work to prevent violence and abuse as well as providing services to meet the individual needs of survivors particularly women and children. Our work is holistic and empowering, working alongside survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse.

Solace has an inclusive definition of women including trans women. Our services seek to support and represent trans women and non-binary people. We understand that trans women and non-binary people are affected by misogyny and the patriarchal frameworks that cause harm to cis women and girls.

Values

Solace core values reflect our history and were developed in consultation with staff and service users. We are working to be:

- Feminist and intersectional in our understanding of male violence against women and girls (MVAWG)
- Survivor led, trauma informed and empowering
- Diverse, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory to create a fully inclusive environment for staff and service users.

We are committed to:

- Social justice and human rights
- Service users having a central voice within the organisation
- Working in collaboration with other agencies
- Continuous improvement.

Public benefit

The trustees have referred to the guidance provided by the Charity Commission regarding public benefit, including its guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity (PB2), when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In setting the annual plan each year, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives of the charity.

Beneficiaries of our services

Solace's main beneficiaries are women, young people and children as outlined in our aims, vision, and mission. A small number of beneficiaries are men who access our community support services.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Our work has a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the women and children we work with, which is frequently expressed by them as 'life saving'.

We measure our success annually via our service user survey, exit questionnaires and analysis of the impact of our services through outcomes achieved with our service users. Successful outcomes are demonstrated through increased autonomy, independence and capability, better mental health and self-care, and better parenting and relationships with children.

Solace aims to achieve at least 85% satisfaction levels and our 2021/22 results demonstrates a good outcome and overall, an improvement in the quality and need for Solace services.

97% rated there was a continued need for Solace services **(2021: 93%)**

97% rated the service met or exceeded their expectation **(2021: 88%)**

93% rated the service as good or excellent **(2021: 88%)**

Our work is also evaluated in accordance to agreed quality frameworks which are monitored through regular reviews with staff, the senior management team, trustees, and funders. We received the ISO 9001 accreditation, the CHAS Health and Safety Quality Standard and maintained our SafeLives Leading Lights accreditation and Advice Quality Mark. We are accredited as an Investor in People charity.

Charitable activities and outcomes

For the year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, Solace supported 14,465 women and children through a range of services including refuge, advocacy, casework, therapeutic groups, and holistic support. Some of the women and children we help use just one of Solace's services, while many seek holistic support by accessing multiple initiatives. Together with our prevention strand with children and young people, we reached out and supported 29,205 beneficiaries of our services.

SERVICE DELIVERY	2021/22	2020/21
PROVISION		
Refuge and Specialist Accommodation	1,049	1,087
Community Based Advice, Advocacy and Support	10,689	12,364
Therapeutic	2,426	1,988
Children and Young People	301	359
Total provision	14,465	15,798
PREVENTION		
Children and Young People Preventive Group Work and Projects	9,610	4,284
Professional and External Training	5,083	3,338
Perpetrator Programmes	47	41
Total prevention	14,740	7,663
TOTAL	29,205	23,461

Refuge and specialist accommodation-based services

We manage 22 refuges offering 178 rooms across seven London boroughs for women and children fleeing abuse who need a safe place to stay and to recover from their trauma and rebuild independent lives. Our specialist multiple disadvantage refuge in Camden offers 24-hour support to women with mental health needs and problematic substance use. We operate a specialist accommodation hub in Southwark for women with multiple disadvantages and special needs leaving prison or at risk of homelessness.

We provide second stage dispersed accommodation and specialist support services across two projects with a total number of 18 flats: the Amari Project provides second stage accommodation for women who have been sexually exploited through prostitution or trafficking and the Rhea project provides immediate temporary, crisis accommodation for women and children in Southwark.

Survivors tell us that they experience abuse for an average of over 6 years before seeking support. As a result of this, the journey to recovery can be long and is not always linear. The relationship between physical and psychological safety is complex and not immediately addressed by being physically apart from an abuser. Our refuges offer an immediate safe haven from which survivors begin this long journey towards improving self-esteem and confidence and truly feeling safe. Many survivors tell us it takes many years and our refuge outcomes demonstrate how complex this journey can be.

Refuge accommodation outcomes

- 58% (2021: 57%) felt safer since accessing refuge.
- 58% (2021: 59%) felt more confident since entering refuge.
- 55% (2021: 54%) received ongoing resettlement support after leaving the refuge.
- 72% (2021: 71%) of service users felt an overall improvement to their wellbeing after accessing refuge.
- 6.2 months (2021: 4.8 months) is the average case length throughout refuge services.

Community based advice, advocacy, and support

Multiple Disadvantage (WISER)

The Women in Safe Engagement and Recovery (WiSER) project targets women who find it very hard to access/engage with support and who are facing severe and multiple disadvantages, delivered in partnership with Against Violence and Abuse (AVA), Fulfilling Lives Islington and Camden (FLIC), Hopscotch, IMECE Women's Centre, The nia Project and Women at the Well using assertive outreach in a trauma and psychologically informed way;

Our Housing First Project in Islington in partnership with Fulfilling Lives in Islington and Camden (FLIC) to support women with multiple disadvantages is the first project of its kind to be run by a specialist VAWG provider whereby we provide the specialist support to this group of women and FLIC allocates and manages the flats. Since August 2019, we have also been running a Housing First Project in Westminster, funded by Westminster Council.

Multiple Disadvantage outcomes

- 51% (2021: 59%) had accessed various health services and were better able to manage.
- 6.4 months (2021:10.6 months) is the average case length.

Advice

Solace's dedicated London Advice confidential line provides a first point of call for survivors and is available five days a week including one evening. The Advice team take calls from individuals and agencies across London who are concerned about domestic and/or sexual abuse and provide immediate advice and short-term support on safety planning, legal rights and options, housing advice, financial concerns, immigration issues, safeguarding and mental health issues. The team are able to refer to specialist services, as necessary. The team also manage one of the two advice hubs in London within the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership of 14 organisations.

Immigration Advice Service

Our Immigration service is an important part of our Advice Service and last year supported some of the most vulnerable women in London. All the women were supported with complex, insecure immigration status, and No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), they are much more vulnerable and subjected to continued exploitation and violence and are often frightened to seek support due to the risk of deportation. We work with women who are eligible to make applications under the Domestic Violence rule, under their human rights and EU regulations. We work with migrant women and EEA Nationals with NRPFs who have experienced domestic abuse and sexual violence, including women exiting prostitution, sexually exploited and trafficked women, women who are at risk of homelessness or are homeless and women needing refuge accommodation and other community advocacy services.

Advocacy and Support

Our Advocacy and Support teams offer help and assistance to those affected by domestic and sexual violence in their community. Our teams supply information, advocacy, and specialist services to increase service users' safety and meet a range of needs – these can include ongoing safety concerns, emotional or housing support, reporting to the police, legal options, and support through court, help around child contact, benefits, and financial advice. As well as providing direct assistance, we also work to build capacity and develop expertise amongst professionals and agencies.

We engage with professionals and community groups through a range of programmes, examples include:

- The Silver project supports women over 55 who have experienced domestic and/or sexual abuse offering intensive support and advocacy;
- The Irish Traveller project provides a specialist outreach and resettlement service to Irish women, Irish Traveller women and their children delivered in conjunction with our partner, the Irish Traveller Movement;
- The Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) programme, a GP based domestic violence training, support, and referral programme for primary care staff;
- Our Women's Resilience Awareness Project (WRAP) delivers a variety of courses and groups in Islington and Southwark that aim to increase resilience and wellbeing for women with children who have experienced domestic and/or sexual abuse; and
- Southwark's Sanctuary Scheme is designed to prevent someone affected by domestic violence from becoming homeless through the provision of security works to a home, ranging from changing locks to the installation of an internal 'safe room'.

Advice, Advocacy, and specialist services outcomes

- 3.1 months (2021: 3.7 months) is the average case length throughout all community services, a decrease from 6 months last year.

Therapeutic Services

Our therapeutic services implement a person-centred approach, which is trauma informed and strength-based practice and supports the service user to make choices for themselves. It ensures the full recognition of

intersectionality and life experiences and works within an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive framework. The service support women who have experienced domestic abuse and all forms of VAWG with a view to provide support in the following areas:

- Address physical and emotional safety;
- Increase awareness of abusive dynamics in relationships – vicious cycles of abuse;
- Increase confidence, resilience, and a greater sense of wellbeing;
- Manage post-traumatic stress and support the client in their recovery journey; and
- Empower survivors to explore options and choices.

Counselling

The Solace Counselling team offers one-to-one counselling sessions to women, creating a safe space for them to explore the impact of violence on their lives. Experienced counsellors work with women to help them recover from the long-term impact of emotional and physical abuse. Our counselling services are delivered as part of the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership and through separate contracts with Southwark, Waltham Forest, and Islington.

Ascent Counselling Service: Offers one-to-one counselling to victims/survivors of domestic abuse and all forms of VAWG. The service covers one assessment and up to 15 counselling sessions. We also offer 6 sessions of pre-trial therapy. Solace offers this service in 11 London Boroughs (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Havering, Islington, Lambeth, Newham, and Southwark).

Ascent Moving Forward: The Moving Forward Group is an 8-week educational programme for women aged 16+ who have experienced any form of domestic and/or sexual violence. These groups provide some first steps on the road to recovery from domestic and/or sexual abuse.

A safe space to talk, listen and be heard, while gaining emotional support. It gives women the opportunity to share experiences and information and explore and understand the impact of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse and the support to regain power and make positive choices.

Rape Crisis

Our North London Rape Crisis teamwork with women and girls over the age of 13 who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any point in their lives. This includes child sexual abuse, recent and non-recent rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, women involved in prostitution, trafficking, and female genital mutilation. North London Rape Crisis is part of the Pan-London Rape Crisis and Gateway service for survivors of Rape and Sexual Abuse working to ensure access to support is easily available across London.

The Rape Crisis service runs a free and anonymous helpline open daily to offer emotional and confidential support as well as a regular caller service. The Rape Crisis Service co-locates ISVAs with partners including police and children's centres across Enfield, Haringey, Barnet, Islington, Camden, Westminster, and Kensington & Chelsea.

The Gateway is a partnership between the four London Rape Crisis Centres (including North London Rape Crisis run by Solace), Galop, SurvivorsUK and the Havens, and is led by the Women and Girls' Network. Solace provides specialist complex needs support with our Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) working with women with multiple and complex needs.

Specialist advocates, counsellors, group therapists and helpline workers provide non-directive emotional and practical support and information to help women understand the impact of abuse, recover from the trauma

they have experienced, and if a woman chooses dedicated support through the Criminal Justice System from report to court and afterwards.

Holistic therapies

We run a variety of groups, well-being classes, as well as one-to-one body therapies to help survivors' recovery from trauma. Our group work includes: Trauma Informed Yoga, Tension and Trauma Releasing Exercises, Lesbian and Bisexual Group, Creative Group, Psychoeducational Group, Quarterly Women's Group.

Our work with children and young people, from the age of 4 to 18, has trained art and drama therapists, who use art, drama and play to help explore their feelings around the violence they have experienced, understand that they are not to blame and rebuild vital relationships with their mother, carer, peers, and siblings. 100% of children and young people expressed that using creative mediums was most helpful and the most enjoyable part of the therapy process which facilitated them processing and expressing feelings and memories that were hard to talk about.

Therapeutic Services outcomes

Ascent Counselling

- 93% (2021: 95%) felt an increase in wellbeing after counselling.
- 85% (2021: 89%) felt an increase in motivation after counselling.
- 86% (2021: 87% felt an increase in self-esteem after counselling.
- 87% (2021: 87%) are more aware of their rights and are able to make clearer choices with their future.
- 81% (2021: 84%) felt an increase in confidence after counselling.

North London Rape Crisis

- 78% (2021: 84%) felt an increase in emotional and mental wellbeing and had an increased understanding of survivors' rights and choices.

Children and Young People

Our Children and Young People's (CYP) team deliver a range of services for families and young people living in the community. Such prevention work is a key strand in Solace's strategy.

The POW Project

The 'Protect Our Women' project is a community-based programme for young people in primary and secondary schools aged 10-25 years in Haringey. Young people in schools and youth clubs complete 10 AQA accredited workshops on the topic of Violence against Women and Girls. The programme engages young people in creative ways with a Champions programme supporting young people and their communities.

Hear2Change (Women and Girls Initiative)

Funded by the Big Lottery, the Hear2Change project works with young people in schools and community settings across Haringey and Islington with the aim of changing attitudes to Violence Against Women and Girls. The project is led by a steering group of young women who meet regularly to decide on project priorities.

Young Change Makers

On the back of the invaluable work with the steering group, a Young Change Maker group of Young People has been set up to raise awareness of VAWG through empowering young people to present their experiences and ensure their voices are heard. This aims to equip young people with specific skills and introduce them to useful strategies (whilst building their confidence and knowledge) in order to design and deliver campaigns of their own. These will be presented in a variety of mediums of their choice (art, drama, music, photography, poetry) and a range of audiences and venues (schools, libraries, community facilities).

Major Trauma Centre - in partnership with Redthread Youth Violence Intervention Programme

Solace, commissioned by The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), has teamed up with Redthread, a London-based youth violence charity, to allocate Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) in London's four major trauma centres. Our IDVAs provide specialist support for young people aged 11 – 25 who are admitted into hospital due to domestic and/or sexual violence and abuse.

Lighthouse

We were part of the first innovative Child House pilots in the UK, bringing together statutory and voluntary sector partners to address Child Sexual Abuse. The Lighthouse is the UK's first Child House, a service where children are put at the centre and given the support they need to recover and rebuild their lives. Specially trained medical, advocacy, social care, police, and therapeutic support is delivered from one place. The project was led by University College Hospital and NSPCC with Solace providing a vital role in the Advocacy team.

CouRAGEus

We have joined together with a number of partner organisations (led by the Women and Girls Network) to support BAME children and young people across London. Solace provides a CYP counsellor, a multi-disadvantage advocate and a community engagement worker to provide support and therapy as well as raising the profile of VAWG with children and young people.

Children and Young People outcomes

- Helped and supported 301 (2021: 359) children and young people in our community services, helping to build their resilience and dealing with the impact of domestic violence.
- Preventive strategies included workshops, talks and seminars with groups of young people in schools impacting 9,610 (2021:4,284) lives.

Other services – Training and Consultancy

We increased delivery of our training and learning programmes to an even wider audience and transferring our courses, webinars and policy consultancy work to online platforms finding exciting new ways to teach and raise awareness.

Training outcomes

- We have trained 5,083 (2021: 2,063) learners during the year.

COVID-19 appeal designated funds

The trustees had designated £350,000 from the previous year towards continued intensive support as a result of the ongoing impact of COVID-19 at services and central teams. If funded additional crisis workers for our refuges and community services and strengthened our core services to respond to continued high demands in service user grants and additional support needed for staff wellbeing.

PARTNERSHIP WORK

Solace works in partnership with 42 other organisations in London and 14 across England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

The Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership

The Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership has been supporting women and children for 9 years and is the largest specialist VAWG service in London that works across multiple boroughs. In 2021/22 the 14 specialist VAWG organisations in the partnership supported 6,215 new service users in reaching a place of

safety and recovery across London. These services provide vital, and often life-saving services to women and girls.

During the peak of the pandemic, the project saw unprecedented demand for their services. The 14 partners adapted to delivering one-to-one counselling; one-to-one advice and case work; group work; legal advice; training and no recourse to public funds assistance to ensure that survivors across London could continue to gain support. The partnerships include majority 'led by and for' specialist VAWG organisations, recognising that access to culturally sensitive support aids women's recovery.

Our focus on standard to medium risk service users plugs an important gap as many local services are targeted towards high-risk cases. The four-year funding from London Councils was extended for a fifth year for 2021/22, recognising the increased pressure on VAWG services during the pandemic.

During the year 2021/22 the partnership delivered the following outputs:

- Assisted 7,860 new users to access advice, counselling, and support;
- Over 14,000 individual counselling sessions and 890 group sessions were delivered, enabling women to have increased self-esteem, confidence, and wellbeing in order to move towards independence;
- 5,900 users received 1-1advice, advocacy, and casework support;
- 934 women were supported by the London Family Law Line.
- 17 women with no recourse to public funds were assisted with accommodation and living expenses to enable them to be safe after fleeing violence/ abuse.

The partnership achieved the following outcomes:

- 3,504 service users reported reduced fear/ greater feelings of safety;
- 3,053 people with protected characteristics were satisfied with the services they were provided.
- 2,445 women with improved self-esteem, motivation, and confidence to rebuild their lives.

"I was so tired of it all, and felt he was never going to leave us alone. I just wanted him to stop. I felt very depressed and anxious. The caseworkers from Solace were really kind and reassuring, and just listened to what I had to say and what I wanted to do."

Ascent Advice Plus

In 2019, we secured additional funding from MOPAC to increase capacity in the two advice hubs and advice spokes within Ascent Advice and Counselling, extend the time it was possible to work with women, expand the London legal advice line and incorporate the expertise of four Equality & Diversity (E&D) partners that specialise in working with disabled, deaf, and hearing-impaired women, women with learning disabilities and autism, and LGBT+ women. Further funding was secured from the Ministry of Justice to ensure that more women could be supported during the pandemic.

The project allows for longer term support of up to 6 months for women across London to allow additional support for issues such as housing, immigration, and their mental health needs, recognising the increased complexity of women's lives when they reach us.

In 2021/22, the partnership supported:

- 2,085 through the East and West London advice hub
- 1,478 with specialist casework
- 665 by the London Family Law Line.

Labyrinth Project

So far, the project has:

- supported 14,557 women

- engaged 327 women's centres
- supported 1,827 women with legal support
- delivered 174 group work sessions
- trained 422 women through 90 individual training sessions.

In April 2021, we launched our Labyrinth Project which is a partnership of 14 women's organisations contributing to a strengthened women's sector in 8 areas across England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland by building capacity and forging stronger networks of support and shared learning locally and nationally. The project particularly focused on supporting the women's sector to emerge stronger from the damage that the Covid-19 pandemic is having on women's lives.

In each local area partners have been mapping the range of support available, identifying good practice, strengths and gaps in provision and the capacity building requirements of local groups. They have used the mapping of services and women's journeys to undertake activities to build capacity of the women's sector according to local priorities including:

- Solace has conducted outreach to support grassroots organisations supporting women in London, providing workshops on topics such as trauma-informed practice, and facilitating organisations and women to attend StreetLaw legal sessions. Women's Support Project has delivered domestic abuse training to community groups and organisations and developed resources in multiple languages on domestic abuse and harmful practices.
- Hopscotch Women's Centre (London) and Pankhurst Trust (Manchester) were able to provide support around safety, mental health, employment and training and well-being for influx of Afghan refugees this year.
- Nottingham Women's Centre have been tackling the lack of affordable childcare in Nottingham and its effect on women's employment, working with local councillors to develop a joint employers charter and ensuring the council adopts policy recommendations.
- Stop Domestic Abuse launched an FGM Women's Empowerment Group enriching BAMER women's knowledge about the different forms of domestic abuse, recognising the signs and how to seek support.
- Leeds Women's Aid have significantly increased their involvement in the Women's Lives Leeds Network which is working towards making Leeds a Woman Friendly City. Through this network, Leeds Women's Aid are leading work on housing for those with complex needs, supporting women who have had children removed, and supporting women's employment by developing a woman friendly employer's checklist.

Partners Rights of Women, Working Chance, Scottish Women's Rights Centre, and Surviving Economic Abuse have delivered a range of workshops and training to service users and professionals working with women covering topics such as job interview preparation, child contact and debt management.

Empowering Women Fund

Through the Labyrinth Project, Solace launched its first grants scheme. The Empowering Women Grants Fund supports organisations that are led by and for women to build their capacity and develop innovative ways of empowering women in their local area. The fund targeted organisations with a turnover of less than £1 million and received 653 applications and 40 grants have been awarded, enabling organisations in the UK to deliver life-saving support to women. The funded projects have identified and are responding to a significant increase in need within their community. Mental health and wellbeing are a particular concern, making up over half of all projects, followed by employment and VAWG.

An important aspect of this fund is to reach a diverse collection of women – 53% of projects are run by and for marginalised communities and funding is spread across small and medium-sized organisations in the three nations. To support both successful and unsuccessful grant applicants, Solace has provided online workshops around grant application tips and monitoring and evaluation.

"I couldn't praise enough the value that this group provides me personally. It has helped me gain confidence and shown me that I am not alone in having mental health problems."

Participant of Benbradagh Community Support, an Empowering Women Fund Grantee

"Receiving peer support through Bluebell was a real turning point in my recovery from perinatal mental illness."

Participant of Bluebell, an Empowering Women Fund Grantee

Women's Centre for Excellence

The Labyrinth Project also developed the National Women's Centre for Excellence which is a collection of knowledge, evidence, resources, and tools based on experience by and for organisations within and supporting the women's sector. This online repository aims to contribute to a stronger, better connected and more inclusive women's sector nationally by sharing knowledge, resources, learning and best practice, and identifying core elements of effectiveness in strengthening the sector.

As part of the Centre of Excellence, partners have launched a Labyrinth learning series, providing support for women's organisations on:

- Supporting Survivors of Harmful Practices – Learning from the Labyrinth Mapping Exercise
- Turning Practice into Policy - Effective Ways to Turn Frontline Practice into Policy Briefs
- The Women Friendly City Movement
- Effective Grant Writing Tips.

While the Labyrinth Project is time-limited, the Centre will continue its legacy, taking the learning as a starting point and creating a space to share information and evidence of what works that is readily accessible by women's sector organisations, groups, and individual women.

The Emergency Accommodation Project

In May 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, Solace and Southall Black Sisters launched a Crisis Project which offers safe emergency accommodation with specialist support to women and children fleeing domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), across London during the Covid-19 pandemic. The project was supported by Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust and received continuation funding for a further six months from MOPAC up to September 2022.

The project is coordinated by Solace with support for women with no recourse to public funds provided by partners Southall Black Sisters. The project provides women with crisis accommodation for three months to enable them to flee domestic abuse/ VAWG during the Covid-19 pandemic and have no recourse to public funds. During their time at the project women are offered therapeutic support, assistance from specialist refuge workers and resettlement support.

This service delivery enabled the achievement of the following outcomes:

- supported 192 women, including 64 women with no recourse to public funds during lockdown; and
- the project was extended into the coming year due to the ongoing nature of the pandemic.

The Women's Development Unit

- The Women's Development Unit trained 209 professionals
- The Women's Development Unit has put together 3 reports to influence women's homelessness

In February 2021, Solace partnered with homelessness charity Connection at St Martin's to launch the Women's Development Unit, a collaborative project to work with women, services, and stakeholders across the capital to improve access to holistic support services which are designed for their needs and help them rebuild their lives from abuse and support them out of homelessness.

In March 2022, the Women's Development Unit published its **pan-London women's homelessness strategy**, a cumulation of its 12 months of evidence gathering and analysis from a wealth of organisations, as well as women with lived experience of homelessness. The strategy was developed following conducting surveys, interviews, focus groups and workshops to hear the voices of those this impacts and share the good practice that many services are delivering. Our initial survey had 90 responses, we interviewed at least 28 stakeholders via semi-structured interviews, we held three focus groups and four strategy group meetings. The development of the strategy was guided by a strategy group had 17 external members with key knowledge and influence across London, including London Councils, the Greater London Authority, MOPAC as well as representatives from London boroughs, the VAWG and homelessness voluntary sectors. Since the launch we have had positive engagement with key stakeholders in Westminster and across London on how to implement the strategy. The new London-wide Strategy for Ending Women's Homelessness brings together recommendations about the specialist services we need to expand, the different ways we can offer support and how we should all be thinking more about women.

The project also sought to improve practice in services across the homelessness and VAWG sector and has developed two new training packages on Trauma Informed Approach to Supporting Homeless.

"In our work in the Life Off the Streets programme, we have relied heavily on the support and expertise of the WDU to refine and improve London's approach to preventing and tackling rough sleeping for women."

Michelle Binfield, Rough Sleeping Programme Director, London Councils

CASA Project

- The Casa Project supported 28 women into safe and affordable properties after refuge

Solace has continued to lead the Casa Project, a partnership within the London Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Consortium which enables women to move-on from refuges to high quality, self-contained accommodation with affordable rents, for up to 2 years.

Specialist resettlement support is provided throughout the tenancy and beyond, to longer-term secure accommodation by our partners Ashiana Network, EACH Counselling and Support, IKWRO Women's Rights Organisation, Latin American Women's Aid and The nia Project. St Mungo's Clearing House works with Solace to allocate the properties which are provided by several registered providers.

This year the project supported 28 women during the year with their secure tenancies and with their ongoing support needs as they leave refuges across London. 12 women were supported into training/education, and a further eight were supported into paid employment.

Other

Solace is a member of National Women's Aid and Rape Crisis England and Wales which are both national federations leading on policy change and campaigns to meet the needs of women and children experiencing domestic and sexual abuse. We are members of Domestic and Sexual Violence Forums across London boroughs and attend MARACs (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) across a number of boroughs and work closely with local services and stakeholders.

We are members of the London VAWG Consortium, along with 28 specialist VAWG organisations across London and are part of 5 of the projects they ran in 2021/22.

We work in partnership with Jewish Women's Aid to deliver advocacy and support services in Barnet. Refuge accommodation is provided through leasing agreements with Housing Associations and other partnerships; we have a partnership with Barnet Homes Ltd in Barnet to provide refuge services to women and with Asha in Lambeth to provide refuge accommodation for South Asian women. We have continued to build on our relationship with Commonweal Housing through the Amari and Rhea Projects.

Solace is the lead for the WiSER project for women with multiple disadvantages and partners Against Violence and Abuse (AVA), Fulfilling Lives Islington and Camden (FLIC), Hopscotch, IMECE Women's Centre, The nia Project and Women at the Well.

We work in partnership with Single Homeless Project (SHP) and FLIC on a Housing First service Islington and continue to work in partnership with Redthread to provide specialist support to young people affected by VAWG in three major trauma centres in London.

Solace is one of the partners in the 'London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS) 'No Recourse Fund', funded by MOPAC and led by Southall Black Sisters to meet the needs of women and children who are victims of domestic and sexual violence and other forms of gendered violence.

We work closely with the Public Interest Law Centre (PILC) to support our staff with legal issues related to housing. PILC provide training for Solace staff, support staff on individual cases and look to identify opportunities for strategic litigation.

Service User Involvement

During 2021/22, we continued to develop our Service User Strategy to build greater organisational understanding of meaningful, empowering and mutually beneficial service user activities. During 2021/22 users of our services helped to develop the plan and activities we will deliver in the coming year including a Service User Advisory Group, staff recruitment and peer auditing programme.

Solace Ambassadors

Our ambassador programme was launched in 2019 and we have a group of survivors who can draw on their experiences to help us raise awareness and campaign for change. They are supported to speak up for women on issues as experts by experience.

Volunteers

The trustees would like to thank all our volunteers, supporters, and staff for their invaluable work throughout the year, as their support is essential to help Solace achieve its aims.

We received 4,588 (2020/21: 3,961) volunteer and professional hours from individuals and students who help us with our advice, advocacy, therapeutic and refuge services, alongside pro bono corporate supporters who contribute to various projects and awareness campaigns.

The value of professional pro bono services provided to Solace was valued at £90,391 (2020/21: £88,553) with a large proportion attributable to apprentice levy funding received from our corporate supporter Expedia, National Grid and Chelsea Football Club and specialist pro bono support from MC Saatchi. We also received many hours of volunteer support from our corporate partner McKinseys.

We manage a programme of using volunteers to help with our services, especially therapeutic services and provide women volunteers with specialist training to enhance their skills. In accordance with charity reporting regulations, we have not accounted for the time provided by these volunteers in the financial statements, however, based on London's Living Wage rate of pay, this is estimated at £50,697 (2021/21: £42,977).

Fundraising

We would like to thank all of our supporters during 2021/22 including those who have chosen to remain anonymous.

We have been successful in raising a combined value of £735,597 (2020/21: £1,575,694) in voluntary income through the diversification of our income streams. Our work is made possible by the generous support and donations from individual donors, community groups and companies over the past year.

It has never been a more challenging fundraising climate for Solace, in the background of demand for services skyrocketing. The pandemic had a significant impact, seeing the cancellation of planned fundraising activities. Nevertheless, we were overwhelmed by the generosity of some amazing funders and support for our emergency pandemic fundraising throughout the past 12 months.

Here are just some of the highlights from the last year;

3i

3i generously supported Solace during the Stay Safe at Home campaign launched as an emergency appeal in response to the increased demand on services caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Their donation of £150,000 provided funding for Solace to bring in post a Multiple Disadvantage Outreach Worker and a Clinical Psychologist.

The Clinical Psychologist is embedding the mental health knowledge we needed across the organisation for the benefit of our 298 staff, 90 volunteers and women we support. This post played a fundamental role in helping us to respond to the combined impacts of domestic abuse and the pandemic.

The additional Multiple Disadvantage Outreach Worker employed for 18-months; meant we could work with women for whom very few specialist services exist. Working with a caseload of 5 to 8 women allowed for intensive support equating to months of building trust and supporting women to manage a tenancy to stay safe off the street - providing more than 3,000 interactions with all the women accessing her support.

Banham Security

Through our partnership with Banham Security, we aim to bring a greater peace of mind and personal safety to women across London, and with the Banham Academy we are providing education and training opportunities for women. Banham Security are the largest security provider in London and the Southeast.

Solace would like to thank Banham for the generous donation of 1,500 personal alarms for women, and through our partnership we aim to bring a greater peace of mind and personal safety to women across London. We are also excited to work alongside The Banham Academy following the launch of their first women's apprenticeship programme, looking to help bridge the gender gap in the industry and provide access to opportunities for all women.



See Change Project

We know that tackling male violence against women and girls (MVAWG) begins with the men perpetrating abuse, which is why we aim to increase safety for victims and children by guiding men in changing their behaviour - helping them to recognise abusive actions and become accountable and responsible for their behaviours. The See Change Project combines group behaviour change work and one-to-one sessions to unpick the experiences of masculinity had by these men, and where necessary create place to work though the repercussions of trauma, including adverse childhood experiences.

The Bruno Schroder Trust very generously fully funded the first year of the project, giving Solace the independence to design a completely bespoke project, incorporating the learnings and experience from previous perpetrator programmes, alongside input from Solace front line services.

Our approach to fundraising

Solace is a member of the fundraising regulator. Our income is generated predominately thanks to the support of individual fundraisers raising income at our events or their own events. We do not employ the services of any fundraising agencies or third parties, nor have we run a telephone or door to door fundraising campaign. Our relationship with our supporters is especially important to us and the charity does not wish for our supporters to feel under any pressure to donate to the charity.

We have a close relationship with our fundraisers and support them in delivering their events and complying with relevant codes of practice. Where we work with commercial participators, contracts are exchanged so that

we can ensure compliance with the code of fundraising practice, applicable laws, and adherence to best practice.

We received no complaints about our fundraising practices in 2021/22.

Quality Management

The quality of Solace's services reflects the commitment of our staff team and our determination to continuously improve our standards. We have invested in accredited training for staff and expanded our business development and resources infrastructure to ensure we have robust systems in place to deliver excellent services.

In 2021/22, we achieved and retained a number of kite marks demonstrating the quality of Solace's work, including:

SafeLives Leading Lights;
Investors In People;
Rape Crisis National Service Standards;
Disability Confident Employer;
Advice Quality Standard;
ISO 9001; and
CHAS (The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme).

Media and Communications

It has been another successful year, connecting to women and children raising our public reach by growing our digital media reach and also working closely with press and media to raise our profile and awareness of the work that we do and the issues facing women and girls.

We now have approximately 30,000 followers on our social media and we have almost 250,000 visits to our website each year.

Our media and communications work has contributed to our being able to deliver thought provoking campaigns to all parts of the community including allies who want to help tackle violence and misogyny.

Campaigns

Working with the agency Roll Nine, our summer campaign appeal Solace Lifelines won the best Crisis Response Campaign at the UK Content Awards for depicting the need for funding when calls to our advice line increased 117% since the start of the pandemic.

We also ran an extremely successful Christmas Fundraising campaign with Roll Nine agency, which was a hard-hitting Christmas video appeal "Do something" (also a finalist in the 2022 Content Awards) challenging us all to intervene when we witness abuse. The campaign received 640,000 Twitter impressions and 10,300 Twitter engagements as well as a reach of 601,100 on Instagram.

In addition, we raised awareness about coercive control and other toxic behaviours in our Valentine's 'It's Not Love' campaign which our unpromoted campaign received 4,000 impressions on Twitter.

We launched our latest charity film which so far had a total reach of nearly 3,000 on social media and is on the home page of our website which regularly receives around 60,000 views per quarter.

International Women's Day

As the year drew to a close, we celebrated International Women's Day. At the event we celebrated our partnerships with New Look, Banham Alarms, E-cubed and Stack. There was also an art exhibition by children in our refuge and Young Change Makers and for the first time we live streamed the event.

We held the event with the following panel who we thank for attending and giving us their sisterly support

- Zara Janjua - Host and panel chair – https://www.zarajanjua.com/
- Maya Tatton co-founder of https://www.ourstreetsnow.org/
- Aliyah Ali https://www.aliyahali.com/ founder of Daddyless Daughters
- Rehema Muthamia, Miss England 2022.

Plans for the future

We have reviewed our strategic plans and launched the Strategic Plan 2022-2027 on International Women's Day in March 2022.

As we started to develop our new strategy, the Covid-19 Pandemic and all its devastating impacts started to change the way that we work and deliver services. At the same time, as an organisation working with our values of intersectionality, we took time to review our approach to our feminism in the light of Black Lives Matters and providing support to Trans Women, as well as focussing on other areas including disability and class. This strategy has thus been developed in light of the lasting impacts of Covid-19 and our bold ambitions for change, with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion.

As we have grown as an organisation, we have become more visionary about what we want to do to support survivors of all forms of violence and abuse. We have diversified and strengthened our services to provide holistic support packages to women, children and men who need them. We have started to strengthen and build on our existing partnerships and develop our influencing work at all levels – amplifying the voices of the 29,000 people we work with each year.

Our new focus for the next strategy will naturally include continuing to focus on meeting the needs of women, children, and young people, while offering services to male victim/survivors and to perpetrators of domestic abuse who wish to change their behaviour.

We have six key strategic outcomes that we are working towards: strategic influencing, partnership, and leadership; organisational development and growth; long-lasting recovery and lasting change; accessibility, education, and employment; children and young people, and empowerment, engagement, and aspirations.

The planned work for an organisational cultural review will support ongoing development of the charity commenced in the summer this year and the findings will inform trustees on cultural and organisational development for the charity. Trustees are looking to recruit a permanent Chair and CEO following the appointment of Ms Kirsty Telford as interim Chair and Ms Judith Banjoko as interim CEO in December 2021.

Our aspirations to support ever more survivors of abuse is coupled with developing a strong and healthy workforce. Our ambition for the period 2022-2027 is for the organisation to grow to achieve the dual aim of supporting more survivors but also to support the frontline staff working for the organisation. As we grow, we will do so making sure we keep our grassroots focus that makes our support so valuable to service users. We will implement the newly agreed terms for an Employee Engagement Forum who will work closely with the

Senior Leadership Team to strengthen internal communications and improve employee engagement.

We are in the process of acquiring our trauma informed quality mark, to further ensure that we run services that are healthy, mindful and reflective. What we will create is a safe, supporting, compassionate, proactive and inclusive work place, ensuring that we have a framework and language that reflect on our purpose, mission and values.

We are committed to becoming a truly anti-racist organisation and embedding anti racist practices within Solace, there is a continual commitment to anti-racism within the organisation. We recognise that there are further steps we need to take as an organisation and will be developing a specific anti-racism plan to be launched in April 2023. We have also signed up to the VAWG Anti-Racism Charter and senior managers have been attending workshops on how to implement it – we will continue to look at how we can deliver the charter in our internal and external work over the coming months.

Over the last year, we have been implementing our refreshed Equity, Diversity and Inclusion plan which is shared with staff quarterly, an external version of the plan can be found here, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Solace (solacewomensaid.org). This will hold us to account our new five year strategy and further recognises the need to do more to support our staff from the global majority, as well as our 'by and for' partners across the sector.

Staff safety (psychological and physical) and wellbeing is the number one priority for the senior management team and the trustees coming out of last year, and particularly black and minoritised staff. As well as being key to living our values as an organisation, staff wellbeing and empowerment is crucial to fostering the right environment to enable the best outcomes for the women and children we work with.

In the coming year, we will continue to work with partners to ensure that our services are accessible to all women. Intersectionality is a key principle of the work that we do at Solace, and we will recognise the multiple and intersecting barriers that women face.

We will continue to implement a business development programme which will support income generation and strengthening our reserves, with the goal to achieve our target reserve levels of £2.2million to enable us to meet the varied needs of our service users, staff, and volunteers at Solace. In conjunction, we will support the organisation's growth by strengthening core services and improving our digital offerings in our services.

We will continue to develop a cost benefit analysis for each of our services to demonstrate the incredible value provided by our specialist staff.

Financial review

The financial results for the year ended 31 March 2022 are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities, balance sheet, cash flow statement and notes to the accounts on pages 35 onwards.

Income

For the financial year 2021/22, total incoming resources was £16,361,422 comparable to the previous year of £16,265,804. Enlarged contracts from statutory funders for our community and specialist work to meet continued high demands offset the lower voluntary income which was boosted by the Emergency Appeal in the prior year. The continued overwhelming support from our statutory partners, trusts and foundations, corporates and the public at large have helped us to maintain essential services including extending the emergency crisis accommodation for a further six months this year.

Our refuge services grew by £376,736 with inflationary increases in core rental income. Community based advice and advocacy services grew by £872,716 with new projects in Tower Hamlets and additional funding for specialist advocates in Bexley and Waltham Forest.

Partnership projects saw the full launch of for our national project, Labyrinth, creating a centre of excellence together with specialist partners to support women's centres, women's groups, and networks to help them, and the women they support, to emerge stronger from the damage that the Covid-19 pandemic had on their lives. The completion of our Covid-19 crisis accommodation project has resulted in lower partnership income of £482,144 this year.

Our advice and advocacy work in the community, which includes specialist services and work with women with multiple needs represented the largest source of incoming resources at 35% of our funding base, followed by refuge provision 26%, Ascent and other partnership work at 20%, and therapeutic at 10%. Children and young people services focussed on prevention activities was at 4% and remains a core strategic goal for Solace.

Voluntary income from donations contributed 4.5% of our funding base through the support of the public, corporates and trusts and foundations.

Further details on our incoming resources are in notes 2 and 3 of the financial statements.

Expenditure

Growth through new activities has correspondingly increased resources expended by 9% from £15,592,165 to £16,927,412. The staff to deliver our charitable services has resulted in an increase in staff costs of £1,456,270 from £8,907,668 to £10,363,938 and similarly, delivering specialist support with partners increased partnership costs by £132,689.

During the year, we continued to maintain expenditure to modernise our information technology and digital offerings to enable remote working provision for staff and improve reach to our service users. We invested in organisational growth and introduced new initiatives for stronger employee engagement, staff wellbeing and demonstrated our commitment to equality, diversity with our plans published on our website. This higher spending in professional fees and service administration expenditure reflects the investment needed to support these activities.

Solace remains focused on tight cost management and supplier contracts are reviewed periodically for better value for money propositions. The blended average annual cost per service user at £580 (2020/21: £665) is lower reflecting the higher one-off costs of crisis projects in the previous year.

Further details on our expenditure are in note 4 of the financial statements.

Financial position

After the net expenditure on restricted funds, the overall result for the year was a deficit of £565,990 (2020/21: surplus of £673,639). Part of this deficit was funded by planned designations amounting to £350,000 for use in 2021/22 to support the delivery of critical lifesaving services. The remaining deficit is explained by our investments in organisational development including our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion which will result in an organisation that is able to deliver on its mission in a more resilient and compassionate manner.

Achieving a surplus remains a key performance target to enable the charity to set aside funds towards reserves for contingency requirements, further explained in our reserves policy note. We have planned to achieve a balanced budget the coming year as we recognise the need to support organisational growth to ensure the continued financial viability of the charity.

Total fund balances as of 31 March 2022 were £2,102,741 (2020/21: £2,668,731) of which £913,262 (2020/21: £1,300,672) were designated funds and the remaining £1,189,479 (2020/21: £,1,368,059) represented general funds. Designated funds as at the balance sheet date represent the net book value of tangible fixed assets.

Risk management and principal risks

Trustees have overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the system of risk management at Solace. The charity maintains a charity risk register which tracks key risks to Solace and is reviewed by trustees at quarterly sub-committee meetings and full board meeting. Unexpected and sudden changes in risks would be scrutinised by trustees over and above planned meetings.

The principal risks facing the charity which operates in a challenging and demanding sector are financial, operational, reputational, people and culture and regulatory and these are detailed below.

Financial

Solace operates in a challenging and demanding sector with uncertainties over longer term funding, due to the commissioning of services by local and central government and the cuts to public spending. Payments by local authorities, government bodies, trusts and foundations are based on the achievement of outcomes or payment by results add further pressures on cash flow and overall financial management.

External risks to funding have been reduced by reaching and maintaining the standards required by commissioners and funding bodies and implementing a strategy to diversify our funding base through income generation from fundraising.

Financial risks arising from contract renewals in 2022/23 are mitigated through TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment) arrangements and the maintenance of adequate reserves to absorb central costs covered by these contracts. This has been reduced as Solace has retained and renewed several key contracts for a new term of three to five years.

Overall financial risks are monitored through regular reporting to the Finance and Resources sub-committee and trustees with scrutiny of annual budgets, reforecasts, management accounts and cash flow projections. Scenario planning with prudent income generation activities has been prepared and reviewed with trustees to ensure that Solace continues to have sufficient resources to deliver its services and maintain solvent in the foreseeable future.

Operational

The nature of our service delivery which provides support to vulnerable women and children suffering from domestic and sexual violence increases our operational risks which could result from services providing inadequate support for our service users caused by unclear priorities, lack of quality oversight and inadequate staff resources.

Operational risks are managed through implementation of suitable policies and procedures including good practices for case management, appropriate case loads, rigorous staff training, staff supervision and support and regular reporting to senior management. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, risks assessments and data protection regulations in respect of service users, staff, trustees, volunteers, and visitors. Appropriate insurance cover is in place for unexpected losses.

Risks on IT systems and cyber crime are managed through the use of accredited managed IT providers using secure cloud based technology. Monthly review of performance and IT risks are undertaken with senior management and reported to trustees. Staff receive regular training on IT and cyber security and induction training is provided to all new employees.

Reputational

In line with our operational risks, reputational risks are heightened as we engage with vulnerable people in difficult circumstances. Service audits are conducted annually to review compliance with funder agreements and reported to trustees. The senior management team works closely with boroughs and other funder leads and attend meetings and events which enable issues to be dealt with promptly and manage reputational risks.

People and culture

As other charities operating in the sector, Solace has been challenged with equity, diversity and inclusiveness and has been in the spotlight with negative publications on racism. Solace is committed to being an actively inclusive charity and has reviewed its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan with trustees, staff and volunteers as outlined in the earlier sections of this report. Specialist inclusive training and awareness programmes are being delivered to all staff.

Risks and challenges on staff recruitment and retention are managed through continuous staff learning and development. Staff wellbeing initiatives have been strengthened and we are committed to becoming a fully trauma informed charity to support with overall staff safety and retention.

Regulatory and compliance

Safeguarding is at the heart of our operational services and a key governance priority, keeping women and their children safe is our primary responsibility and we take all appropriate steps to protect everyone from harm.

We deliver robust safeguarding training to all our staff and volunteers, as part of their induction training. This includes the legal framework, how to spot signs and symptoms, how to respond and what makes a good referral to social care. We also explain our whistle blowing policies to all staff and volunteers during the training. Annual refresher training on safeguarding is mandatory for all staff.

We have a suite of policies and procedures designed to manage this risk including those covering: acceptance of donations, unauthorised fundraising, procurement, IT security, anti-fraud, data protection and social media. We undertake regular training on compliance and continue to review and strengthen our training to staff and volunteers.

Reserves policy and going concern

The reserves fund represents unrestricted general funds which are not committed or tied to any tangible fixed assets held by Solace.

It is Solace's policy to retain sufficient reserves to safeguard its financial commitments and to continue to provide essential services to women and children who are experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence, in the event of unforeseen financial problems for a length of time to enable those problems to be resolved.

The trustees have reviewed its reserves policy in March 2022 and agreed to build Solace's reserves based on an analysis of the risks facing the charity. In determining the level of reserves required by Solace, the following factors are taken into account by the Board of Trustees:

- key strategic risks as described in Solace's risk register;
- our strategic goals;
- financial strategy and sustainability;
- liquidity management;
- commitments to staff and other contractual obligations; and
- needs of services and beneficiaries.

This level of reserves is to protect the charity from having to make quick structural changes arising from the sudden loss of income, for example when contracts are not renewed or other unforeseen circumstances, to enable the charity to function during unexpected periods of financial difficulties. The Finance and Resources sub-committee reviews the level of reserves required by Solace annually and recommends the appropriate level to the trustees.

Based on the analysis of risks, a minimum general reserves level of £2,249,949 would be considered adequate. The current unrestricted free reserves of £1,189,479 (unrestricted reserves less those related to tangible fixed assets and designations) are below the target reserves level although more than adequate to meet ongoing liquidity requirements for the coming year. The need to increase reserves to achieve the desired target levels will be a key focus of the charity in the coming years, with a plan to generate sufficient reserves over a period of three to five years to ensure the desired target levels are achieved by 2027.
Further notes on our reserves are outlined in note 15 of the financial statements.

The trustees have considered the material uncertainties which may cast doubts on the appropriateness of the going concern assumption with regards to the 2021/22 financial statements. As noted above, these uncertainties are continually monitored by the board and the senior management team, and remedial actions are implemented in a timely manner. Having considered the risks of these uncertainties, the trustees have concluded that the going concern assumption remains appropriate.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the memorandum, and articles of association, the Companies Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Company number	3376716
Country of incorporation	United Kingdom
Charity number	1082450
Country of registration	England & Wales
Registered office	9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP
Website	www.solacewomensaid.org

Board of Trustees
Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Ms. Helen Hughes	Chair (resigned 9 December 2021)
Ms. Kirsty Telford	Vice Chair (from 24 June 2021) Interim Chair (from 9 December 2021)
Ms. Jasbir Sandhu	Treasurer (up to 29 June 2022)
Ms. Kerri Hartwell (nee Podobnik)	Interim Treasurer (appointed 29 June 2022)
Ms. Yasmin Becker	
Ms. Teresa Hoey	(retired 29 March 2022)
Ms. Maureen Hopcroft	
Ms. Emily Florence Hutchings	
Ms. Vivien Ma	
Ms. Heather Mah	(retired 29 March 2022)
Ms. Margaret Osimen	(resigned 9 December 2021)
Ms. Natalie Lopez	(appointed 5 August 2022)
Ms. Madeline Church	(appointed 5 August 2022)
Ms. Meghan Roach	(appointed 5 August 2022)
Ms. Amy Pritchard	(appointed 5 August 2022)

Principal staff

Ms. Fiona Dwyer	Chief Executive Officer (resigned 30 September 2021)
Ms. Judith Banjoko	Interim Chief Executive Officer (wef 1 October 2021) Director of Services (up to 30 September 2021)
Ms. Retna Thevarajah	Chief Operating Officer
Ms. Jane Jutsum	Director of Business Development
Dr. Jennifer Cirone	Interim Director of Services (appointed 1 Feb 2022)

Bankers	HSBC plc 1 Aldermans Hill London, N13 4YE
Solicitors	Bates Wells & Braithwaite London LLP 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE
Auditor	Moore Kingston Smith 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP

Structure, governance & management

Solace is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 28 May 1997, and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 16 September 2000. The charity is formed under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

Recruitment and appointment of members of the Board of Trustees

Solace welcomes women to the Board of Trustees who have the skills, dedication, and enthusiasm to take overall responsibility for the organisation. The charity advertises for members in a number of ways including recruitment websites and other relevant publications.

Trustees serve for a maximum period of six years in aggregate and the total number of trustees are twelve members. Solace has a diverse Board, ensuring that our trustees represent the women we support. One third of members must resign each year, with the longest standing members resigning first.

Induction and training for the Board of Trustees

All prospective members receive information regarding Solace including the most recent annual report and audited accounts, as well as copies of relevant policies and procedures. They meet with the CEO who carries out an induction that includes training on key policies (including equality, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, confidentiality, complaints, whistle blowing, financial regulation, risk assessments and DBS checks), a tour of our services and meetings with both staff and service users.

A skills audit is conducted annually, and any gaps identified are met through training, guidance from the CEO and other members of the trustees and staff, as well as targeted recruitment.

Trustees are encouraged to attend relevant training in areas such as governance, human resource management and financial management. The cost of this training is met by the organisation.

Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 5 to the accounts.

Organisational structure

The trustees meet every quarter and are responsible for the organisation's overall management and strategic direction. The trustees also meet twice a year for Board Away Days. These women are drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to our work including those who have been impacted by domestic or sexual abuse. We are also committed to diversity and have a trustee board representative of our service users and staff.

The officers of the charity are:

Chair	Ms. Helen Hughes (resigned 9 December 2021)
Interim Chair	Ms. Kirsty Telford (appointed 9 December 2021)
Vice Chair	Ms. Kirsty Telford (up to 9 December 2021)
Treasurer	Ms. Jasbir Sandhu (up to 29 June 2022)
Interim Treasurer	Ms. Kerri Hartwell (appointed 29 June 2022) (nee Podobnik)

The trustees delegate appropriate functions to the sub-committees listed below, of which at least two members must be from the Board.

Business Development sub-committee: Oversees the overall strategy and business development plans for the charity, as well as Training and Consultancy, Fundraising, and Communications. Chair – Ms. Yasmin Becker.

Finance and Resources sub-committee: Oversees financial management to ensure optimum use of resources. It scrutinises income and expenditure and regularly reports to, makes recommendations, and clarifies options available to the trustees. Interim Chair – Ms. Kerri Hartwell.

Human Resources and Governance sub-committee: Oversees staffing issues including recruitment, retention, pay, equality and diversity, health and safety and environmental issues. It acts as the appeal body for any disciplinary and capability matters and is responsible for overall board governance. Chair – Ms. Kirsty Telford.

Services sub-committee: Scrutinises operational top-level reports and internal audits; discusses policy, devises, and reviews the service operations strategy. Chair – Ms. Maureen Hopcroft.

In the summer of 2021, the Board of Trustees set up an Oversight sub-committee that was led by the Chair and had Chairs or all sub-committees and the CEO working together to monitor and manage the increased risks faced by the charity since allegations around racism were published in the media. The committee met frequently and has worked closely with the interim CEO to drive forward changes in the culture and management of the charity. One year on the committee has reduced the number of times they meet but will continue to meet twice a year to track progress on all matters relating to staffing, in particular staff from the global majority, monitor our ED&I action plan and to ensure oversight of the culture review and resulting orgaisational culture changes.

Expert Advisors are selected to provide specialist advice to the sub-committees. They attend and scrutinise reports together with trustees at sub-committee meeting. We currently have six Expert Advisors: Ms. Judy Kawaguchi (Finance and Resources); Ms. Helena Dollimore (Business Development); Ms. Beth Herlihy, (Business Development; Ms Debbie Peel (Services); Ms Rachel Galvin (HR and Governance) and Ms Sian Elliot (HR and Governance).

Overall management is delegated to the CEO and Directors who are responsible for ensuring that Solace delivers high quality services, meets contractual obligations and conditions of grant aid. Principal staff are the CEO, COO, Director of Services and Director of Business Development who convene regularly to oversee the organisational management of Solace. The Directors report to the CEO.

The wider Senior Management Team includes eight Heads of Services and two Deputy Heads of Services who meet with the Directors and CEO on a fortnightly monthly basis.

Team and Service Managers run the day-to-day activities with their staff teams delivering services in both refuge and community-based services. They report to Heads of Services and meet with the CEO and Directors each month.

Related party transactions

Related party transaction during the year related to professional pro bono services and valued at Nil (2020/21: £2,500), and donations from 2 trustees totalling £658 (2020/21: £1,300).

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

Solace awards a fair remuneration package to all staff including key management personnel. Both the Human Resources and Finance and Resources sub-committees undertake an annual review of salaries, and the trustees are responsible for setting the CEO salary, and with the CEO set the salaries of Directors. The salary of the highest and lowest salaries in the organisation does not exceed 1:5.

Statement of responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Solace for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic 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 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 these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 operation.

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.

As 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.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2022 was 10 (2020/21 - 12). The trustees are members of the charity, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors

Moore Kingston Smith LLP were appointed as auditors in 2018 and are deemed to be reappointed to under Section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The report of the Board of Trustees has been approved by the trustees on 15 September 2022 and signed on their behalf by



Kirsty Telford – Interim Chair

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS SOLACE WOMEN'S AID

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Solace Women's Aid for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the Summary Income and Expenditure Account), 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 2022 and of the 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 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 annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. 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 there is 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 trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report have 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 trustees' annual report.

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.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 30, 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 aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement 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 purposes 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.

- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the charitable company to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit report.

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.

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

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.

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 charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.

- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.

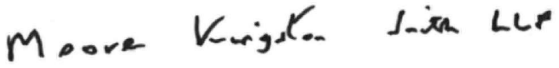
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.

- 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.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

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 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 any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Neil Finlayson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

Date: 20 October 2022

9 Appold Street
London
EC2A 2AP

Moore Kingston Smith LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Solace Women's Aid

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	735,597	–	**735,597**	1,235,971	339,723	1,575,694
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	3	3,702,854	487,743	**4,190,597**	3,393,459	420,402	3,813,861
Community based advice, advocacy and support	3	5,022,474	766,094	**5,788,568**	4,090,444	825,408	4,915,852
Therapeutic	3	–	1,710,618	**1,710,618**	43,400	1,424,363	1,467,763
Children and Young People	3	57,349	531,142	**588,491**	242,301	392,429	634,730
Other services	3	107,009	48,253	**155,262**	82,975	100,664	183,639
Partnership work							
Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships	3	121,467	3,070,654	**3,192,121**	–	3,674,265	3,674,265
Investment income		168	–	**168**	–	–	–
Total income		**9,746,918**	**6,614,504**	**16,361,422**	**9,088,550**	**7,177,254**	**16,265,804**
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	291,306	–	**291,306**	251,761	376,000	627,761
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	4	3,655,295	542,599	**4,197,894**	3,341,986	428,440	3,770,426
Community based advice, advocacy and support	4	5,441,389	756,677	**6,198,066**	4,258,349	881,253	5,139,602
Therapeutic	4	17,031	1,800,380	**1,817,411**	52,328	1,439,674	1,492,002
Children and Young People	4	63,378	580,395	**643,773**	245,835	399,743	645,578
Other services	4	478,896	48,253	**527,149**	113,507	113,533	227,040
Partnership work							
Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships	4	162,556	3,089,257	**3,251,813**	9,336	3,680,420	3,689,756
Total expenditure		**10,109,851**	**6,817,561**	**16,927,412**	**8,273,102**	**7,319,063**	**15,592,165**
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	**5**	**(362,933)**	**(203,057)**	**(565,990)**	**815,448**	**(141,809)**	**673,639**
Transfers between funds		(203,057)	203,057	–	(141,809)	141,809	–
Net movement in funds		**(565,990)**	–	**(565,990)**	**673,639**	–	**673,639**
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		2,668,731	–	**2,668,731**	1,995,092	–	1,995,092
Total funds carried forward		**2,102,741**	–	**2,102,741**	**2,668,731**	–	**2,668,731**

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities unless noted otherwise. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15 to the financial statements.

Notes on pages 38 to 50 form part of these financial statements.

Solace Women's Aid

Balance sheet

Company no. 3376716

As at 31 March 2022

	Note	£	2022 £	£	2021 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible fixed assets	10		**913,262**		950,672
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	**2,045,428**		2,095,461	
Cash at bank and in hand		**2,922,697**		2,676,142	
		4,968,125		4,771,603	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	**3,460,664**		3,053,544	
Net current assets			**1,507,461**		1,718,059
Total assets less current liabilities			**2,420,723**		2,668,731
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	13		**317,982**		–
Total net assets	14		**2,102,741**		2,668,731
The funds of the charity:	15				
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		**913,262**		1,300,672	
General funds		**1,189,479**		1,368,059	
Total unrestricted funds			**2,102,741**		2,668,731
Total charity funds			**2,102,741**		2,668,731

Approved by the trustees on 15 September 2022 and signed on their behalf by

Kirsty Telford
Interim Chair

Kerri Hartwell
Interim Treasurer

Notes on pages 38 to 50 form part of these financial statements.

Solace Women's Aid

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:					
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	16		**(190,833)**		1,676,219
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		**168**		–	
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		**(62,780)**		(42,743)	
Net cash used in investing activities			**(62,612)**		(42,743)
Cash flows from financing activities:					
Receipt of CBILS loan		**500,000**		–	
Net cash provided by financing activities			**500,000**		–
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			**246,555**		1,633,476
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			**2,676,142**		1,042,666
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			**2,922,697**		2,676,142

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents	**2022**	**2021**
	£	**£**
Cash in hand	77,799	63,333
Cash in bank	1,417,474	1,266,033
Immediate notice deposits	1,427,424	1,346,776
Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**2,922,697**	**2,676,142**

Analysis of changes in net debt	**At start of year**	**Cash inflows**	**At end of year**
	£	**£**	**£**
Cash and cash equivalents	2,676,142	(253,445)	2,422,697
CBILS loan falling due within one year	–	182,018	182,018
CBILS loan falling due after one year	–	317,982	317,982
	2,676,142	**246,555**	**2,922,697**

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Solace Women's Aid is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address is 6th floor, 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP.

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

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The presentation currency of the Charity is British Pounds Sterling. The amounts in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound.

c) Key judgements and Assumptions

In the application of the company's accounting policies, 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. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis and actual results may differ from these estimates.

d) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

e) Going concern

The trustees have considered the principal risks of the charity and the potential financial impact of these risks materialising in a range of negative scenarios. The detailed cash flow forecast and the adequacy of cash resources under these negative scenarios have been reviewed by trustees. Based on these detailed scrutiny, the trustees have concluded that there is reasonable expectation that the charity is able to meet its obligations as they fall due for at least 12 months following approval of the financial statements. There are no material uncertainties which may impact on the going concern assumption. Accordingly the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

f) Income

Income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis once 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' grants 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 and is not deferred.

Personal charges from service users are recognised on a receipts basis as this is the most reliable form of measurement.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for performance related or other conditions of income recognition have been met.

g) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised. The trustees' annual report describes thier contributions in more detail.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

h) Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument to meet the requirements of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102. Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, where 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.

i) 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.

i) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are accounted for in accordance with th express or implies wishies of donors in so far as thse are intended to be binding on the charity. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes which are not subject to any special restrictions and are classed as unrestricted within the General fund.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

j) Irrecoverable VAT

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:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services and other charitable activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs

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

k) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure based on costs incurred with the publicity event.

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on transaction activity and staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

l) Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases charges are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

m) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000 or groups of similar assets purchased in bulk exceeds £7,500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Freehold land and buildings are carried at cost.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- Freehold land — Not depreciated
- Freehold buildings — 2% on cost
- Leasehold property — Over the life of the lease
- Office equipment, fixtures and fittings, IT and play area — 25% on cost

n) Debtors

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

o) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

p) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present or constructive 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.

q) Pensions

Solace Women's Aid operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions. It provides a contribution at 3% of annual basic pay for those staff who have joined the scheme. The pension charge recorded in these accounts is the amount of contributions payable in the accounting year.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted	Restricted	**2022 Total £**	2021 Total £
Individuals	373,019	–	**373,019**	445,951
Community fundraising and events	53,503	–	**53,503**	87,333
Corporates	73,058	–	**73,058**	443,916
Trust and Foundations	75,680	–	**75,680**	478,300
Government CJRS grant	4,946	–	**4,946**	31,641
Donation in kind – Government CBILS Loan interest	65,000	–	**65,000**	–
Donated services	90,391	–	**90,391**	88,553
	735,597	**–**	**735,597**	1,575,694

3a Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Provision and Prevention				
Local Boroughs	1,428,339	–	**1,428,339**	1,291,554
Core Rents	1,926,275	–	**1,926,275**	1,854,325
Core rents (second stage)	245,720	–	**245,720**	213,547
Personal Charges	102,520	–	**102,520**	111,862
London Councils (note 3b)	–	249,816	**249,816**	249,816
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government		136,456	**136,456**	56,406
The Masonic Foundation	–	49,500	**49,500**	–
Hollick Foundation	–	3,256	**3,256**	6,707
Southall Black Sisters	–	6,542	**6,542**	–
Other	–	42,173	**42,173**	9,644
The Tudor Capital	–	–	**–**	20,000
Sub-total for Refuge Accommodation	**3,702,854**	**487,743**	**4,190,597**	3,813,861

Prior year income from charitable Refuge Accommodation activities included £3,393,459 attributable to unrestricted activities and £420,402 to restricted activities.

Local Boroughs	5,022,474	–	**5,022,474**	4,135,711
London Councils (note 3b)	–	226,863	**226,863**	226,863
Southall Black Sisters	–	154,664	**154,664**	196,152
The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Fields	–	57,311	**57,311**	–
Bruno Schroder Trust	–	42,978	**42,978**	
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Emigrant Support Programme (this grant restricted to Irish Traveller activities)	–	35,000	**35,000**	35,000
National Lottery Fund (Reaching Communities)	–	32,271	**32,271**	152,611
Trust For London	–	52,296	**52,296**	69,000
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	–	43,850	**43,850**	–
Olwyn Foundation	–	24,595	**24,595**	–
3i Foundation	–	23,333	**23,333**	–
Cripplegate Foundation	–	15,030	**15,030**	31,105
Irish Youth Foundation	–	14,500	**14,500**	16,000
Marion Malcapine	–	10,000	**10,000**	–
City of London	–	8,928	**8,928**	–
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	–	7,359	**7,359**	–
Cloudesley	–		**–**	10,000
Comic Relief	–	–	**–**	42,910
Other	–	17,116	**17,116**	500
Sub-total for Community based advice, advocacy and support	**5,022,474**	**766,094**	**5,788,568**	4,915,852

Prior year income from charitable Community based advice, advocacy and support activities included £4,090,444 attributable to unrestricted activities and £825,408 to restricted activities.

Local Boroughs	–	335,609	**335,609**	283,570
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	–	770,748	**770,748**	574,374
NHSE	–	107,736	**107,736**	132,118
London Councils (note 3b)	–	190,052	**190,052**	190,052
Tri-borough Angelou	–	56,602	**56,602**	68,904
Women and Girls Network	–	151,718	**151,718**	73,841
BBC Children in Need	–	46,010	**46,010**	45,264
3i Foundation	–	20,000	**20,000**	–
Ruth and David Foundation	–	17,143	**17,143**	–
Parliament	–	–	**–**	84,640
Cloudesley	–	15,000	**15,000**	15,000
Sub-total for Therapeutic	**–**	**1,710,618**	**1,710,618**	1,467,763

Prior year income from charitable Therapeutic activities included £43,400 attributable to unrestricted activities and £1,424,363 to restricted activities.

3a Income from charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	–	185,001	**185,001**	142,800
National Lottery Community Fund	–	100,449	**100,449**	139,103
NSPCC	–	121,069	**121,069**	183,118
CYPS	57,349	–	**57,349**	57,349
Women and Girls Network	–	92,124	**92,124**	93,943
Garfield Weston Foundation	–	28,200	**28,200**	16,583
Other		4,299	**4,299**	1,834
Sub-total for Children and Young People	**57,349**	**531,142**	**588,491**	634,730

Prior year income from charitable Children and Young People activities included £242,301 attributable to unrestricted activities and £392,429 to restricted activities.

External training	86,465	–	**86,465**	82,975
Glasspool Charity Trust	–	48,253	**48,253**	–
MOPAC	–	–	**–**	56,482
Respect	–	–	**–**	37,996
Other	20,544	–	**20,544**	6,186
Sub-total for Other services	**107,009**	**48,253**	**155,262**	183,639

Prior year income from charitable Other services included £82,975 attributable to unrestricted activities and £100,664 to restricted activities.

Partnership work				
London Councils (Ascent, note 3b)	–	1,033,846	**1,033,846**	1,044,846
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	–	1,098,110	**1,098,110**	2,141,622
Department of Culture, Media and Digital	–	906,474	**906,474**	224,418
MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	–	–	**–**	149,361
Greater London Authority	121,467		**121,467**	92,395
Wansworth Councils	–	21,623	**21,623**	21,623
St Mungos	–	10,601	**10,601**	
Sub-total for Ascent, CRISIS and other Partnerships	**121,467**	**3,070,654**	**3,192,121**	3,674,265

Prior year income from charitable Partnership activities included arttributable £nil to unrestricted activities and £3,674,504 to restricted activities.

Total income from charitable activities	**9,011,153**	**6,614,504**	**15,625,657**	14,690,110

Total income from charitable activities in 2021 included £7,852,579 attributable to unrestricted activities and £6,837,531 to restricted activities. In prior year 2021 an amount of £350,000 was designated for COVID-19 expenditure in 2021.22, this is reported in note 4 of the financial statements.

3b. Section 37 Statement

* Grand funding of £1,425,238 was received in 2022 (2021 £1,425,238) from London Councils for the Ascent partnership delivering advice, counselling and other work funded under Priority 2 Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence. The table below shows how the funding was allocated across the partnership and that it has been used for the purposes outlined in the funding agreement.

	2022 Grant awarded £	2022 Grant spent £	2021 Grant awarded £	2021 Grant spent £
Ascent Advice and Counselling				
Solace lead partner	463,150	463,150	463,150	463,150
Rights of Women	67,555	67,555	67,555	67,555
Women and Girls Network	296,272	296,272	296,272	296,272
Ashiana Network	81,777	81,777	81,777	81,777
Nia	36,849	25,831	36,849	36,849
IMECE	69,583	69,583	69,583	69,583
IKWRO	76,267	76,267	76,267	76,267
LAWRS	72,861	72,861	72,861	72,861
Jewish Women's Aid	23,674	23,674	23,674	23,674
EACH counselling	90,489	90,489	90,489	90,489
Southall Black Sisters	53,619	53,619	53,619	53,619
RASASC	19,184	19,184	19,184	19,184
Asian Women's Resource Centre	36,979	36,979	36,979	36,979
CIAC	36,979	36,979	36,979	36,979
	1,425,238	**1,414,220**	**1,425,238**	**1,425,238**
Breakdown by expenditure:				
Staff costs	1,205,254	1,199,803	1,205,254	1,220,083
Beneficiary costs	56,221	50,654	56,221	54,558
Other costs	163,763	163,763	163,763	150,597
	1,425,238	**1,414,220**	**1,425,238**	**1,425,238**
Ascent Refuges	286,339	286,339	286,339	286,339
	286,339	**286,339**	**286,339**	**286,339**
TOTAL LONDON COUNCIL FUNDING	**1,711,577**	**1,700,559**	**1,711,577**	**1,711,577**

As per note 3a) for all London Council funding:	2022 £	2021 £
Refuge services	**249,798**	**249,816**
Community advice advocacy and support	**226,863**	**226,863**
Therapeutic	**190,052**	**190,052**
Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership	**1,033,846**	**1,044,846**
	1,700,559	**1,711,577**

4 Analysis of expenditure

		Charitable activities								
		Provision and Prevention					Partnership			
	Cost of raising funds	Refuge accomo-dation	Community advice, advocacy and support	Therapeutic	Children and Young People	Other services (*)	Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships	Support costs	Governance costs	**2022 Total**	2021 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	**£**	£
Staff (Note 6)	62,255	1,896,844	4,422,506	1,390,751	491,186	283,386	430,537	1,300,627	85,846	**10,363,938**	8,907,668
Partnerships	–	91,323	279,722	–	–	–	2,160,448	–	–	**2,531,493**	2,398,804
Children and service users	517	107,000	216,956	25,277	10,577	52,207	351,315	–	–	**763,849**	1,178,702
IT and Facilities	25,929	204,988	249,501	72,552	29,019	50,342	24,033	105,504	17,154	**779,022**	958,033
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	29,149	1,228,656	174,975	82,902	16,699	7,031	9,931	90,885	27,446	**1,667,674**	1,630,598
Professional Fees and Other	84,024	6,150	46,938	2,424	14,031	28,058	91,825	525,986	22,000	**821,436**	518,360
	201,874	3,534,961	5,390,598	1,573,906	561,512	421,024	3,068,089	2,023,002	152,446	16,927,412	15,592,165
Support costs	86,274	624,329	750,471	226,792	76,341	104,975	153,820	(2,023,002)	–	–	–
Governance costs	3,158	38,604	56,997	16,713	5,920	1,150	29,904	–	(152,446)	–	–
Total expenditure 2022	**291,306**	**4,197,894**	**6,198,066**	**1,817,411**	**643,773**	**527,149**	**3,251,813**	–	–	**16,927,412**	**15,592,165**
Total expenditure 2021	627,761	3,770,426	5,139,602	1,492,002	645,578	227,040	3,689,756	–	–	**15,592,165**	

Of the total expenditure, £10,109,851 was unrestricted (2021: £8,273,102) and £6,817,561 was restricted (2021: £7,319,063).
(*) Other services includes prior year designated COVID-19 appeal funds amounting to £350,000 which was expended on staff and other costs relating to the pandemic in 2021/22.

4 Analysis of expenditure (comparative information for prior year)

		Charitable activities								
		Provision and Prevention					Partnership			
	Cost of raising funds (*) £	Refuge accomo-dation £	Community advice, advocacy and support £	Therapeutic £	Children and Young People £	Other services £	Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	**2021 Total £**
Staff (Note 6)	321,872	1,668,257	3,640,403	1,165,330	508,704	120,868	525,959	893,127	63,148	**8,907,668**
Partnerships		84,915	247,654	-	-	-	2,051,235	15,000	-	**2,398,804**
Children and service users	50,364	75,860	221,404	5,208	2,858	3,013	819,332	663	-	**1,178,702**
IT and Facilities	102,995	221,146	283,981	78,838	38,683	39,210	59,491	121,077	12,612	**958,033**
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	21,250	1,187,597	215,201	65,838	12,171	5,243	17,526	85,594	20,178	**1,630,598**
Professional Fees and Other	29,086	41,390	61,115	6,893	17,516	45,392	21,344	280,484	15,140	**518,360**
	525,567	3,279,165	4,669,758	1,322,107	579,932	213,726	3,494,887	1,395,945	111,078	15,592,165
Support costs	98,049	465,401	433,017	159,805	60,736	11,628	167,308	(1,395,945)	-	**-**
Governance costs	4,145	25,860	36,827	10,090	4,910	1,686	27,561	-	(111,078)	**-**
Total expenditure 2021	**627,761**	**3,770,426**	**5,139,602**	**1,492,002**	**645,578**	**227,040**	**3,689,756**	**-**	**-**	**15,592,165**

5 Net (expenditure)/income for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2022	2,021
	£	£
Depreciation	**100,190**	87,714
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	**1,031,292**	875,509
Other	**22,828**	12,470
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit (statutory audit)	**13,115**	12,200
Other services	**1,390**	1,295
Trustee expenses	**75**	–

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2022	2,021
	£	£
Salaries and wages	**7,899,261**	6,822,622
Social security costs	**735,849**	602,996
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**223,406**	177,871
Redundancy and termination payments	**73,376**	–
Staff training, supervision, travel and volunteer costs	**250,005**	204,836
Sessional counsellors and self employed	**559,980**	452,070
Agency & locum staff	**594,098**	568,072
Other forms of employee benefits	**27,963**	79,201
	10,363,938	8,907,668

Staff costs above have been allocated to expenditure as follows:

	2022	2,021
	£	£
Cost of raising funds	**62,255**	321,872
Refuge accommodation	**1,896,844**	1,668,257
Community advice, advocacy and support	**4,422,506**	3,640,403
Therapeutic	**1,390,751**	1,165,330
Children and Young People	**491,186**	508,704
Other services	**283,386**	120,868
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	**430,537**	525,959
Support and governance	**1,386,473**	956,275
	10,363,938	8,907,668

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) during the year between:

	2022	2,021
	No.	No.
£60,000 – £69,999	**1**	2
£70,000 – £79,999	**2**	1
£80,000 – £89,999	**1**	1
£90,000 – £99,999	**–**	–
£100,000 – £109,999	**–**	–

The total employee benefits paid to the key management personnel (Chief Executive Officer, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Services and Director of Business Development) were £381,471 (2021: £334,492). Employee benefits included employer pension contributions, on call payments and employer NI. It also included termination and redundancy payments of £46,658 paid to key managment personnel.

No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2021: £nil). Reimbursement of travel expenses to trustees in 2022 was £75 (2021: Nil).

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2022 No.	2,021 No.
Cost of raising funds	**2.0**	2.5
Refuge accommodation	**60.7**	56.7
Community advice, advocacy and support	**136.2**	128.9
Therapeutic	**35.5**	34.4
Children and Young People	**16.1**	16.2
Other services	**2.0**	2.0
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	**8.6**	3.0
Support and governance	**36.5**	21.8
	297.6	265.5

8 Related party transactions

Total donations from 2 trustees were £658 (2021: £1,300).
Related party transactions during the year related to pro bono professional services valued at nil (2021: £2,500)

9 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold property	Play area	Fixtures and fittings	Computer equipment	**Total**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Cost or valuation					
At the start of the year	961,662	51,908	236,013	273,210	**1,522,793**
Additions in year	–	–	20,930	41,850	**62,780**
At the end of the year	961,662	51,908	256,943	315,060	**1,585,573**
Depreciation					
At the start of the year	159,685	51,908	185,527	175,001	**572,121**
Charge for the year	11,383	–	21,477	67,330	**100,190**
At the end of the year	171,068	51,908	207,004	242,331	**672,311**
Net book value					
At the end of the year	**790,594**	**–**	**49,939**	**72,729**	**913,262**
At the start of the year	801,977	–	50,486	98,209	950,672

Land with a value of £480,831 (2021: £480,831) is included within freehold property and not depreciated.

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

11 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Amounts due from Local Authorities and government agencies	**1,276,622**	1,211,372
Other debtors	**78,709**	79,256
Prepayments	**95,896**	128,734
Accrued income	**594,201**	676,099
	2,045,428	2,095,461

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	**834,570**	747,786
Taxation and social security	**275,249**	253,847
Other creditors	**94,199**	41,970
Provision	**105,000**	105,000
Funds held on behalf of clients	**21,174**	43,936
CBILS Loan payable	**182,018**	–
Accruals	**638,896**	782,387
Deferred income – see 12a below	**1,309,558**	1,078,618
	3,460,664	3,053,544

12a Deferred income

Deferred income comprises income received in advance on contracts and projects which are delivered in the following year.

	2022	2021
	£	£
Balance at the beginning of the year	**1,078,618**	435,730
Amount released to income in the year	**(1,078,618)**	(435,730)
Amount deferred in the year	**1,309,558**	1,078,618
Balance at the end of the year	**1,309,558**	1,078,618

13 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
CBILS Loan payable	**317,982**	–

13a Loans payable

Loans payable includes £500,000 relating to the government backed Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, which carries interest at 6.5% and a final Scheme payable to Social Investment Business FM Limited (SIB).
Interest is charged at 6.5% and monthly capital and interest payments commenced in July 2022.
The government paid interest of £45,000 and an arrangement fee of £20,000 to SIB on behalf of Solace, this has been recognised as a donation in kind in note 2 of the financial statements.

	2022	2021
	£	£
Capital repayments are due as follows:		
– up to one year (see note 12)	182,018	–
– two to five years (see note 13)	317,982	–
Balance at the end of the year	**500,000**	–

The loan is secured with a debenture charge over the charity's assets in favour of SIB.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	**Total funds**
	£	£	£	**£**
Tangible fixed assets	–	913,262	–	**913,262**
Net current assets	1,507,461	–	–	**1,507,461**
Non current liabilities	(317,982)	–	–	**(317,982)**
Net assets at the end of the year	**1,189,479**	**913,262**	**–**	**2,102,741**

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	**Total funds**
	£	£	£	**£**
Tangible fixed assets	–	950,672	–	**950,672**
Net current assets	1,368,059	350,000	–	**1,718,059**
Net assets at the end of the year	**1,368,059**	**1,300,672**	**–**	**2,668,731**

15 Movements in funds (current year)

	At the start of the year	Income & gains	Expenditure & losses	Transfers	At the end of the year
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds:					
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	–	487,743	(542,599)	54,856	–
Community advice, advocacy & support	–	766,094	(756,677)	(9,417)	–
Therapeutic	–	1,710,618	(1,800,380)	89,762	–
Children and Young People	–	531,142	(580,395)	49,253	–
Other services	–	48,253	(48,253)	–	–
Partnership work					
Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership	–	3,070,654	(3,089,257)	18,603	–
Total restricted funds	–	6,614,504	(6,817,561)	203,057	–
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	950,672	–	(100,190)	62,780	**913,262**
COVID-19 appeal	350,000	–	(350,000)	–	–
Total designated funds	**1,300,672**	–	**(450,190)**	**62,780**	**913,262**
General funds	1,368,059	9,746,918	(9,659,661)	(265,837)	1,189,479
Total unrestricted funds	**2,668,731**	**9,746,918**	**(10,109,851)**	**(203,057)**	**2,102,741**
Total funds	**2,668,731**	**16,361,422**	**(16,927,412)**	–	**2,102,741**

15a Movements in funds (prior year)

	At the start of the year	Income & gains	Expenditure & losses	Transfers	At the end of the year
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds:					
Voluntary income	–	339,723	(376,000)	36,277	–
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	–	420,402	(428,440)	8,038	–
Community advice, advocacy & support	–	825,408	(881,253)	55,845	–
Therapeutic	–	1,424,363	(1,439,674)	15,311	–
Children and Young People	–	392,429	(399,743)	7,314	–
Other services	–	100,664	(113,533)	12,869	–
Partnership work					
Ascent Advice and Counselling	–	3,674,265	(3,680,420)	6,155	–
Total restricted funds	–	**7,177,254**	**(7,319,063)**	**141,809**	–
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	995,643	–	(87,714)	42,743	**950,672**
COVID-19 appeal	–	–	–	350,000	**350,000**
Staff Contingency	20,000	–	(20,000)	–	–
Building Emergency Repairs	5,000	–	(5,000)	–	–
Strategic initiatives	10,000	–	(10,000)	–	–
Total designated funds	**1,030,643**	–	**(122,714)**	**392,743**	**1,300,672**
General funds	**964,449**	**9,088,550**	**(8,150,388)**	**(534,552)**	**1,368,059**
Total unrestricted funds	**1,995,092**	**9,088,550**	**(8,273,102)**	**(141,809)**	**2,668,731**
Total funds	**1,995,092**	**16,265,804**	**(15,592,165)**	–	**2,668,731**

Purposes of restricted funds

Refuge services: This fund is dedicated to help the women and children staying in our refuges. Restriced funding were received from London Councils for the complex needs refuge in Camden, MHCLG for Family Support and Resettlement workers across our London boroughs and The Masonic Foundation towards a family support worker in Bexley.

Community advice, advocacy and support: This fund is for the advice, advocacy and outreach work to survivors of domestic violence. London Councils funded our Ascent Advice hub. Other funders include Southall Black Sisters for women with no recourse to public funds , Leonie Schroder for a specialist programme, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Programme for the Irish and Irish Traveller communities, Cripplegate for the Women Resilience and Awareness project, Trust for London towards the Immigration advice lawyer and National Lottery Community Fund for the Silver project helping those over 55.

The Emigrant Support Programme included 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 which was deferred from 2020/21 and utilised in 2021/22. 9 months of the grant income received in 2021/22 was utilised in the period to 31 March 2022 and 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 has been deferred to the 2022/23 financial year and will be utilised by 30th June 2022.

15 Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

Therapeutic: The counselling service is free to residents and service users of the organisation and is accessed through Ascent counselling and the North London Rape Crisis services. The funders are London Councils, MOPAC, Tri-borough Angelou, Women and Girls Network and the Ministry of Justice and more recently Richard Cloudesley.

Children and Young People (CYP): The BBC CIN funded various Art Therapies programmes and City Bridge Trust part funded the role of the manager that oversees all our Children and Young people programmes. MOPAC funded our work delivered to youths in hospitals with Redthread. In October 2016, the Women and Young Girls project 'Hear to Change' was launched which runs workshops and various support activities for women and young girls in London, this project is a five year project with funding from Big Lottery. Garfield Weston Foundation commenced support for a CYP worker this year.

Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership: This fund was for the provision of Violence against Women and Girls services delivered through the partners outlined in Note 3b (S37 statement). London Councils awarded more than one milliion pounds for the management and delivery of the partnership strand.

Transfers of £203, 057 from unrestricted funds, in addition to restricted funding received from funders, were needed to support delivery of charitable restricted activities.

Purposes of designated funds

Capital: This fund represents the net book value of all tangible fixed assets.

COVID-19 Appeal: This is to cover additional staff and related expenditure relating to the impact on COVID-19 and has been fully utilised during 2021/22. It is reported within Other Services activities in note 4 of the financial statements.

16 Reconciliation of net (expenditure) / income to net cash flows (used in) / provided by operating activities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Net (expenditure) / income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	**(565,990)**	673,639
Interest received	**(168)**	-
Depreciation charges	**100,190**	87,714
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	**50,033**	(499,645)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**225,102**	1,414,511
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	**(190,833)**	1,676,219

17 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Property		Equipment	
	2022	2021	**2022**	2021
	£	£	**£**	£
Up to one year	**775,122**	788,655	**15,214**	15,479
Two to five years	**1,125**	66,379	**45,396**	39,429
	776,247	855,034	**60,610**	54,908

18 Capital commitments

Capital commitments as at year end was £Nil (2021: £22,950).

19 Contingent liability

At the balance sheet date, the charity was in discussions with one of its funders relating to the planned exit at one of our services. As at the date of the approval of these financial statements, the terms and conditions of the planned exit were ongoing and yet to be finalised. As such, the trustees were unable to reliably measure the associated costs and therefore a provision has not been made within the year to 31 March 2022.

19 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.

SOLACE WOMEN'S AID

England & Wales - Charity number 1082450

Accounts

Company number: 3376716
Charity number: 1082450

Annual Report and Financial Statements

31 March 2021

"I felt trapped during lockdown and thought I would not make it through. Solace helped me and my child survive and stay safe. They have given me a place to recover, nappies, medicines and clothes for my child, but most of all they have given me counselling and peace of mind for the first time in years." Solace service user

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SOLACE AT A GLANCE

For the year ended 31 March 2021, Solace Women's Aid's (Solace) life-changing services touched the lives of 23,461 survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

The pandemic had a huge impact on our services and our Advice Helpline saw an increase of 26% calls from the previous year. During the year, we continued to maintain all our essential refuge accommodation, community support advocacy and advice including specialist and therapeutic counselling services and delivered new crisis emergency accommodation projects.

We continued to adapt our services and introduced new ways of working and have been able to deliver workshops with children and young people and therapeutic services since late last year. Some services and prevention work with children and young people were impacted as schools and venues were closed for long periods last year.

We responded to the Covid-19 crisis together with our network of partners and delivered an emergency accommodation project in partnership with Southall Black Sisters which was a life line throughout lockdown supporting 192 women, including 64 women with no recourse to public funds. The project has continued beyond the year end due to the ongoing nature of the crisis.

Our provision to women with specialist needs and multiple disadvantaged backgrounds continued to grow and we extended our reach with Housing First projects in Westminster and the WISER project in eight boroughs in London.

We extended our partnership networks to include other women sector organisations in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland and mobilised a new project to support women in November 2020, The Labyrinth project's aim is to join up women's centred outcomes across women's centres, children's centres and older women's spaces, providing holistic support to women to untangle the complexities within their lives and at time of crisis.

Solace received additional funding from statutory funders and the public in response to the pandemic. Our income grew by 40% and unrestricted voluntary income raised during the emergency appeal has enabled the charity to maintain its financial sustainability during this incredibly challenging period. Our staff team grew by 15% and our volunteers contributed 3,961 of hours; together they made all the difference to help us provide our life-saving services.

We increased the awareness of our services to the public and reached out to more women and supporters: with over half a million unique website page views, with our 12,666 followers on twitter alone reaching over 11 million people, with Facebook reaching 81,000, with 146,000 on LinkedIn and Instagram gaining over 5,000 followers.

STRATEGIC REPORT

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. The reference and administrative information set out on page 23 forms part of this report.

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of Solace each year. This report looks at what Solace has achieved and the outcomes and benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people Solace is established to assist during the reporting period. The review also helps ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

Key Objectives

The purpose of Solace is 'the promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological well-being and safety of victims of domestic, sexual and associated abuse, in particular women, young people and children.'

Vision and mission

Solace's vision is of a world where women and children live their lives free from all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

Solace exists to bring to an end to the harm done through Violence Against Women and Girls. Our aim is to work to prevent violence and abuse as well as providing services to meet the needs of survivors particularly women and girls. Our work is holistic and empowering, working alongside survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse.

Public benefit

The trustees have referred to the guidance provided by the Charity Commission regarding public benefit, including its guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity (PB2), when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In setting the annual plan each year, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives of the charity.

Beneficiaries of our services

Solace's main beneficiaries are women, young people and children as outlined in our aims, vision and mission. A small number of beneficiaries are men who access our community support services.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Solace is committed as an organisation to living our values on equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work and service provision. Solace understands its responsibilities for everyone to feel supported and live our values of intersectionality and inclusion at all levels.

During the last year, we reflected as an organisation on the Black Lives Matter movement for racial justice and have created an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan together with employees, volunteers and trustees. This plan is a living document and we have determined it shall be the driver of all that we do to meet the challenges of inequality still evident in society and in workplaces and stand up against all forms of oppression.

Solace recognises the need to make ongoing improvements to ensure we have a culture where all employees, volunteers and trustees feel they can be heard, treated fairly and have a sense of belonging to the charity.

We are committed to ensuring that our beneficiaries who access our services experience the same values that we uphold within the charity. All frontline services have monitoring mechanisms including an annual survey to seek feedback from our beneficiaries on our values which informs our overall actions plans.

Our newly appointed Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will play a pivotal role in continuing our journey and engagement with all stakeholders and further embed a culture which fully embraces equality, diversity and inclusion with Solace.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Overview

Our work has a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the women and children we work with, which is frequently expressed by them as 'life saving'.

Solace's Strategic Plan for 2016-2021 focused on the three key aims of provision, prevention and partnership working to support survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

We measure our success annually via our service user survey, exit questionnaires and analysis of the impact of our services through outcomes achieved with our service users. Successful outcomes are demonstrated through increased autonomy, independence and capability, better mental health and self-care, and better parenting and relationships with children.

Solace aims to achieve at least 85% satisfaction levels and our 2020/21 results demonstrates a good outcome.

93% rated there was a continued need for Solace services **(2020: n/a)**
88% rated the service met or exceeded their expectation **(2020: n/a)**
88% rated the service as good or excellent **(2020: 91%)**
73% reported that their service helped them feel more confident **(2020: 80%)**

Our work is also evaluated in accordance to agreed quality frameworks which are monitored through regular reviews with staff, the senior management team, trustees and funders. We received the ISO 9001 accreditation, renewed our SafeLives Leading Lights accreditation and achieved the Advice Quality Mark.

Charitable activities and outcomes

For the year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, Solace supported 15,798 woman and children through a range of services including refuge, advocacy, casework, therapeutic groups and holistic support. Some of the women and children we help use just one of Solace's services, while many seek holistic support by accessing multiple initiatives.

A total of 14,984 adult service users and 814 child service users accessed our provision services. Overall, this is a 6% decrease to the 16,087 supported in the last financial year due to the added complexities of operating during the pandemic and remote working.

The Advice Helpline provided support through a further 3,633 calls in 2020/21, an increase of 26% from the previous year, whilst the Rape Crisis Helpline and therapeutic services saw a decrease due to cancelations for face to face counselling which could not be substituted with virtual counselling. We have responded to these challenges and continue to adapt our working model to achieve higher outcomes.

This year, Solace has supported 550 people with no recourse to public funds in refuge, advocacy services, North London Rape Crisis and counselling services. Solace supported 134 male survivors in 2020/21, a 43% increase from the previous year. 60 survivors were supported in multiple disadvantage projects.

Our prevention work was also at the forefront this financial year with 7,663 individuals educated on various strands of VAWG and its impact, as well as best practices for responding to survivors. This is a decrease of

32% from last year and reflects the impact of Covid-19 and national lockdowns on the prevention services as schools were unable to equip for workshops and training as they would have prior to the pandemic.

SERVICE DELIVERY	2020/21	2019/20
PROVISION		
Refuge Accommodation	**1,087**	920
Community Based Advice, Advocacy and Support	**12,364**	11,220
Therapeutic	**1,988**	2,991
Children and Young People	**359**	956
Total provision	**15,798**	**16,087**
PREVENTION		
Children and Young People Preventive Group Work and Community Projects	**4,284**	7,461
Professional and External Training	**3,338**	3,723
Perpetrator Programmes	**41**	143
Total prevention	**7,663**	**11,327**
TOTAL	**23,461**	**27,414**

PROVISION

Refuge and specialist accommodation-based services

We manage twenty-two refuges offering 178 rooms across seven London boroughs for women and children fleeing abuse who need a safe place to stay in a crisis in order to recover from their trauma and rebuild independent lives. Our specialist multiple disadvantage refuge in Camden offers 24-hour support to women with mental health needs and problematic substance use. We operate a specialist accommodation hub in Southwark for women with multiple disadvantages and special needs leaving prison or at risk of street homelessness.

We provide second stage dispersed accommodation and specialist support services across two projects with a total number of 19 flats: The Amari Project provides second stage accommodation for women who have been sexually exploited through prostitution or trafficking and the Rhea project provides immediate temporary, crisis emergency accommodation for women and children in Southwark.

Last year, we launched a Housing First Project in Islington in partnership with Fulfilling Lives in Islington and Camden (FLIC) to support women with multiple disadvantages. Solace Housing First is the first project of its kind to be run by a specialist VAWG provider whereby we provide the specialist support to this group of women and FLIC allocates and manages the flats. Since August 2019, we have also been running a Housing First Project in Westminster, funded by Westminster Council.

Refuge accommodation outcomes

- 54% were resettled through support.
- 71% of service users felt an overall improvement to their wellbeing after accessing refuge.
- 34% accessed treatment support for physical health, 24% for mental health.
- 59% felt more confident since entering refuge.
- 57% felt safer since accessing refuge.
- 63% had improved positive coping strategies and have seen a reduction in trauma and anxiety.
- 37% had increased access to benefit entitlements.
- 4.8 months is the average case length throughout refuge services.

Community based advice, advocacy and support

Advice

Solace's dedicated London Advice confidential line provides a first point of call for survivors and is available five days a week including one evening. The Advice team take calls from individuals and agencies across London who are concerned about domestic and/or sexual abuse and provide immediate advice and short-term support on safety planning, legal rights and options, housing advice, financial concerns, immigration issues, safeguarding and mental health issues. The team are able to refer to specialist services as necessary. The team also manage one of the two advice hubs in London within the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership of 14 organisations, which Solace leads.

Immigration Advice Service

Our Immigration service is an important part of our Advice Service and last year supported some of the most vulnerable women in London. All the women were supported with complex, insecure immigration status, and No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). We work with women who are eligible to make applications under the Domestic Violence rule, under their human rights and EU regulations. We work with migrant women and EEA Nationals with NRPFs who have experienced domestic abuse and sexual violence, including; women exiting prostitution, sexually exploited and trafficked women, women who are at risk of homelessness or are homeless and women needing refuge accommodation and other community advocacy services.

Women who do not have the right to reside and work in the UK are much more vulnerable to be subject to continued exploitation and violence and are often frightened to seek support due to the risk of deportation. There is a gap in the provision of immigration legal advice for migrant women who have experienced VAWG from a qualified solicitor; and extremely difficult for women to find immigration solicitors who offer Legal Aid. Our Immigration Solicitor provides representation for particularly complex cases at Tribunals and the High Court and so our free service is an absolute lifeline for women in highly dangerous and vulnerable circumstances.

Advocacy and Support

Our Advocacy and Support teams offer support to those affected by domestic and sexual violence in their community. Our teams supply information, advocacy and specialist services to increase service users' safety and meet a range of needs – these can include ongoing safety concerns, emotional or housing support, reporting to the police, legal options and support through court, help around child contact, benefits and financial advice. As well as providing direct assistance, we also work to build capacity and develop expertise amongst professionals and agencies.

We engage with professionals and community groups through a range of programmes, examples include:

- The Silver project supports women over 55 who have experienced domestic and/or sexual abuse offering intensive support and advocacy;

- The Irish Traveller project provides a specialist outreach and resettlement service to Irish women, Irish Traveller women and their children delivered in conjunction with our partner, the Irish Traveller Movement;
- The Women in Safe Engagement and Recovery (WiSER) project targets women who find it very hard to access/engage with support and who are facing severe and multiple disadvantage, delivered in partnership with Against Violence and Abuse (AVA), Fulfilling Lives Islington and Camden (FLIC), Hopscotch, IMECE Women's Centre, nia and Women at the Well using assertive outreach in a trauma and psychologically informed way;
- The Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) programme, a GP based domestic violence training, support and referral programme for primary care staff;
- Our Women's Resilience Awareness Project (WRAP) delivers a variety of courses and groups in Islington, Enfield and Southwark that aim to increase resilience and wellbeing for women with children who have experienced domestic and/or sexual abuse; and
- Southwark's Sanctuary Scheme is designed to prevent someone affected by domestic violence from becoming homeless through the provision of security works to a home, ranging from changing locks to the installation of an internal 'safe room'.

In addition, we worked with statutory partners on an innovation project to further develop our response to Domestic Violence perpetrators in Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark, working with high risk and repeat offenders to bring about a change in behaviour in order to keep women and children safer.

Community based advice, advocacy and support outcomes

Advice, Advocacy and specialist services

- 7% of service users had the perpetrator removed from the property.
- 12% had security improvements made to property.
- 92% of DDVC (destitution of domestic violence concession) applications made were successful.
- Of those who accessed treatment support for Sexual Health, 97% were better able to manage it.
- 3.7 months is the average case length throughout all community services, a decrease from 6 months last year.

Multiple Disadvantage services

- 59% had accessed various health services and were better able to manage.
- 10.6 months is the average case length.

Therapeutic Services

Our therapeutic services implement a person-centred approach, which is trauma informed and strength based practice and supports the service user to make choices for themselves. It ensures the full recognition of intersectionality and life experience and works within an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive framework. The service support women who have experienced domestic abuse and all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) with a view to provide support in the following areas:

- Address physical and emotional safety;
- Increase awareness of abusive dynamics in relationships – vicious circus of abuse;
- Increase confidence, resilience and a greater sense of wellbeing;
- Manage post-traumatic stress and support the client in their recovery journey; and

- Empower survivors to explore options and choices.

Counselling

The Solace Counselling team offers one-to-one counselling sessions to women, creating a safe space for them to explore the impact of violence on their lives. Experienced counsellors work with women to help them recover from the long term impact of emotional and physical abuse. Our counselling services are delivered as part of the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership as well as through separate contracts with Southwark, Waltham Forest and Islington.

Ascent Counselling Service: Offers one-to-one counselling to victims/survivors of domestic abuse and all forms of VAWG. The service covers one assessment and up to 15 counselling sessions. We also offer 6 sessions of pre-trial therapy. Solace offers this service in 11 London Boroughs (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Havering, Islington, Lambeth, Newham and Southwark).

Ascent Moving Forward: The Moving Forward Group is an 8-week educational programme for women aged 16+ who have experienced any form of domestic and/or sexual violence. These groups provide some first steps on the road to recovery from domestic and/or sexual abuse.
A safe space to talk, listen and be heard, while gaining emotional support. It gives women the opportunity to share experiences and information and explore and understand the impact of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse and the support to regain power and make positive choices. We provided 264 group sessions during the year.

Rape Crisis

The Gateway is a partnership between the four London Rape Crisis Centres (including North London Rape Crisis run by Solace), Galop, SurvivorsUK and the Havens, and is led by the Women and Girls' Network. Solace provide specialist complex needs: with our Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) supporting women with multiple and complex needs.

Our North London Rape Crisis team work with women and girls over the age of 13 who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any point in their lives. This includes child sexual abuse, recent and non-recent rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, women involved in prostitution, trafficking and female genital mutilation. North London Rape Crisis is part of the Pan-London Rape Crisis and Gateway service for survivors of Rape and Sexual Abuse working to ensure access to support is easily available across London.

The Rape Crisis service runs a free and anonymous helpline open daily to offer support as well as a regular caller service. The helpline provides specialist emotional support and confidential information about options and services available. The Rape Crisis Service co-locates ISVAs with partners including police and children's centres across Enfield, Haringey, Barnet, Islington, Camden, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea.

Specialist advocates, counsellors, group therapists and helpline workers provide non-directive emotional and practical support and information to help women understand the impact of abuse, recover from the trauma they have experienced, and if a woman chooses, dedicated support through the Criminal Justice System from report to court and afterwards. They also provide support and advice for the friends and family of survivors, as well as professionals working alongside them.

Holistic therapies

We run a variety of groups, well-being classes, as well as one-to-one body therapies to help survivors' recovery from trauma. Our group work includes: Trauma Informed Yoga, Tension and Trauma Releasing Exercises, Lesbian and Bisexual Group, Creative Group, Psychoeducational Group, Quarterly Women's Group.

Our work with children and young people, from the age of 4 to 18, has trained art and drama therapists, who use art, drama and play to help explore their feelings around the violence they have experienced, understand

that they are not to blame and rebuild vital relationships with their mother, carer, peers and siblings. 100% of children and young people expressed that using creative mediums was most helpful and the most enjoyable part of the therapy process which facilitated them processing and expressing feelings and memories that were hard to talk about.

Therapeutic Services outcomes

Ascent Counselling

- 95% felt an increase in wellbeing after counselling.
- 89% felt an increase in motivation after counselling.
- 87% felt an increase in self-esteem after counselling.
- 87% are more aware of their rights and are able to make clearer choices with their future.
- 84% felt an increase in confidence after counselling.

North London Rape Crisis

- 84% felt an increase in emotional and mental wellbeing.
- 84% had an increased understanding of survivors' rights ad choices.

PREVENTION

Children and Young People

Our Children and Young People's (CYP) team deliver a range of services for families and young people living in the community. Such prevention work is a key strand in Solace's medium to long term strategy.

The POW Project

The 'Protect Our Women' project is a community-based programme for young people in primary and secondary schools aged 10-25 years in Haringey. Young people in schools and youth clubs complete 10 AQA accredited workshops on the topic of Violence against Women and Girls. The programme engages young people in creative ways with a Champions programme supporting young people to take learning back into their communities.

Hear2Change (Women and Girls Initiative)

Funded by the Big Lottery, the Hear2Change project works with young people in schools and community settings across Haringey and Islington with the aim of changing attitudes to Violence Against Women and Girls.

The project is led by a steering group of young women who meet regularly to decide on project priorities. The project also provides support to young people through workshops, assemblies and one-to- one advocacy work for those who have experienced, or are at risk of, violence and abuse.

Young Change Makers

On the back of the invaluable work with the steering group, a Young Change Maker group of Young People has been set up to raise awareness of VAWG through empowering young people to present their experiences and ensure their voices are heard. This aims to equip young people with specific skills and introduce them to useful strategies (whilst building their confidence and knowledge) in order to design and deliver campaigns of their own. These will be presented in a variety of mediums of their choice (art, drama, music, photography, poetry) and a range of audiences and venues (schools, libraries, community facilities).

Major Trauma Centre - in partnership with Redthread Youth Violence Intervention Programme

Solace, commissioned by The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), has teamed up with Redthread, a London-based youth violence charity, to allocate Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) in London's four major trauma centres. Our IDVAs provide specialist support for young people aged 11 – 25 who are admitted into hospital due to domestic and/or sexual violence and abuse.

Lighthouse

We are part of the first innovative Child House pilots in the UK, bringing together statutory and voluntary sector partners to address Child Sexual Abuse. The Lighthouse is the UK's first Child House, a service where children are put at the centre and given the support they need to recover and rebuild their lives. Specially trained medical, advocacy, social care, police, and therapeutic support is delivered from one place, working together to provide a coordinated approach to supporting children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse. The project is led by University College Hospital and NSPCC with Solace providing a vital role in the Advocacy team.

CouRAGEus

We have joined together with a number of partner organisations (led by Women and Girls Network) to support BAME children and young people Pan London. Solace provides a CYP counsellor, a multi-disadvantage advocate and a community engagement worker to provide support and therapy for CYP experiencing various forms of VAWG as well as raising the profile of VAWG with children and young people.

Children and Young People outcomes

- Helped and supported 359 children and young people in our community services, helping to build their resilience and dealing with the impact of domestic violence.
- Preventive strategies included workshops, talks and seminars with groups of young people in schools impacting 4,284 lives.

Working with perpetrators

Solace Domestic Violence Prevention Programme (SDVPP) is for men who have had a history of being violent or abusive towards a partner and want support to change this behaviour. The main objective of the programme is to increase safety for victims and children.

This is delivered in conjunction with our advocacy work in Southwark and outcomes included above in that section.

Training

We increased delivery of our training and learning programmes to an even wider audience and transferring our courses, webinars and policy consultancy work to online platforms finding exciting new ways to teach and raise awareness.

It has allowed us to be totally flexible in what material we produce and has taught us that there are many ways in which we can deliver it – webinars, Q&As, interactive training. Additionally, anyone can now join from anywhere in the country allowing us to have an even wider impact.

Training outcomes

- We have trained 2,659 learners during the year.
- We supported another 26 new workplace champions in completing our 3-day training programme.
- We now have 30 unique training packages available.

PARTNERSHIP WORK

Solace works in partnership with 42 other organisations in London as part of the London Violence Against Women and Girls' consortium and working in partnership is central to our approach to provide a comprehensive range of specialist support to meet the needs of women and children. We are an active member of the London VAWG Consortium and The Rights of Women legal advice, training and legal guides have provided an essential resource to our service users and professionals at a time when access to Legal Aid is severely diminished. We are also now in partnership with our Labyrinth sister organisations and partnerships including The Traveller Movement and The Connection at St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

The Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership

Solace leads the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership which has gone from strength to strength over the last eight years. We are continuing to deliver vital, high quality, specialist, advice, counselling, legal and NRPF services to women and girls affected by all forms of VAWG across the whole of London. This is the largest partnership delivering specialist VAWG services across London.

The 14 partners have worked well together through a hub and spoke model to aid thousands of women and girls in their safety, recovery and journey to independence. The services provided under this strand have enabled our service users to access therapeutic support and longer term group work, as well as advice, in recognition of the fact that each survivor recovers at their own pace and require access to specialist services led by and for women and BME specialists to aid their recovery.

Details of partners in the Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership are outlined in Note 3b of the Accounts.

The Ascent Advice & Counselling (A&C) Partnership outcomes

Our Social Impact Analysis identified that the Ascent A&C partnership created £6 of social value for every £1 spent on its services.

Over the eight years of the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership we have achieved great success, working with over 70,000 new users, achieving a huge range of positive outcomes such as advice and support in obtaining secure immigration status, positive living situation, improved health and well-being, increased safety and reduced risk for service users across London. We have worked in partnership with stakeholders to identify and respond to unmet needs and to provide vital, and often life-saving services to women and girls.

The services provided under this strand have enabled service users to access therapeutic support, bespoke group work, specialist advice and support; in recognition of the fact that each survivor recovers at their own pace and require access to specialist services led by and for those groups, to aid women's recovery.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the work of the Ascent A&C partnership, with all services being provided remotely during this period. Partners made this transition smoothly, ensuring that women and girls were able to access continuous support despite government restrictions. The work carried out by the strand has changed in response to women's needs. Women have presented to the project with higher levels of risk and need than prior to the pandemic. Mental health needs have become more acute, and women are requiring more intensive and longer support. Survivors have required support to access basic necessities, such as food parcels, and more stabilisation before being able to engage in trauma-work through counselling.

Despite these challenges, survivor satisfaction has remained extremely high, averaging 98% in the year 2020/21, reflecting the support offered by the partnership. During 2020/21, the partnership:

- supported 7,484 service users to access advice, advocacy, and casework support;
- delivered 14,358 individual counselling sessions, supporting women's self-esteem, confidence, and wellbeing, and enabling them to move towards independence;
- delivered 531 groupwork sessions; and
- supported 19 women with no recourse to public funds by providing them with accommodation and living expenses.

This service delivery enabled the achievement of the following outcomes:

- 3,985 service users reported reduced fear and/or greater feelings of safety;
- 2,509 women had improved self-esteem, motivation, and confidence to rebuild their lives; and
- 1,904 service users reported improve emotional health and wellbeing and physical health, are felt able to rebuild their lives.

Ascent Advice Plus provided a valuable increase in capacity, particularly in the partnership hubs, which helped to meet increases in demand following the easing of government restrictions. Capacity was also increased across the advice partners and hubs for 9 months through Covid-19 emergency funding from the Ministry of Justice, which also provided funding to support changes to IT infrastructure.

During 2020/21, Ascent Advice Plus enabled the partnership to:

- reach an additional 4,250 new service users;
- answer an additional 2,987 calls to the advice lines and 534 calls to the legal line; and
- provide casework support to an extra 797 service users, including over 12 weeks of support to 384 service users.

Specialist resettlement support is provided throughout the tenancy and beyond, to longer-term secure accommodation. The referral and allocations process is supported by the Clearing House, run by St. Mungo's. In 2020/21 20 women have been supported by the project and our specialist partners with a 100% tenancy sustainment rate.

The Emergency Accommodation Project

In May 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, Solace and Southall Black Sisters launched a Crisis Project which offers safe emergency accommodation with specialist support to women and children fleeing domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), across London during the Covid-19 pandemic. The project was supported by Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust.

The project is coordinated by Solace with support for women with no recourse to public funds provided by partners Southall Black Sisters. The project provides women with crisis accommodation for three months to enable them to flee domestic abuse/ VAWG during the Covid-19 pandemic and has supported 192 women including 64 women with no recourse to public funds. During their time at the project women are offered therapeutic support, assistance from specialist refuge workers and resettlement support.

The Emergency Accommodation Project outcomes

This service delivery enabled the achievement of the following outcomes:

- supported 192 women, including 64 women with no recourse to public funds during lockdown; and

- the project has been extended into the coming year due to the ongoing nature of the pandemic.

Labyrinth

We were awarded £1,614,288 by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) through the Tampon Tax Fund in November 2020 which will fund the Labyrinth project up to September 2022. We are thrilled to be working with women's organisations across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Labyrinth project was designed as a national response to support women's centres, women's groups and networks to help them, and the women they support, to emerge stronger from the damage that the Covid-19 pandemic is having on women's lives. The Labyrinth project aims to help women get to an empowered position – or the centre – through providing holistic wide-ranging support. The project is needs led and service user focused, placing women at the centre of their own interventions.

Labyrinth outcomes

- The project was mobilised and developed partnership networks during the financial year; and it incorporates a Grant scheme, The Empowering Women Fund, and has created a Centre of Excellence.

CASA

Solace has continued to lead the Casa Project with resettlement support provided by Ashiana Network, EACH Counselling and Support, IKWRO Women's Rights Organisation, Latin American Women's Aid and The nia Project. It is a partnership within the London Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Consortium which enables women to move-on from refuges to high quality, self-contained accommodation with affordable rents, for up to 2 years.

CASA outcomes

- The project was supported more than 20 women during the year.

Other

Solace is a member of National Women's Aid and Rape Crisis England and Wales which are both national federations leading on policy change and campaigns to meet the needs of women and children experiencing domestic and sexual abuse. We are members of Domestic and Sexual Violence Forums across London boroughs and attend MARACs (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) across a number of boroughs and work closely with local services and stakeholders.

We work in partnership with Jewish Women's Aid to deliver advocacy and support services in Barnet. Refuge accommodation is provided through leasing agreements with Housing Associations and other partnerships; we have a partnership with Barnet Homes Ltd in Barnet to provide refuge services to women and with Asha in Lambeth to provide refuge accommodation for South Asian women. We have continued to build on our relationship with Commonweal Housing through the Amari and Rhea Projects.

Solace is the lead for the WiSER project for women with multiple disadvantages and partners Against Violence and Abuse (AVA), Fulfilling Lives Islington and Camden (FLIC), Hopscotch, IMECE Women's Centre, nia and Women at the Well.

The CASA project is a new partnership since last year within the London Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Consortium, coordinated by Solace, with specialist resettlement support provided by members of the

London VAWG Consortium: Ashiana Network, EACH Counselling and Support, IKWRO Women's Rights Organisation, Latin American Women's Aid and The nia Project.

We work in partnership with Single Homeless Project (SHP) and FLIC on a Housing First service Islington and continue to work in partnership with Redthread to provide specialist support to young people affected by VAWG in three major trauma centres in London.

Solace is one of the partners in the 'London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS) 'No Recourse Fund', funded by MOPAC and led by Southall Black Sisters to meet the needs of women and children who are victims of domestic and sexual violence and other forms of gendered violence.

Women's Voices

Our women's involvement programme offers fortnightly peer support with input into policy and project development. Service users contribute to the development of all services in the organisation through Women's Voices.

Solace Ambassadors

Our Ambassador programme was launched in 2019 and we are creating a group of survivors who can draw on their experiences to help us raise awareness and campaign for change. They are supported to speak up for women on issues as experts by experience.

Public Affairs and Communications and outcomes

Public affairs

In 2020/21, we created a dedicated public affairs function to support the organisation to improve the lives of those who have been subjected to violence against women and girls, using the knowledge of survivors and of our frontline workers, and our experience in services to bring expertise to decision makers.

Our public affairs work seeks to use Solace's frontline expertise to influence policy, legislation and practice that will improve the lives of service users and establish Solace as a key voice on VAWG issues in Westminster and across London.

In the first year, Solace's public affairs function has set up a strategy for 2021-2024 (based on the current Westminster electoral cycle) and developed a public affairs and parliamentary policy which has been shared with staff. Three of our priorities for the year were to ensure that:

- women have access to safe housing to begin their recovery from abuse;
- The Domestic Abuse Bill protects migrant women and provides support for children who have experienced abuse; and
- services that support women and children who have experienced violence are adequately and sustainable funded.

In November we put together a briefing on the housing needs for VAWG survivors during the second lockdown to accompany our Empty fundraising campaign and based on our Safe as Houses report. This was shared this with parliamentarians and led to a meeting with Shadow Minister for Communities and Local Government, Naz Shah MP, and an invitation to a housing focus group on the Domestic Abuse Bill draft statutory guidance.

As the Domestic Abuse Bill (now Act) went through the Houses of Parliament, we lobbied for improvements including extending the Bill to migrant women and the removal of the local connection test – our priorities for the Bill can be found here and we sent briefings to MPs and peers outlining this key areas for improvement as the Bill progressed.

In March, we published an update to the Safe as Houses Report with a series of recommendations for the UK Government, GLA and local councils. The report was launched at event with two London MPs, Florence Eshalomi MP and Neil Coyle MP, Pragna Patel from Southall Black Sisters and one of our Solace Ambassadors. The report was shared with ministers, shadow ministers, parliamentarians, Government officials and local authority housing and VAWG leads.

In March, Solace responded to the Home Office's call for evidence on their new VAWG strategy to set out our key recommendations on what Government should be doing to prevent VAWG and support survivors.

Solace has also responded to the following parliamentary inquiries:

- Public Accounts Select Committee inquiry on Covid-19 and rough sleeping;
- APPG on ending homelessness inquiry into Housing First;
- Home Affairs Select Committee inquiry on Home Office preparedness for Covid-19; and
- House of Lords Public Services Select Committee inquiry into child vulnerability.

Media and Communications

As part of our strategy to engage with audiences old and new and constantly raise public awareness, we held a significant online event called Voices for Change: Activism and Solidarity. On the eve of the UN 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence, we were proud to host a panel of intersectional feminist activists. Our key speakers being:

- **Mona Eltahawy,** an award-winning columnist and international public speaker on global feminism. She is the author of *"Headscarves and Hymens: Why the Middle East Needs a Sexual Revolution"* and *"The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls"*;
- **Jenn Selby**, freelance journalist, writer, editor and women's rights campaigner. She writes for Glamour, Grazia, The Stylist, the Independent and the BBC;
- **Ngozi Fulani,** founder of Sistah Space, an organisation supporting African heritage women and girls affected by domestic and sexual abuse; and
- **Huda Jawad,** founder of Safety Across Faith and Ethnic Communities, supporting faith and BME communities to improve the response to domestic abuse and gender-based violence.

We also had the support of STACK agency who developed a campaign called Love bombing: Affection today. Abuse tomorrow.

The campaign was designed to highlight how abusers shower their partners with affection as another chance to use coercive control and gives a stark reminder of how 'love bombing' can play a part in the cycle of abuse. Just like in real life, abuser's romantic words are soon replaced with intimidating behaviour and other forms of abuse. Women in abusive relationships live their lives in a hyper-alert, anxious state, not knowing what mood or message awaits them each day. We put together information about love-bombing and coercive control from the work we do on the frontline supporting survivors of abuse and increased awareness and shared information on coercive control to our supporters.

In addition, we focus on reaching out to survivors, their families and friends so they know where to get help and how Solace can help them. This is one of our major communications objectives: making sure that victims of abuse know we are here.

We had a highly successful year with TV appearances and media inserts as part of the media's focus on domestic abuse and sexual violence as a result of the pandemic.

Quality Management

The quality of Solace's services reflects the commitment of our staff team and our determination to continuously improve our standards. We have invested in accredited training for staff and expanded our business development and resources infrastructure to ensure we have robust systems in place to deliver excellent services.

In 2020/21, we achieved a number of kite marks demonstrating the quality of Solace's work, including:

- Rape Crisis National Service Standards;
- SafeLives Leading Lights;
- Investors In People;
- Disability Confident Employer;
- Advice Quality Standard;
- ISO 9001 (achieved June 2021); and
- CHAS (The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme).

Volunteers

We received 3,961 (2019/20: 11,151) volunteer and professional hours from individuals and students who help us with our advice, advocacy, therapeutic and refuge services, alongside pro bono corporate supporters who contribute to various projects and awareness campaigns.

The value of professional pro bono services provided to Solace was valued at £88,553 (2019/20: £85,907) with a large proportion attributable to apprentice levy funding received from our corporate supporter Expedia and National Grid and specialist pro bono support from STACK Agency, Wavemaker, PHA Group and Roll Nine Productions.

We manage a programme of using volunteers to help with our services, especially therapeutic services and provide women volunteers with specialist training to enhance their skills. In accordance with charity reporting regulations, we have not accounted for the time provided by these volunteers in the financial statements, however, based on London's Living Wage rate of pay, this is estimated at £42,977. We also received many hours of volunteer support from our corporate partner McKinseys.

The trustees would like to thank all our volunteers, supporters and staff for their invaluable work throughout the year, as their support is essential to help Solace achieve its aims.

Fundraising

We would like to thank all of our supporters during 2020/21, including those who have chosen to remain anonymous.

We have been successful in raising a combined value of £1,575,694 (2019/20: £336,432) in voluntary income through the diversification of our income streams.

Our work is made possible by the generous support and donations from individual donors, community groups and companies over the past year.

Our Emergency Appeal was an outstanding success with support coming from our loyal individual supporters, from Trusts and Foundations and Corporate donations. It made such a difference to women's lives who were

coming to us destitute having fled abusive relationships with nothing. We were able to pay for hotels when our refuges were full, buy food, clothes and medicine and support them and their children until we managed to find a refuge space or help them to move on. These funds helped with travel, moving costs and basic furniture packs, bedding and cooking equipment. We have never been more grateful that we could act swiftly in a dangerous situation throughout the pandemic.

Our staff also make a huge contribution to raising funds and our Immigration Solicitor organised a fantastic comedy fundraiser for Solace at raising valuable funds for our work. We ran our most successful Christmas Fundraising campaign ever with the help of the brilliant STACK agency, who also supported our Valentine's Day campaign.

As the year drew to a close we celebrated International Women's Day. Feminist journalist, Laura Bates, talked with gold-medal winning Olympian Tessa Sanderson CBE on the theme of strength through adversity

Our approach to fundraising

Solace is a member of the fundraising regulator. Our income is generated predominately thanks to the support of individual fundraisers raising income at our events or their own events. We do not employ the services of any fundraising agencies or third parties, nor have we run a telephone or door to door fundraising campaign. Our relationship with our supporters is very important to us and the charity does not wish for our supporters to feel under any pressure to donate to the charity.

We have a close relationship with our fundraisers and support them in delivering their events and complying with relevant codes of practice. Where we work with commercial participators, contracts are exchanged so that we can ensure compliance with the code of fundraising practice, applicable laws and adherence to best practice.

We received no complaints about our fundraising practices in 2020/21.

Plans for the future

We have just completed the final year of our Strategic Plan 2016-2021 and have agreed on our next Strategy from 2021-2026.

As we started to develop our new strategy, the Covid-19 Pandemic and all its devastating impacts, started to change the way that we work and deliver services. At the same time, as an organisation working intersectionally, we took time to review our approach to our feminism in the light of Black Lives Matters and providing support to Trans Women, as well as focussing on other areas including disability and class. This strategy has thus been developed in light of the lasting impacts of Covid-19 and our bold ambitions for change, equity and inclusion.

As we have grown as an organisation, we have become more visionary about what we want to do to support survivors of all forms of violence and abuse. We have diversified and strengthened our services to provide holistic support packages to women, children and men who need them. We have started to strengthen and build on our existing partnerships and develop our influencing work at all levels – amplifying the voices of the 23,000 people we work with each year.

Our new focus for the next strategy will naturally include continuing to focus on meeting the needs of women, children and young people, while offering services to male victim/survivors and to perpetrators of domestic abuse who wish to change their behaviour. We have six key outcomes that we are working towards: strategic influencing, partnership and leadership; organisational development and growth; long-lasting recovery and

lasting change; aspirations, education and employment; children and young people, and empowerment, engagement and accessibility.

Our aspirations to support ever more survivors of abuse is coupled with developing a strong and healthy workforce. Our ambition for the period 2021-2026 is for the organisation to grow to achieve the dual aim of supporting more survivors but also to support the frontline staff working for the organisation. As we grow, we will do so making sure we keep our grassroots focus that makes our support so valuable to service users. We are working with all staff to realign our values as part of our People Strategy review for the next 5 years.

Trustees are looking to bring in an interim CEO following the departure of Ms Fiona Dwyer as CEO of Solace on 30 September 2021. Whilst the recruitment and appointment of an interim CEO is underway, Ms Judith Banjoko and Ms Retnadevi Thevarajah have been requested by the Board of Trustees to step in and lead Solace. With the interim CEO, the trustees plan to undertake an organisational cultural review which will support ongoing development of the charity.

In 2021/22 we will work with partners to ensure that our services are accessible to all women. Intersectionality is a key principle of the work that we do at Solace and underpinning this strategy and we will recognise the multiple and intersecting barriers that women face.

In 2021/22 we will implement a business development programme which will support income generation, in particular by increasing unrestricted funds to further enable us to meet the varied needs of our service users. We will develop our infrastructure within business development and other central services to support the organisation's growth.

We will continue to develop a cost benefit analysis for each of our services to demonstrate the incredible value provided by our specialist staff.

Financial review

The financial results for the year ended 31 March 2021 are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities, balance sheet, cash flow statement and notes to the accounts on pages 34 onwards.

Income

For the financial year 2020/21, total incoming resources grew by 40% from to £11,586,962 to £16,265,804. This is primarily due to new contracts and additional funding secured during the year across all our services and our Emergency Accommodation project during the pandemic. The demand for our services grew during the year which resulted in overwhelming support from our statutory partners, trusts and foundations, corporates and the public at large to enable us set up crisis projects, many of which with other partners, to support our beneficiaries.

Our refuge services grew by £218,052 with improvements in core rental income. Community based advice and advocacy services grew by £694,911 with new projects in Tower Hamlets and additional funding for specialist Covid-19 support.

Partnership projects for specialist advice, funding for women with 'no recourse to public funding' and crisis accommodation contributed to increased revenues of £2,446,247 during the year. This has enabled Solace to support 192 women including 64 women with no recourse to public funds during the pandemic, providing a crucial life line to the women. London Councils funding for our Ascent partnership work for more than £1.4million is detailed in note 3b of the financial statements.

Our advice and advocacy work in the community, which includes specialist services and work with women with multiple needs represented the largest source of incoming resources at 30% of our funding base, followed by refuge provision 23%, Ascent and other partnership work at 23%, and therapeutic at 9%. Children and young people services focussed on prevention activities was at 4% and remains a core strategic goal for Solace.

Voluntary income from donations grew by nearly 368% from £336,432 to £1,575,694 through the support of the public, corporates and trusts and foundations. We received an overwhelming response to our Emergency Appeal during the pandemic which has helped the charity manage its overall financial position during the unprecedented year.

Further details on our incoming resources are in notes 2 and 3 of the financial statements.

Expenditure

Growth through new activities has correspondingly increased resources expended by 34% from £11,626,761 to £15,592,165. The staff needed to deliver these charitable services has resulted in an increase in staff costs of £1,168,458 from £7,369,159 to £8,907,668 and similarly, delivering specialist support with partners increased partnership costs by £950,005. We directly supported women with meals, accommodation and other welfare needs and increased our direct spending by £908,762 to our beneficiaries.

During the year, we continued to focus expenditure to modernise our information technology and review of digital offerings to enable remote working provision for staff and a wider reach to our service users. This has resulted in higher spending on IT and service administration expenditure as illustrated in note 4 of the financial statements.

Solace remains focused on tight cost management and supplier contracts are reviewed periodically for better value for money propositions. The blended average annual cost per service user at £665 (2019/20: £424) was higher reflecting the costs of emergency projects and Covid-19 related costs during the year.

Further details on our expenditure are in note 4 of the financial statements.

Financial position

After the net expenditure on restricted funds, the overall result for the year was a surplus of £673,639 (2019/20: deficit of £39,799). The surplus arose due to our successful efforts in fundraising and the Emergency Appeal which raised unrestricted funds enabling a sum of £350,000 to be designated for use towards ongoing Covid-19 expenditure in the coming year. Achieving a surplus remains a key performance target to enable the charity to set aside funds towards reserves for contingency requirements, further explained in our reserves policy note.

Total fund balances at 31 March 2021 were £2,668,731 (2019/20: £1,995,092) of which £1,300,672 (2019/20: £1,030,643) were set aside as designated funds and the remaining £1,368,059 (2019/20: £964,449) represented general funds.

Risk management and principal risks

Trustees have overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the system of risk management at Solace. The charity maintains a charity risk register which tracks key risks to Solace and is reviewed by trustees at quarterly sub-committee meetings. Unexpected and sudden changes in risks would be scrutinised by trustees over and above planned meetings.

The principal risks facing the charity are financial, operational, reputational and regulatory as detailed below.

Financial

Solace operates in a challenging and demanding sector with uncertainties over longer term funding, due to the commissioning of services by local and central government and the cuts to public spending. Payments by local authorities, government bodies, trusts and foundations are based on the achievement of outcomes or payment by results which adds further pressures on cash flow and overall financial management. In the coming year, a higher number of contracts are due for renewal which increases overall financial risks.

External risks to funding have been reduced by reaching and maintaining the standards required by commissioners and funding bodies and implementing a strategy to diversify our funding base through income generation from fundraising. Financial risks are monitored through regular reporting to the Finance and Resources sub-committee and trustees with scrutiny of annual budgets, reforecasts, management accounts and cash flow monitoring and projections. The use of key performance indicators for cash balances forms an important monitoring tool to ensure adequacy of liquid funds to meet our ongoing obligations.

Increased financial risks arising from a higher number of contract renewals in 2021/22 are mitigated through TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment) arrangements and the maintenance of adequate reserves to absorb central costs currently covered by contracts. Scenario planning has also been prepared to ensure that Solace continues to have sufficient resources to continue its operations and maintain solvent in the foreseeable future.

Operational

The nature of our service delivery which provides support to vulnerable women and children suffering from domestic and sexual violence increases our operational risks. The operational risks are our services do not provide sufficient support for our service users, which could be caused by unclear priorities, lack of quality oversight and inadequate staff resources.

Operational risks are managed through implementation of suitable policies and procedures including good practices for case management, rigorous staff training, staff supervision and support and regular reporting to senior management. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, risks assessments and data protection regulations in respect of service users, staff, trustees, volunteers and visitors. Appropriate insurance cover is in place for unexpected losses.

Reputational

In line with our operational risks, reputational risks are heightened as we engage with vulnerable people in difficult circumstances. Service audits are conducted annually to review compliance with funder agreements and reported to trustees. The senior management team works closely with boroughs and other funder leads and attend meetings and events which enable issues to be dealt with promptly and manage reputational risks.

As other charities operating in the sector, Solace has been challenged with equality, diversity and inclusiveness and has been put on the spotlight post year end with negative publications on racism. Solace is committed to a being an anti-racist charity and has reviewed its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan with trustees, staff and volunteers. Progress against the plan is being monitored closely by trustees and the senior management team. Specialist training and awareness programmes are being delivered to all staff.

Regulatory

Safeguarding is at the heart of our operational services and a key governance priority, keeping women and their children safe is our primary responsibility and we take all appropriate steps to protect everyone from harm.

We deliver robust safeguarding training to all our staff and volunteers, as part of their induction training. This includes the legal framework, how to spot signs and symptoms, how to respond and what makes a good referral to social care. We also explain our whistle blowing policies to all staff and volunteers during the training.

Annual refresher training on safeguarding is mandatory for all staff.

Reserves policy and going concern

The reserves fund represents unrestricted general funds which are not committed or tied to any tangible fixed assets held by Solace.

It is Solace's policy to retain sufficient reserves to safeguard its financial commitments and to continue to provide essential services to women and children who are experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence, in the event of unforeseen financial problems for a length of time to enable those problems to be resolved.

The trustees have reviewed its reserves policy in March 2021 and agreed to build Solace's reserves based on an analysis of the risks facing the charity. In determining the level of reserves required by Solace, the following factors are taken into account by the Board of Trustees:

- key strategic risks as described in Solace's risk register;
- our strategic goals;
- financial strategy and sustainability;
- liquidity management;
- commitments to staff and other contractual obligations; and
- needs of services and beneficiaries.

This level of reserves is to protect the charity from having to make quick structural changes arising from the sudden loss of income, for example when contracts are not renewed or other unforeseen circumstances, to enable the charity to function during unexpected periods of financial difficulties. The Finance and Resources sub-committee reviews the level of reserves required by Solace annually and recommends the appropriate level to the trustees.

Based on the analysis of risks, a minimum general reserves level of £1,296,128 would be considered adequate with a higher optimal target level of £1,351,010. The current unrestricted free reserves of £1,368,059 (unrestricted reserves less those related to tangible fixed assets and designations) is above the target reserve level and positions the charity to meet the increased financial challenges arising from additional contracts renewals in the coming year. The trustees have designated £350,000 as a Covid-19 fund out of the free reserves for ongoing crisis support beyond the year ended March 2021. Further notes on our reserves are outlined in note 15 of the financial statements.

The trustees have considered the material uncertainties which may cast doubts on the appropriateness of the going concern assumption in regard to the 2020/21 financial statements. As noted above, these uncertainties are continually monitored by the board and the senior management team, and remedial actions are implemented in a timely manner. Having considered the risks of these uncertainties, the trustees have concluded that the going concern assumption remains appropriate.

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association, the Companies Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Company number	3376716
Country of incorporation	United Kingdom
Charity number	1082450
Country of registration	England & Wales
Registered office	Devonshire House 60 Goswell Road London, EC1M 7AD
Website	www.solacewomensaid.org

Board of Trustees
Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Ms. Helen Hughes	Chair
Ms. Natalia Schiffrin	Secretary and Vice Chair (Retired 12 December 2020)
Ms. Kirsty Telford	Vice Chair (from 24 June 2021)
Ms. Jasbir Sandhu	Treasurer (returned from maternity leave on 26 January 2021
Ms. Vivien Ma	(Appointed 22 April 2020) Acting Treasurer (From 25 June 2020 up to 25 January 2021
Ms. Yasmin Becker	(Appointed 22 April 2020)
Ms. Alice Dyke	(Resigned 25 March 2021)
Ms. Teresa Hoey	
Ms. Maureen Hopcroft	(Appointed 22 April 2020)
Ms. Emily Florence Hutchings	
Ms. Heather Mah	
Ms. Margaret Osimen	

Principal staff

Ms. Fiona Dwyer	Chief Executive Officer (left 30 September 2021)
Ms. Retna Thevarajah	Chief Operating Officer (up to 30 September 2021) Joint Interim Chief Executive Officers (wef 1 October 2021)
Ms. Judith Banjoko	Director of Services (up to 30 September 2021) Joint Interim Chief Executive Officers (wef 1 October 2021)
Ms. Jane Jutsum	Director of Business Development

Bankers	HSBC plc 1 Aldermans Hill London, N13 4YE
Solicitors	Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP 134 Edmund Street Birmingham, B3 2ES Bates Wells & Braithwaite London LLP 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE
Auditor	Moore Kingston Smith Devonshire House 60 Goswell Road, London, EC1M 7AD

Structure, governance & management

Solace is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 28 May 1997 and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 16 September 2000. The charity is formed under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

Recruitment and appointment of members of the Board of Trustees

Solace welcomes women to the Board of Trustees who have the skills, dedication and enthusiasm to take overall responsibility for the organisation. The charity advertises for members in a number of ways including recruitment websites and other relevant publications.

Trustees serve for a maximum period of six years in aggregate and the total number of trustees are twelve members. Solace has a diverse Board, ensuring that our trustees represent the women we support. One third of members must resign each year, with the longest standing members resigning first.

Induction and training for the Board of Trustees

All prospective members receive information regarding Solace including the most recent annual report and audited accounts, as well as copies of relevant policies and procedures. They meet with the CEO who carries out an induction that includes training on key policies (including equality, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, confidentiality, complaints, whistle blowing, financial regulation, risk assessments and DBS checks), a tour of our services and meetings with both staff and service users.

A skills audit is conducted annually, and any gaps identified are met through training, guidance from the CEO and other members of the trustees and staff, as well as targeted recruitment.

Trustees are encouraged to attend relevant training in areas such as governance, human resource management and financial management. The cost of this training is met by the organisation.

Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 5 to the accounts.

Organisational structure

The trustees meet every quarter and are responsible for the organisation's overall management and strategic direction. The trustees also meet twice a year for Board Away Days. These women are drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to our work including those who have been impacted by domestic or sexual abuse. We are also committed to diversity and have a trustee board representative of our service users and staff.

The officers of the charity are:

Chair	Ms. Helen Hughes
Secretary	Ms. Natalia Schiffrin
Vice Chair	Ms. Natalia Schiffrin (retired12 December 2020
	Ms. Kirsty Telford (appointed 25 March 2021)
Treasurer	Ms. Jasbir Sandhu (returned from maternity leave on 26 January 2021)
	Ms. Vivien Ma (acting treasurer from 25 June 2020 to 25 January 2021)

The trustees delegate appropriate functions to the sub-committees listed below, of which at least two members must be from the Board.

Business Development sub-committee: Oversees the overall strategy and business development plans for the charity, as well as Training and Consultancy, Fundraising, and Communications. Chair – Ms. Yasmin Becker.

Finance and Resources sub-committee: Oversees financial management to ensure optimum use of resources. It scrutinises income and expenditure and regularly reports to, makes recommendations, and clarifies options available to the trustees. Chair – Ms. Jasbir Sandhu.

Human Resources and Governance sub-committee: Oversees staffing issues including recruitment, retention, pay, equality and diversity, health and safety and environmental issues. It acts as the appeal body for any disciplinary and capability matters and is responsible for overall board governance. Chair – Ms. Teresa Hoey.

Services sub-committee: Scrutinises operational top-level reports and internal audits; discusses policy, devises and reviews the service operations strategy. Chair – Ms. Maureen Hopcroft.

Expert Advisors are selected to provide specialist advice to the sub-committees. They attend and scrutinise reports together with trustees at sub-committee meeting. We currently have four Expert Advisors: Ms. Judy Kawaguchi (Business Development); Ms. Helena Dollimore (Business Development); Ms. Kerri Podobnik (Finance and Resources); and Ms. Jennifer Bosiacki (Finance and Resources).

Overall management is delegated to the CEO and Directors who are responsible for ensuring that Solace delivers high quality services, meets contractual obligations and conditions of grant aid. Principal staff are the CEO, COO, Director of Services and Director of Business Development who convene regularly to oversee the organisational management of Solace. The Directors report to the CEO.

The wider Senior Management Team includes a Deputy Director of Service Excellence, five Heads of Services and one Deputy who meet with the Directors and CEO on a fortnightly monthly basis.

Team and Service Managers run the day to day activities with their staff teams delivering services in both refuge and community-based services. They report to Heads of Services and meet with the CEO and Directors each quarter.

Related party transactions

Related party transaction during the year related to professional pro bono services and valued at £2,500 (2020: £1,500), and donations from 4 trustees totalling £1,300 (2019: £1,661).

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

Solace awards a fair remuneration package to all staff including key management personnel. Both the Human Resources and Finance and Resources sub-committees undertake an annual review of salaries and the trustees are responsible for setting the CEO salary, and with the CEO set the salaries of Directors. The salary of the highest and lowest salaries in the organisation does not exceed 1:5.

Statement of responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Solace for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic 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 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 these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 operation.

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.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2021 was 12 (2019/20 - 14). The trustees are members of the charity, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors

Moore Kingston Smith LLP were appointed as auditors in 2018 and are deemed to be reappointed to under Section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The report of the Board of Trustees has been approved by the trustees on 3 November and signed on their behalf by



Helen Hughes - Chair

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Solace Women's Aid ('the 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 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 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 annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. 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 there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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 strategic report and the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the trustees' annual report have 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 company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the trustees' annual report.

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.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page [x], 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 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 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 charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are [the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council]

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.

- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.

- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance 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.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement 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 purposes 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 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 any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Date 2 December 2021

Neil Finlayson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

Devonshire House
60 Goswell Road
London
EC1M 7AD

Solace Women's Aid

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	1,235,971	339,723	**1,575,694**	317,739	18,693	336,432
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	3	3,393,459	420,402	**3,813,861**	3,181,191	414,618	3,595,809
Community based advice, advocacy and support	3	4,090,444	825,408	**4,915,852**	3,708,526	512,415	4,220,941
Therapeutic	3	43,400	1,424,363	**1,467,763**	43,400	1,489,722	1,533,122
Children and Young People	3	242,301	392,429	**634,730**	73,853	499,031	572,884
Other services	3	82,975	100,664	**183,639**	97,472	–	97,472
Partnership work							
Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships	3	–	3,674,265	**3,674,265**	–	1,228,018	1,228,018
Investments		–	–	**–**	2,284	–	2,284
Total income		9,088,550	7,177,254	**16,265,804**	7,424,465	4,162,497	11,586,962
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	251,761	376,000	**627,761**	164,606	18,693	183,299
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	4	3,341,986	428,440	**3,770,426**	3,039,181	414,618	3,453,799
Community based advice, advocacy and support	4	4,258,349	881,253	**5,139,602**	3,915,583	587,938	4,503,521
Therapeutic	4	52,328	1,439,674	**1,492,002**	53,054	1,496,532	1,549,586
Children and Young People	4	245,835	399,743	**645,578**	81,888	500,009	581,897
Other services	4	113,507	113,533	**227,040**	111,750	–	111,750
Partnership work							
Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships	4	9,336	3,680,420	**3,689,756**	1,369	1,241,540	1,242,909
Total expenditure		8,273,102	7,319,063	**15,592,165**	7,367,431	4,259,330	11,626,761
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	5	815,448	(141,809)	**673,639**	57,034	(96,833)	(39,799)
Transfers between funds		(141,809)	141,809	**–**	(96,833)	96,833	–
Net movement in funds		673,639	–	**673,639**	(39,799)	–	(39,799)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		1,995,092	–	**1,995,092**	2,034,891	–	2,034,891
Total funds carried forward		2,668,731	–	**2,668,731**	1,995,092	–	1,995,092

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities unless noted otherwise. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15 to the financial statements.

Solace Women's Aid

Balance sheet

Company no. 3376716

As at 31 March 2021

	Note	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible fixed assets	10		**950,672**		995,643
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	**2,095,461**		1,595,816	
Cash at bank and in hand		**2,676,142**		1,042,666	
		4,771,603		2,638,482	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	**3,053,544**		1,639,033	
Net current assets			**1,718,059**		999,449
Total assets	14		**2,668,731**		1,995,092
The funds of the charity:	15				
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		**1,300,672**		1,030,643	
General funds		**1,368,059**		964,449	
Total unrestricted funds			**2,668,731**		1,995,092
Total charity funds			**2,668,731**		1,995,092

Approved by the trustees on 3 November and signed on their behalf by

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.





Helen Hughes
Chair

Jasbir Sandhu
Treasurer

Solace Women's Aid

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021		2020	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:	16				
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities			1,676,219		301,363
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		–		2,284	
Purchase of fixed assets		(42,743)		(178,190)	
Net cash used in investing activities			(42,743)		(175,906)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			1,633,476		125,457
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			1,042,666		917,209
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			2,676,142		1,042,666

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Solace Women's Aid is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address is Devonshire House, 60 Goswell Road, London EC1M 7AD.

b) 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 in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The presentation currency of the Charity is British Pounds Sterling. The amounts in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound.

c) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

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

The impact of COVID-19 has been considered by the trustees and adjustments made for income generating activities which are at risk within the next reporting period . Funding from the Emergency Appeal which ran throughout the summer of 2020 has been designated by the Board of Trustees towards managing ongoing costs arising from the pandemic.

In addition, a three year loan from the government backed Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan was approved and paid to the charity to support liquidity management for at least 12 months after year end.

The reserves policy was revised during the year to establish adequate levels of reserves to safeguard the charity against unexpected fluctuations in cash holdings. Cash flow forecasts are regularly produced and reviewed with the trustees and these confirm the Charity is able to meet its obligations as and when they arise.

On this basis the trustees have concluded that they charity is able to meet its obligations as they fall due for at least 12 months following approval of the financial statements and accordingly the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

e) 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’ grants 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.

Rental income is recognised on an accrual basis and personal charges from service users on a receipts basis as this is the most certain form of income recognition.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service or subject to permance conditions, is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

f) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised, refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

g) 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.

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

i) Irrecoverable VAT

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:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services and other charitable activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs

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

j) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure based on costs incurred with the publicity event. The costs of running the communications service forms part of support costs.

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on transaction activity and staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

- Cost of raising funds 7%

Provision and Prevention

- Refuge accommodation 33%
- Community based advice, advocacy and support 31%
- Therapeutic 11%
- Children and Young People 5%
- Other services 1%

Partnership work

- Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships 12%

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs attributable to the strategic management of the charity's activities.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

k) Operating leases

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

l) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000 or groups of similar assets purchased in bulk exceeds £7,500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Freehold land and buildings are carried at cost.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- Freehold land — Not depreciated
- Freehold buildings — 2% on cost
- Office equipment, fixtures and fittings, IT and play area — 25% on cost

m) Debtors

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

n) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

o) 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.

p) Pensions

Solace Women's Aid operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions. It provides a contribution at 3% of annual basic pay for those staff who have joined the scheme. The pension charge recorded in these accounts is the amount of contributions payable in the accounting year.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted	Restricted (*)	**2021 Total £**	2020 Total £
Individuals	441,078	4,873	**445,951**	137,671
Community fundraising and events	86,733	600	**87,333**	61,103
Corporates	443,916	-	**443,916**	40,595
Legacy		-	**-**	5,000
Trust and Foundations	144,050	334,250	**478,300**	6,156
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (Furlough)	31,641	-	**31,641**	-
Donated services	88,553	-	**88,553**	85,907
	1,235,971	**339,723**	**1,575,694**	336,432

(*) restricted income raised from our Emergency Appeal for expenditure during the pandemic and utilised during the year.

3a Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Provision and Prevention				
Local Boroughs	1,213,725	77,829	**1,291,554**	1,236,025
Core Rents	1,854,325	-	**1,854,325**	1,586,116
Core rents (second stage)	213,547	-	**213,547**	241,905
Personal Charges	111,862	-	**111,862**	113,322
London Councils (note 3b)	-	249,816	**249,816**	249,816
MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government		56,406	**56,406**	-
National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities)	-	-	**-**	97,307
The Tudor Capital	-	20,000	**20,000**	25,000
Hollick Foundation	-	6,707	**6,707**	8,849
Other		9,644	**9,644**	37,469
Sub-total for Refuge Accommodation	**3,393,459**	**420,402**	**3,813,861**	3,595,809
Local Boroughs	4,089,944	45,767	**4,135,711**	3,109,393
London Councils (note 3b)	-	226,863	**226,863**	226,863
National Lottery Community Fund	-	152,611	**152,611**	58,212
Cripplegate Foundation	-	31,105	**31,105**	32,150
MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	-	**-**	599,133
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Emigrant Support Programme (this grant restricted to Irish Traveller activities)	-	35,000	**35,000**	35,000
Trust For London	-	69,000	**69,000**	64,985
Comic Relief	-	42,910	**42,910**	52,878
Irish Youth Foundation	-	16,000	**16,000**	9,000
Southall Black Sisters		196,152	**196,152**	9,701
Cloudesley	-	10,000	**10,000**	23,626
Other	500	-	**500**	-
Sub-total for Community based advice, advocacy and support	**4,090,444**	**825,408**	**4,915,852**	4,220,941
Local Boroughs	-	240,170	**240,170**	94,947
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	43,400	574,374	**617,774**	637,820
Parliament	-	84,640	**84,640**	309,846
NHSE	-	132,118	**132,118**	117,139
London Councils (note 3b)	-	190,052	**190,052**	190,053
Tri-borough Angelou	-	68,904	**68,904**	76,561
Women and Girls Network	-	73,841	**73,841**	49,468
BBC Children in Need	-	45,264	**45,264**	44,788
Cloudesley	-	15,000	**15,000**	12,500
Sub-total for Therapeutic	**43,400**	**1,424,363**	**1,467,763**	1,533,122

3a Income from charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	142,800	**142,800**	140,000
National Lottery Community Fund	-	139,103	**139,103**	151,301
NSPCC	183,118	-	**183,118**	176,009
CYPS	57,349	-	**57,349**	57,349
Women and Girls Network	-	93,943	**93,943**	26,304
London Councils (note 3b)/(Tender Education & Arts)		-	**-**	16,504
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	16,583	**16,583**	5,417
Other	1,834	-	**1,834**	
Sub-total for Children and Young People	**242,301**	**392,429**	**634,730**	572,884
External training	82,975	-	**82,975**	97,472
MOPAC		56,482	**56,482**	
Respect	-	37,996	**37,996**	-
Other	-	6,186	**6,186**	-
Sub-total for Other services	**82,975**	**100,664**	**183,639**	97,472
Partnership work				
London Councils (Ascent, note 3b)	-	1,044,846	**1,044,846**	1,044,845
Wansworth Councils	-	21,623	**21,623**	
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	2,141,622	**2,141,622**	144,168
MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	149,361	**149,361**	39,005
Greater London Authority	-	92,395	**92,395**	39,005
Department of Culture, Media and Digital	-	224,418	**224,418**	-
Sub-total for Ascent, CRISIS and other Partnerships	**-**	**3,674,265**	**3,674,265**	1,267,023
Total income from charitable activities	**7,852,579**	**6,837,531**	**14,690,110**	11,287,251

3b. Section 37 Statement

* Grant funding of £1,425,238 was received in 2021 (2020 £1,425,238) from London Councils for the Ascent partnership delivering advice, counselling and other work funded under Priority 2 Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence. The table below shows how the funding was allocated across the partnership and that it has been used for the purposes outlined in the funding agreement. There was no unspent funding as at 31 March 2021.

	2021 Grant awarded £	2021 Grant spent £	2020 Grant awarded £	2020 Grant spent £
Ascent Advice and Counselling				
Solace lead partner	463,150	463,150	463,150	463,150
Rights of Women	67,555	67,555	67,555	67,555
Women and Girls Network	296,272	296,272	296,272	296,272
Ashiana Network	81,777	81,777	81,777	81,777
Nia	36,849	36,849	36,849	36,849
IMECE	69,583	69,583	69,583	69,583
IKWRO	76,267	76,267	76,267	76,267
LAWRS	72,861	72,861	72,861	72,861
Jewish Women's Aid	23,674	23,674	23,674	23,674
EACH counselling	90,489	90,489	90,489	90,489
Southall Black Sisters	53,619	53,619	53,619	53,619
RASASC	19,184	19,184	19,184	19,184
Asian Women's Resource Centre	36,979	36,979	36,979	36,979
CIAC	36,979	36,979	36,979	36,979
	1,425,238	1,425,238	1,425,238	1,425,238
Breakdown by expenditure:				
Staff costs	1,205,254	1,211,934	1,205,254	1,220,083
Beneficiary costs	56,221	50,669	56,221	54,558
Other costs	163,763	162,635	163,763	150,597
	1,425,238	1,425,238	1,425,238	1,425,238
London Council funding with other lead partners:				
Ascent Prevention	-	-	16,504	16,504
Ascent Refuges	286,339	286,339	286,339	286,339
	286,339	286,339	302,843	302,843
TOTAL LONDON COUNCIL FUNDING	1,711,577	1,711,577	1,728,081	1,728,081

As per note 3a) for all London Council funding:	2021 £	2020 £
Refuge services	249,816	249,816
Community advice advocacy and support	226,863	226,863
Therapeutic	190,052	190,053
Children and Young People	-	16,504
Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership	1,044,846	1,044,845
	1,711,577	1,728,081

4 Analysis of expenditure

		Charitable activities									
		Provision and Prevention					Partnership				
	Cost of raising funds (*) £	Refuge accomo-dation £	Community advice, advocacy and support £	Therapeutic £	Children and Young People £	Other services £	Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Staff (Note 6)	321,872	1,668,257	3,640,403	1,165,330	508,704	120,868	525,959	893,127	63,148	**8,907,668**	7,369,159
Partnerships		84,915	247,654	–	–	–	2,051,235	15,000	–	**2,398,804**	1,448,799
Children and service users	50,364	75,860	221,404	5,208	2,858	3,013	819,332	663	–	**1,178,702**	269,940
IT and Facilities	102,995	221,146	283,981	78,838	38,683	39,210	59,491	121,077	12,612	**958,033**	572,662
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	21,250	1,187,597	215,201	65,838	12,171	5,243	17,526	85,594	20,178	**1,630,598**	1,464,779
Professional Fees and Other	29,086	41,390	61,115	6,893	17,516	45,392	21,344	280,484	15,140	**518,360**	501,422
	525,567	3,279,165	4,669,758	1,322,107	579,932	213,726	3,494,887	1,395,945	111,078	15,592,165	11,626,761
Support costs	98,049	465,401	433,017	159,805	60,736	11,628	167,308	–	–	**–**	–
Governance costs	4,145	25,860	36,827	10,090	4,910	1,686	27,561	–	–	**–**	–
Total expenditure 2021	**627,761**	**3,770,426**	**5,139,602**	**1,492,002**	**645,578**	**227,040**	**3,689,756**	**(1,395,945)**	**(111,078)**	**15,592,165**	**11,626,761**
Total expenditure 2020	183,299	3,453,799	4,503,521	1,549,586	581,897	111,750	1,242,909	**–**	**–**	**11,626,761**	

Of the total expenditure, £8,273,102 was unrestricted (2020: £7,367,431) and £7,319,063 was restricted (2020: £4,259,330).
(*) includes expenditure amounting to £376,000 relating to funds raised from Emergency Appeal during the pandemic

5 Net (expenditure)/income for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Depreciation	87,714	45,738
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	875,509	827,457
Other	12,470	9,079
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit (statutory audit)	12,200	10,300
Trustee expenses	90	623

There was no payment or reimbursement of travel expenses to trustees in 2021 (2020: Nil).

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Salaries and wages	6,822,622	5,575,881
Social security costs	602,996	492,571
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	177,871	150,738
Staff training, supervision, travel and volunteer costs	204,836	224,705
Sessional counsellors and self employed	452,070	354,031
Agency & locum staff	568,072	542,093
Other forms of employee benefits	79,201	29,140
	8,907,668	7,369,159

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) during the year between:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
£60,000 - £69,999	2	1
£70,000 - £79,999	1	1
£80,000 - £89,999	1	-

The total employee benefits including pension contributions of the key management personnel were £334,492 (2019: £315,594).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2020: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2020: £nil). See note 5 for trustee expenses.

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Raising funds	**2.5**	1.8
Refuge services	**56.7**	64.4
Community advice, advocacy and support	**128.9**	101.7
Therapeutic	**34.4**	26.7
Children and Young People	**16.2**	14.6
Other services	**2.0**	2.0
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	**3.0**	1.8
Support and governance	**21.8**	17.5
	265.5	230.5

8 Related party transactions

Total donations from 4 trustees were £1,300 (2020: £1,661).
Related party transactions during the year related to pro bono professional services valued at £2,500 (2020: £1,000)

9 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold property £	Play area £	Fixtures and fittings £	IT & Computer equipment £	**Total £**
Cost or valuation					
At the start of the year	961,662	51,908	236,013	230,467	**1,480,050**
Additions in year	–	–		42,743	**42,743**
At the end of the year	961,662	51,908	236,013	273,210	**1,522,793**
Depreciation					
At the start of the year	148,302	51,908	161,071	123,126	**484,407**
Charge for the year	11,383	–	24,456	51,875	**87,714**
At the end of the year	159,685	51,908	185,527	175,001	**572,121**
Net book value					
At the end of the year	**801,977**	**–**	**50,486**	**98,209**	**950,672**
At the start of the year	813,360	–	74,942	107,341	995,643

Land with a value of £480,831 (2020: £480,831) is included within freehold property and not depreciated.

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

11 Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Amounts due from Local Authorities and government agencies	**1,211,372**	738,125
Other debtors	**79,256**	46,053
Prepayments	**128,734**	143,624
Accrued income	**676,099**	668,014
	2,095,461	1,595,816

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	**747,786**	393,107
Taxation and social security	**253,847**	327,740
Other creditors	**41,970**	56,606
Provision	**105,000**	80,919
Funds held on behalf of clients	**43,936**	27,889
Accruals	**782,387**	317,042
Deferred income - see 13 below	**1,078,618**	435,730
	3,053,544	1,639,033

13 Deferred income

Deferred income comprises income received in advance on contracts and projects which are delivered in the following year.

	2021 £	2020 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	**435,730**	370,914
Amount released to income in the year	**(435,730)**	(370,914)
Amount deferred in the year	**1,078,618**	435,730
Balance at the end of the year	**1,078,618**	435,730

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	950,672	-	**950,672**
Net current assets	1,368,059	350,000	-	**1,718,059**
Net assets at the end of the year	**1,368,059**	**1,300,672**	**-**	**2,668,731**

14b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	995,643	-	**995,643**
Net current assets	964,449	35,000	-	**999,449**
Net assets at the end of the year	**964,449**	**1,030,643**	**-**	**1,995,092**

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At the start of the year £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:					
Voluntary income	–	339,723	(376,000)	36,277	–
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	–	420,402	(428,440)	8,038	–
Community advice, advocacy & support	–	825,408	(881,253)	55,845	–
Therapeutic	–	1,424,363	(1,439,674)	15,311	–
Children and Young People	–	392,429	(399,743)	7,314	–
Other services	–	100,664	(113,533)	12,869	–
Partnership work					
Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership	–	3,674,265	(3,680,420)	6,155	–
Total restricted funds	–	7,177,254	(7,319,063)	141,809	–
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	995,643	–	(87,714)	42,743	**950,672**
COVID-19 appeal	–	–	–	350,000	**350,000**
Staff Contingency	20,000	–	(20,000)	–	–
Building Emergency Repairs	5,000	–	(5,000)	–	–
Strategic initiatives	10,000	–	(10,000)	–	–
Total designated funds	1,030,643	–	(122,714)	392,743	**1,300,672**
General funds	964,449	9,088,550	(8,150,388)	(534,552)	**1,368,059**
Total unrestricted funds	1,995,092	9,088,550	(8,273,102)	(141,809)	**2,668,731**
Total funds	1,995,092	16,265,804	(15,592,165)	–	**2,668,731**

15b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At the start of the year £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:					
Voluntary income	–	18,693	(18,693)	–	–
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	–	414,618	(414,618)	–	–
Community advice, advocacy & support	–	512,415	(587,938)	75,523	–
Therapeutic	–	1,489,722	(1,496,532)	6,810	–
Children and Young People	–	499,031	(500,009)	978	–
Other services	–	–	–	–	–
Partnership work					
Ascent Advice and Counselling	–	1,228,018	(1,241,540)	13,522	–
Total restricted funds	–	4,162,497	(4,259,330)	96,833	–
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	863,191	–	(45,738)	178,190	**995,643**
Staff Contingency	50,000	–	(30,000)	–	**20,000**
Building Emergency Repairs	30,000	–	(25,000)	–	**5,000**
Strategic initiatives	15,000	–	(5,000)	–	**10,000**
Total designated funds	958,191	–	(105,738)	178,190	**1,030,643**
General funds	1,076,700	7,424,465	(7,261,693)	(275,023)	**964,449**
Total unrestricted funds	2,034,891	7,424,465	(7,367,431)	(96,833)	**1,995,092**
Total funds	2,034,891	11,586,962	(11,626,761)	–	**1,995,092**

15 Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Voluntary income: Funding from individual donors and trusts towards the impact of COVID-19 on Solace services.

Refuge services: This fund is dedicated to help the women and children staying in our refuges. The main funders are London Councils' funding for the complex needs refuge in Camden, Tudor Capital's funding towards a family support worker in Islington and National Lottery Community Fund's funding for a family support worker in Haringey and Lambeth refuges. In the current year, MHCLG and London Boroughs of Bexley and Islington also provided emergency funding to maintain services at our refuges. Other funders outlined in note 3a.

Community advice, advocacy and support: This fund is for the advice, advocacy and outreach work to survivors of domestic violence. London Councils funded our Ascent Advice hub. In the current year, Solace received funding from the National Lottery Comminity Fund towards additional counsellors and well being workers. Other funders include funding from Comic Relief, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Programme for the Irish and Irish Traveller communities, Cripplegate for the Women Resilience and Awareness project, Trust for London towards the Immigration advice lawyer and National Lottery Community Fund for the Silver project helping those over 55.

The Emigrant Support Programme included 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 which was deferred from 2019/20 and utilised in 2020/21. 9 months of the grant income received in 2020/21 was utilised in the period to 31 March 2021 and 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 has been deferred to the 2021/22 financial year and will be utilised by 30th June 2021.

Therapeutic: The counselling service is free to residents and service users of the organisation and is accessed through Ascent counselling and the North London Rape Crisis services. The funders are London Councils, MOPAC, NHS England, Tri-borough Angelou, Women and Girls Network and the Ministry of Justice and more recently Richard

Children and Young People (CYP): MOPAC funded our work delivered to youths in hospitals with Redthread and NSPCC funds our work on the Lighthouse project with young people who are victims of sexual abuse. The BBC CIN funded various Art Therapies programmes with young children. In October 2016, the Women and Young Girls project 'Hear to Change' was launched which runs workshops and various support activities for women and young girls in London, this project is a five year project with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund. Garfield Weston Foundation continued to support a CYP worker this year.

Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership: This fund was for the provision of Violence against Women and Girls services delivered through the partners outlined in Note 3b (S37 statement). London Councils awarded £1,044,846 for the management and delivery of the partnership strand.
Due to the pandemic, MOPAC and MHCLG jointly funded the CRISIS accommodation project with £2,141,622 and £149,361 respectively. Additional funding was secured from Wandsworth Councils for £21,623 and used with partners. The Department of Culture, Digital and Media have funded the Labyrinth project up to September 2022 and a total amount of £224,418 was used for women in 2020/21.

We received restricted donations from trusts and foundations including £150,000 from the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust and £133,750 from The Generation Foundation which helped our charitable emergency projects and services during the pandemic.

Purposes of designated funds

Capital: This fund represents the net book value of all tangible fixed assets.

COVID 19: Transfers have been made to create a designated fund for the ongoing life saving work and increased demand in services following lockdown in March 2020. The fund will be used towards emergency grants for survivors and crisis support staff int he coming year and will be fully utilised by March 2022.

Prior year designations for staff, building repairs and strategic initiatives have been utilised and future need in these expenditure categories considered within Solace's general reserves requirements.

16 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Net (expenditure) / income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	**673,639**	(39,799)
Interest received		(2,284)
Depreciation charges	**87,714**	45,738
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	**(499,645)**	23,816
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**1,414,511**	273,892
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	**1,676,219**	301,363

17 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Property		Equipment	
	2021	2020	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Up to one year	**788,655**	810,078	**15,479**	12,470
One to five years	**66,379**	208,142	**39,429**	9,011
	855,034	1,018,220	**54,908**	21,481

18 Capital commitments

Capital commitments as at year end related to IT infrastructure amounting to £22,950 (2020: £17,132).

19 Post balance sheet transaction

Solace received a Business Interruption Loan from the Social Investment Bank for £500,000 in June 2021 which is to be repaid in 3 years time with the first year interest payment covered by the Government. This is to support the charity with liquidity management during the ongoing pandemic.

20 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.