

Company registration number: 03440794

Charity registration number: 1090457

First Light South West Ltd

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 March 2024



First Light South West Ltd

Contents

Reference and Administrative Details	1
Trustees' Report	2 to 9
Independent Auditors' Report	10 to 12
Statement of Financial Activities	13
Balance Sheet	14
Statement of Cash Flows	15
Notes to the Financial Statements	16 to 33

First Light South West Ltd

Reference and Administrative Details

Chief Executive Officer	L Gooding
Trustees	B Van Loo-Born P Naylor (Resigned 17/10/2023) M Davies T Smith A A Foulger V Martin S Dupre-Echeverria A Chitty F Fueller C Jones A H Young (Appointed 19/03/2024) H Frumson Belitsky (Appointed 13/03/2024) C Lewis (Appointed 13/03/2024) K L Jones (Appointed 13/03/2024) S J Snyder (Appointed 13/03/2024)
Secretary	R Baker
Charity Registration Number	1090457
Company Registration Number	03440794
Registered Office	The Business Centre 2 Cattedown Road Plymouth PL4 0EG
Auditor	Westcotts (SW) LLP Plym House 3 Longbridge Road Plymouth Marsh Mills Devon PL6 8LT

First Light South West Ltd

Trustees' Report

The Trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

First Light exists to improve the lives of current and future generations affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence. The charity's purpose and objectives are to:

- ☐ provide specialist services for those who are affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence,
- ☐ benefit the public by associating together the inhabitants, local authorities, and other public sector bodies, voluntary and community organisations in a common effort to improve conditions of life of those affected by inter-personal violence,
- ☐ increase public awareness of the impacts of such harmful behaviours on individuals and society as a whole,
- ☐ increase public education to reduce the likelihood of such harmful behaviours.
- ☐ Educate and Prevent through early intervention, training and campaigning,
- ☐ Protect and Support through the provision of services to help safeguard and reach out to those suffering Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence,
- ☐ Cope and Recover by providing a full range of services to help people build resilience and move on to healthier happier lives,
- ☐ Give a Voice to those who suffer in silence and influence others to bring about positive change.

Our mission, vision and values demonstrates the charity's future ambitions to evolve and grow the service to tackle the harmful effects of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The vision of our charity is a place where we live in safety free from Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse. While our mission is to work together to build safer lives free from Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

All this activity is underpinned by our organisational values:

Trust
Integrity
Respect
Progression
Collaboration

The 2024 aim of our charity is to be the domestic abuse and sexual violence organisation that is recognised as impactful, effective and efficient, and that the community want to:

- ☐ Be supported by, when in crisis.
- ☐ Work or volunteer for.
- ☐ Fund or commission.

First Light South West Ltd

Trustees' Report

- ☐ Personally support by giving financially, pro-bono skills and or experience and time.
- ☐ Partner with to deliver integrated services.
- ☐ Its forecasts for levels of income for the current and future years, taking into account the reliability of each source of income and the prospects for developing new income sources
- ☐ Its forecasts for expenditure for the current and future years on the basis of planned activity
- ☐ Its analysis of any future needs, opportunities, commitments or risks, where future income alone is likely to fall short of the amount of the anticipated costs
- ☐ Its assessment, on the best evidence reasonably available, of the likelihood of a shortfall arising which means that reserves are necessary, and the potential consequences for the charity of not being able to make up the shortfall

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year and this is formalised during the Trustee's Annual Away days. This review looks at what we achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous 12 months coupled with setting annual objectives for the year ahead. The review looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to our beneficiaries. The review also helps us ensure our aim, objectives and activities remained focused on our stated purposes.

We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aim and objectives and in planning our future activities. The trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

The focus of our work

Our main priorities for the year were:

1. Continue to deliver safe, effective and value-for-money services meeting contractual volumes, standards and KPIs across all new services
2. Retain and secure current services that First Light are delivering by working with commissioners to deliver an adaptable and flexible programme.
3. Deliver clear and effective communications that promotes the work, mission, vision and values of First Light
4. Ensure our fundraising strategy helps address existing funding needs as well as support organisational growth to develop new areas of business
5. Give a voice and enable people affected by Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence to be heard

Public benefit

The Trustees have complied with the duty in section 17(5) of the Charities Act to have due regard to guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Our main activities and who we help are described below.

All our charitable activities focus on the provision of specialist services for victims of violence and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

Who used and benefited from our services:

First Light South West Ltd

Trustees' Report

Our objects and funding limit the services we provide to those who reside in our service areas in the United Kingdom.

We believe domestic abuse and sexual violence is everybody's business. Domestic abuse and sexual violence do not discriminate between their victims and affects the whole of society. We believe equal access to our services is vital to our success and that successful outcomes must be shared by all communities that use our services. We monitor all our referrals against the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. We review the ethnicity of our referrals against census information, released by the areas in which we provide services.

The impact of our work goes far beyond those we help directly and includes families and friends. Our active liaison with local community groups has helped significantly in raising awareness of domestic abuse and sexual violence, creating better local understanding of our work, while we also continue to highlight and promote our services through our websites, which last year was viewed by 118,694 users.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Fundraising activities

First Light is registered with the Fundraiser Regulator and does not retain commercial participators, nor conduct telephone direct marketing activities. All fundraising was delivered based on voluntary contributions to the charity and the charity received no complaints about its fundraising practices.

First Light's fundraising strategy sets out our ambitions for the next three years. Our Head of Development and his team are responsible for realising these ambitions and together with the assistance of the senior management team, are responsible for the implementation of the strategy.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The charities reserves as at 31 March 2024 are £1,916,180 (2023 £2,208,329). Of this £603,299 are unrestricted reserves (2023 £695,545) and £1,312,881 (2022 £1,512,784) are restricted.

Principal funding sources

The Charity's principal funding sources are through the provision of commissioned services for domestic abuse and sexual violence in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (Cornwall Council supported by funding from Charles Hayward Foundation, Devon & Cornwall Police, Cornwall Community Foundation, Access to Justice Foundation, Royal Cornwall Hospitals Charity), Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Wiltshire (NHS England supported by the, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Wiltshire, Wiltshire Community Foundation, Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Services in Devon and Cornwall (Police and Crime Commissioner supported by Henry Smith Charity, Cornwall Council, Diocese of Truro, Sexual Violence Therapy in Plymouth (Plymouth City Council, NHS England, The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Devon & Cornwall, Victim Support, Ministry of Justice, Rayne Foundation, Heydown Trust, Northbrook Community Trust), Safe Spaces advocacy service (Safe Spaces England & Wales).

The Trustees recognises the significant change in the national funding landscape between statutory and charitable provision, albeit somewhat restricted due to other cost of living pressures, continues to offer limited opportunities to address the increase in demand for those in need of support. The work of Development Team continues to maximise opportunities that incorporates both statutory commissioned contracts and charitable grants and donations.

First Light South West Ltd

Trustees' Report

Investment policy and objectives

Aside from retaining a prudent amount in reserves each year, the majority of the charity's funds are to be spent in the short term so there are few funds for long term investment. Having considered the options available, the Trustees have decided to put what is available on deposit, largely to ensure protection under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) as growth from interest is currently low. Given the nature of the charitable work, the Trustees observe social, environmental and ethical considerations and reasonable steps have been taken to ensure financial investments do not further activities which undermine charitable objectives. Whilst the charity has not yet utilised social investment, the opportunities are well understood and will be explored further in the years ahead.

RESERVES POLICY

When considering the charity's reserves policy, Trustees refer to the [Charity reserves: building resilience - GOV.UK](#) document and have applied an integrated approach to setting our reserves policy incorporating strategic, operational, and budgetary planning.

The charity's target level of reserves is informed by:

Utilising the Charity Commission guidance, trustees adopted the Charity Commission six step process, including consideration of the financial impact of risk. Based on that approach, Trustees have determined the unrestricted reserves target should be circa £650,000. Currently the charity's unrestricted reserves of £603,299 are with +/- 10% of the target figure.

FUTURE PLANS

The Trustees together with the senior management team will launch their 2024 – 2029 five year strategy which details the organisations aspiration to actively contribute to reshaping societal perspectives and responses to domestic abuse and sexual violence, fostering a climate conducive to meaningful change by:

- DO MORE – Scale up our response to domestic abuse and sexual violence to meet growing need
- DO IT WELL – Innovate to improve the quality, equity and equality of our service offer
- DO IT TOGETHER – Influence societal and system response to domestic abuse and sexual violence

During 2023-24 the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Devon & Cornwall commenced the re-procurement of the Devon & Cornwall Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service, in June 2024 commissioners decided to award the contract to a new provider with effect from 1st October 2024, which means all existing ISVA staff will TUPE to the new provider from that date, thereby reducing the overall establishment of the organisation by 17%.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 26th September 1997 and registered as a charity on the same date.

The company was established under a Memorandum of Association (updated in 2022-23 in response to securing our first national contract) which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

First Light South West Ltd

Trustees' Report

In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £10.

Trustee recruitment and appointment

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as The Trustees. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the members of The Trustees are elected to serve until the next Annual General Meeting when Trustees must retire by rotation prior to re-election at the next Annual General Meeting.

All members of the Board of Trustees give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity for their Trusteeship.

The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs of our victims are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body. The Trustees conduct an annual diversity audit to ensure the Board reflects the society it serves. Where gaps are identified, every effort is made to recruit and fill these gaps.

The more traditional business and strategy knowledge are well represented on the Board of Trustees. To create a diverse skill mix, Trustees undertake a Trustees Skills Audit annually and in the event of skills being lost due to retirements or identified as not present, individuals are approached to offer themselves for election to the Board of Trustees.

Organisational structure

Full responsibility for the running of the Charity is vested in the Trustees, who by reason of incorporation of the Charity are also Directors of the company. The company is limited by guarantee and does not hold any share capital. The Memorandum of Association precludes the Trustees/ Directors receiving any remuneration or benefits for the purposes of Trusteeship.

The Trustees have a membership that must be no less than three, who are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At present, the Trustees have fourteen members from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

A scheme of delegation is in place and day to day responsibility for the provision of the services rest with the Chief Executive, working with the Directors, Services and Business Administration Managers. The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the charity delivers the services specified and that key performance indicators are met. The Director of Governance & Compliance is to ensure appropriate governance and compliance across the organisation. The Service Managers have responsibility for the day to day operational management of the service area, individual supervision of the staff team and ensuring that the teams continue to develop their skills and working practices in line with national guidelines and recognised good practice.

Trustee induction and training

New trustees are invited to meet with members of the trustees and senior management team to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. These are jointly led by the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive of the charity and cover:

- The obligations of Trustee members.
- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity including the Memorandum and Articles.
- Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.

First Light South West Ltd

Trustees' Report

- Future plans and objectives and set out in the three-year business plan, funding strategy and business model documents.

A Question & Answer pack has also been prepared drawing information from the various Charity Commission publications signposted through the Commission's guide "the Essential Trustee". This is distributed to all new trustees along with the Memorandum and Articles and the latest financial statements.

As well as mandatory e-learning courses which include safeguarding, GDPR, equality & diversity, all Trustees also receive dedicated domestic abuse and sexual violence awareness training to help them better understand the purpose of the organisation.

Remuneration arrangements

Following the completion of the bi-annual terms, conditions and remuneration review, the Board of Trustees increased relevant salaries in line with the Real Living Wage for 2023 of £12 per hour, while all other staff were awarded a 7% pay rise with effect from 1st April 2023

Related parties

In so far as it is complimentary to the charity's objects, the charity is guided by both local and national policy.

Sexual violence

At a national level Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) services are steered by the current NHS England policy Strategic Direction for Sexual Assault and Abuse Services. Locally, the service is guided by NHS England as commissioners and a Swindon and Wiltshire SARC Board.

At a national level, Independent Sexual Violence Advisory services are steered by LimeCulture ISVA standards. Locally, it is led by the Police and Crime Commissioner as the local commissioner.

A national level, sexual violence counselling is led by the standards of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy. Locally, they are led by Plymouth City Council as the local commissioner.

Domestic Abuse

Nationally, domestic abuse services are guided by Home Office's Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan published March 2022.

Locally Cornwall Council's Action for a Safer Cornwall, Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Strategy 2023-2028. This is guided by the Community Safety Partnership (Safer Cornwall) Commissioner in partnership with statutory and voluntary service stakeholders through steering groups across the spectrum of domestic abuse pathways.

Risk management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. In order to mitigate the risk, the Director of Governance & Compliance's primary duty is to ensure appropriate governance and compliance across the organisation. This includes leading on key areas including; Health and Safety, Information Governance and Quality Standards.

First Light South West Ltd

Trustees' Report

The Board of Trustees review the risks to which the charity is exposed at every Board meeting. A risk register has been established and is reviewed by the Finance & Audit Committee, Operations Committee, Fundraising & Communications Committee as well as the Full Board on a quarterly basis. The principal risks are categorised as strategic, operational or financial and where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Internal control risks are minimised through policy and procedures.

Contractors Health and Safety Scheme (CHAS) accreditation is in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to the service centres. ISO 9001 accreditation ensure a consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the charity and the Fundraising Regulator oversees our fundraising practice and activities. These procedures are reviewed annually to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity, through an internal audit and then external accreditation compliance audits. Where appropriate, our services are accredited by national standards, such as the Quality Standards for Services Supporting Male Victims / Survivors recently achieved by our Swindon & Wiltshire SARC and Devon & Cornwall ISVA service.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of First Light South West Ltd for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the 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.

First Light South West Ltd

Trustees' Report

AUDITORS

The auditors, Westcotts, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 10th DECEMBER 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


.....
V Martin
Trustee

First Light South West Ltd

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of First Light South West Ltd

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of First Light South West Ltd (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising Charities SORP - FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, 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 responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

First Light South West Ltd

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of First Light South West Ltd

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.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the Trustees' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters 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 (set out on page), the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

First Light South West Ltd

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of First Light South West Ltd

We obtained an understanding of the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with management, and those charged with governance. These laws and regulations which were considered to have a materials effects on the financial statements or operations of the company were identified including following; Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011 and the Charities SORP, Employment Law, Health and Safety Act, Data Protection Act.

We obtain an understanding of the entity's policies and procedure for assessing fraud risk and identifying actual or alleged fraud by making enquiries with managements and those charged with governance and reviewing supporting correspondence with relevant and advisor.

We obtained an understanding of the effectiveness of the entities control environment by testing of management override of controls, which includes but is not limited to; testing of journal entries, review of assumptions and judgements made in accounting estimate, and reviewing transactions occurring outside the normal scope of business.

The use of qualified and experienced staff members to ensure the audit team is comprised of only competent and capable members who are able to recognise and document any instances of non-compliance. The audit team exercises professional judgement and maintains professional scepticism throughout the audit.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, 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 charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Adam Croney ACA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of
Westcotts (SW) LLP, Statutory Auditor
Plym House
3 Longbridge Road
Plymouth
Marsh Mills
Devon
PL6 8LT

Date: 17/12/24

First Light South West Ltd

**Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024
(Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total
Recognised Gains and Losses)**

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income and Endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	3	24,212	5,257,063	5,281,275	4,793,876
Charitable activities	4	5,230	-	5,230	1,600
Investment income	5	32,061	-	32,061	5,530
Total income		61,503	5,257,063	5,318,566	4,801,006
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	6	(84,671)	-	(84,671)	(50,909)
Charitable activities	7	(69,078)	(5,456,966)	(5,526,044)	(4,556,918)
Total expenditure		(153,749)	(5,456,966)	(5,610,715)	(4,607,827)
Net (expenditure)/income		(92,246)	(199,903)	(292,149)	193,179
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		695,545	1,512,784	2,208,329	2,015,150
Total funds carried forward	17	603,299	1,312,881	1,916,180	2,208,329

The notes on pages 16 to 33 form an integral part of these financial statements.

First Light South West Ltd

(Registration number: 03440794)
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	64,940	98,059
Current assets			
Debtors	14	149,150	418,960
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>2,453,833</u>	<u>2,031,880</u>
		2,602,983	2,450,840
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	15	<u>(751,743)</u>	<u>(340,570)</u>
Net current assets		<u>1,851,240</u>	<u>2,110,270</u>
Net assets		<u>1,916,180</u>	<u>2,208,329</u>
Funds of the charity:			
Unrestricted funds		603,299	695,547
Restricted funds		<u>1,312,881</u>	<u>1,512,782</u>
Total funds	17	<u>1,916,180</u>	<u>2,208,329</u>

The financial statements on pages 13 to 33 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on ~~10.12.24~~ and signed on their behalf by:


.....
V Martin
Trustee

First Light South West Ltd

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash (expenditure)/income		(292,149)	193,179
Adjustments to cash flows from non-cash items			
Depreciation	13	72,353	32,683
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets		972	-
Investment income	5	<u>(32,061)</u>	<u>(5,530)</u>
		(250,885)	220,332
Working capital adjustments			
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	14	269,810	(284,922)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	15	<u>411,173</u>	<u>(639,721)</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities		<u>430,098</u>	<u>(704,311)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received	5	32,061	5,530
Acquisitions of tangible assets		<u>(40,206)</u>	<u>(64,439)</u>
Net cash flows from investing activities		<u>(8,145)</u>	<u>(58,909)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	20	421,953	(763,220)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April		<u>2,031,880</u>	<u>2,795,100</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March		<u>2,453,833</u>	<u>2,031,880</u>

The notes on pages 16 to 33 form an integral part of these financial statements.

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

1 Charity status

The charity is limited by guarantee, incorporated in , and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

2 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of preparation

First Light South West Ltd meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the charity.

Income and endowments

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations and legacies

Voluntary income received by the way of donations and gifts are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts.

Grants receivable

Incoming resources from grants, including government grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance. Other grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant. Where applicable it is recognised as grants deferred.

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Investment income

Investment income is included when receivable.

Charitable activities

Incoming resources from other charitable activities are accounted for when earned.

Turnover is the amount derived from the provision of services and stated net of all applicable VAT.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries.

Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional statutory requirements and strategic management of the charity.

Termination payments are recognised at the date of payment.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £500.00 or more are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Plant and machinery	33% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	25% reducing balance

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Research and development

Research and development expenditure is written off as incurred.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Borrowings

Interest-bearing borrowings are initially recorded at fair value, net of transaction costs. Interest-bearing borrowings are subsequently carried at amortised cost, with the difference between the proceeds, net of transaction costs, and the amount due on redemption being recognised as a charge to the Statement of Financial Activities over the period of the relevant borrowing.

Interest expense is recognised on the basis of the effective interest method and is included in interest payable and similar charges.

Borrowings are classified as current liabilities unless the charity has an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least twelve months after the reporting date.

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Financial Instruments

Classification

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the charity after deducting all of its liabilities.

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Recognition and measurement

All financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs), except for those financial assets classified as at fair value through profit or loss, which are initially measured at fair value (which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs), unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction. If an arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, the financial asset or financial liability is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are only offset in the statement of financial position when, and only when there exists a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and the charity intends either to settle on a net basis, or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Financial assets are derecognised when and only when a) the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are settled, b) the charity transfers to another party substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of the financial asset, or c) the charity, despite having retained some, but not all, significant risks and rewards of ownership, has transferred control of the asset to another party.

Financial liabilities are derecognised only when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	2024 £	2023 £
Donations	22,212	22,246
Grants	5,259,063	4,771,630
	<u>5,281,275</u>	<u>4,793,876</u>

All donations in the period were unrestricted, £2,000 of grant income was unrestricted with the rest being income from restricted funds.

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Safer Cornwall (DASV Service)	1,906,438	2,402,336
Ministry of Justice	364,044	294,581
NHS, Police & Crime Commissioner for D&C, Safer Plymouth (Plymouth Counselling service)	119,445	162,279
Police & Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall	1,520	236,093
Police and Crime Commissioner - D&C ISVA	878,374	772,770
Gloucester Health & Care NHS England - W&S SARC	294,472	131,126
Diocese South West	2,000	2,000
NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)	193,949	185,171
Cornwall Foundation Trust Emergency Fund	2,000	1,000
Charles Hayward Foundation	-	25,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	20,000	20,000

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Gloucester Health & Care NHS Foundation Trust	-	22,579
Henry Smith Charity	60,000	60,000
The Norman Family Charitable Trust	-	2,000
Persimmons Homes Community Champions	-	1,000
Access to Justice Foundation	51,431	13,000
Victim Support	130,000	130,000
Dutchy Health	-	11,740
The Hobson Charity	-	4,000
Cornwall Council - D&C ISVA	43,050	83,363
Children's Society	-	40,199
Clear	-	20,000
Great Western Railways	-	2,250
Weinstock Fund	-	3,000
Safe Spaces	336,143	112,833
Cash 4 Kids	-	2,350
Souter Charitable Trust	-	3,000
Jamieson-Bystock	-	2,000
Albert Hunt-Trust	-	4,000
Co-op Community Fund	-	7,020
Rayne Foundation	20,000	-
Northbrook Community Trust	15,000	-
Tesco Community Grant	2,125	-
Royal Cornwall Hospitals Charity	12,694	-
Cornwall Supporting Families	247,892	-
Heydown Trust	750	-
Wiltshire Community Fund	5,000	-
Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire	552,736	14,940
	5,259,063	4,771,630

Of these £4,833,511 (2023: £4,305,238) are government grants.

4 Income from charitable activities

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Training	5,230	1,600

First Light South West Ltd**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024****5 Investment income**

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Deposit account interest	<u>32,061</u>	<u>5,530</u>

6 Expenditure on raising funds

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Staff costs	66,550	34,465
Telephone	1,141	20
Postage and stationery	18	59
Fundraising expenses	9,007	4,888
Training	-	597
Subscriptions	4,258	2,959
Travel	754	1,113
Web maintenance and support	1,554	6,625
Recruitment costs	<u>1,389</u>	<u>183</u>
	<u>84,671</u>	<u>50,909</u>

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

7 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Activity undertaken directly £	Grant funding of activity £	Activity support costs £	2024 £
Cornwall DASV	1,254,032	615,712	328,000	2,197,744
Plymouth Therapy	265,248	23,030	284,158	572,436
Devon & Cornwall ISVA	957,544	100,920	340,302	1,398,766
Wiltshire SARC	200,408	-	82,329	282,737
Safe Spaces	191,107	-	79,919	271,026
Swindon & Wiltshire ISVA	306,244	-	200,776	507,020
CC-Together for families	191,818	-	65,200	257,018
Training	27,929	-	11,368	39,297
	<u>3,394,330</u>	<u>739,662</u>	<u>1,392,052</u>	<u>5,526,044</u>

	Activity undertaken directly £	Grant funding of activity £	Activity support costs £	2023 £
Cornwall DASV	1,342,981	809,259	302,087	2,454,327
Plymouth Therapy	349,507	70,000	256,463	675,970
Devon & Cornwall ISVA	826,074	45,000	181,984	1,053,058
Wiltshire SARC	272,182	-	53,156	325,338
Safe Spaces	36,014	-	7,182	43,196
Swindon & Wiltshire ISVA	217	-	4,812	5,029
	<u>2,826,975</u>	<u>924,259</u>	<u>805,684</u>	<u>4,556,918</u>

All expenditure on charitable activities is use of restricted funds except for training expenditure, which is entirely unrestricted (£38,730 not including depreciation), and unrestricted depreciation (£30,348) which is apportioned between departments based on support cost allocations.

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

8 Grant-making

Analysis of grants

	2024 £	2023 £
Analysis		
Devon & Cornwall ISVA	100,920	45,000
Cornwall DASV	615,712	809,259
Counselling	23,030	70,000
	<u>739,662</u>	<u>924,259</u>

Below are details of material grants made to institutions

	2024 £	2023 £
Name of institution		
Operation Emotion	52,655	57,500
MoMENTum Devon CIC	52,655	57,500
Survivors Alliance Partnership	18,640	-
Cornwall Refuge Trust	-	25,000
Barnardos	615,712	784,259
	<u>739,662</u>	<u>924,259</u>

9 Analysis of support costs

Support costs have been allocated based upon usage to deliver each activity as assessed by the Board of the Trustees.

	Premises £	Office £	Staffing £	Travel £	Other £	Governance £	Total £
Cornwall DASV	58,038	69,468	108,373	34,064	45,910	12,147	328,000
Counselling	228,091	23,874	22,805	659	7,090	1,639	284,158
D&C ISVA	35,891	87,190	125,677	51,013	32,025	8,506	340,302
Wiltshire SARC	6,487	29,378	30,628	3,653	9,779	2,404	82,329
W&S ISVA	7,966	49,194	96,846	26,330	15,056	5,384	200,776
Safe spaces	3,838	16,481	44,201	4,980	7,815	2,604	79,919
Training	406	2,890	6,751	248	805	268	11,368
Together for families	5,606	14,087	32,509	4,282	5,801	2,915	65,200
Total	<u>346,323</u>	<u>292,562</u>	<u>467,790</u>	<u>125,229</u>	<u>124,281</u>	<u>35,867</u>	<u>1,392,052</u>

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

10 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net (outgoing)/incoming resources for the year include:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Audit fees	8,500	5,385
Other non-audit services	3,250	6,585
Loss on disposal of fixed assets held for the charity's own use	972	-
Depreciation of fixed assets	<u>72,353</u>	<u>32,683</u>

11 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

The amount of travel expenses reimbursed to the trustees during the year totalled £545 (2023 - £Nil).

12 Staff costs

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
Salaries	3,159,668	2,339,400
Social security	262,657	204,974
Employers pension	<u>61,808</u>	<u>45,766</u>
	<u>3,484,133</u>	<u>2,590,140</u>

The pension liability outstanding as at 31 March 2024 is £24,344 (2023: £8,579). Pension costs are allocated to different funds in line with the time each employee spends on each activity.

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management / leadership team) employed by the charity during the year expressed as full time equivalents was as follows:

	2024 No	2023 No
Central	13	7
Cornwall DASV	53	48
D&C ISVA	32	27
Fundraising	2	2
Counselling	9	9
Wiltshire SARC	13	10
Safe spaces	5	2
S&W ISVA	8	-
Training	1	-
Together for families	<u>5</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>141</u>	<u>105</u>

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

The number of employees whose emoluments fell within the following bands was:

	2024 No	2023 No
£60,001 - £70,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and machinery £	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	207,000	24,309	231,309
Additions	33,919	6,287	40,206
Disposals	<u>(78,543)</u>	<u>(14,943)</u>	<u>(93,486)</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>162,376</u>	<u>15,653</u>	<u>178,029</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	116,663	16,587	133,250
Charge for the year	68,851	3,502	72,353
Eliminated on disposal	<u>(78,360)</u>	<u>(14,154)</u>	<u>(92,514)</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>107,154</u>	<u>5,935</u>	<u>113,089</u>
Net book value			
At 31 March 2024	<u>55,222</u>	<u>9,718</u>	<u>64,940</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>73,526</u>	<u>24,533</u>	<u>98,059</u>

14 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	29,858	311,730
Prepayments	59,310	107,230
Accrued income	<u>59,982</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>149,150</u>	<u>418,960</u>

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	319,491	225,518
Other taxation and social security	61,185	46,732
Other creditors	<u>371,067</u>	<u>68,320</u>
	<u>751,743</u>	<u>340,570</u>

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Income has been deferred so that it is recognised in the period to which it relates.

	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred income at 1 April 2023	43,050	852,431
Resources deferred in the period	317,513	-
Amounts released from previous periods	<u>(43,050)</u>	<u>(809,381)</u>
Deferred income at year end	<u>317,513</u>	<u>43,050</u>

16 Obligations under leases and hire purchase contracts

The total value of future minimum lease payments was as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Within one year	27,161	142,650
In two to five years	<u>101,989</u>	<u>3,917</u>
	<u>129,150</u>	<u>146,567</u>

17 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds				
General				
General fund	695,545	61,503	(153,749)	603,299
Restricted funds				
Safer Cornwall	732,714	1,949,488	(2,334,859)	347,343
Ministry of Justice	191,402	364,044	(387,638)	167,808
Police & Crime Commissioner for Devon & Cornwall	42,268	875,369	(832,466)	85,171
NHS England - Wiltshire SARC	198,518	294,472	(246,434)	244,556
NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group	-	193,949	(193,949)	-
NHS, OPCC, Safer Plymouth - Therapy	233,419	122,450	(100,950)	254,919
Devon Community Foundation	497	-	(400)	97
Cornwall Foundation Trust				
Emergency Fund	727	2,000	(952)	1,775
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	20,000	(20,000)	-

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Henry Smith Charity	-	60,000	(60,000)	-
Northbrook Community Trust	-	15,000	(15,000)	-
The Big Give	265	-	(265)	-
Access to Justice Foundation	-	51,431	(51,431)	-
Victim Support	-	130,000	(130,000)	-
Dutchy Health	4,798	-	(4,798)	-
The Hobson Charity	2,978	-	(2,978)	-
National Benevolent Charity	10,000	-	(10,000)	-
Wiltshire Community Foundation	5,000	5,000	(10,000)	-
Great Western Railways	2,250	-	(2,250)	-
Weinstock Fund	3,000	-	(3,000)	-
Safe Spaces	69,638	336,143	(268,464)	137,317
Swindon & Wiltshire ISVA	9,910	552,736	(493,193)	69,453
Cash 4 Kids	1,400	-	(1,400)	-
Albert Hunt Trust	4,000	-	(4,000)	-
Rayne Foundation	-	20,000	(15,558)	4,442
Tesco Community Grant	-	2,125	(2,125)	-
Royal Cornwall Hospitals Charity	-	12,694	(12,694)	-
Cornwall Supporting Families	-	247,892	(247,892)	-
Heydown Trust	-	750	(750)	-
Devon & Cornwall Police	-	1,520	(1,520)	-
Total restricted funds	1,512,784	5,257,063	(5,456,966)	1,312,881
Total funds	2,208,329	5,318,566	(5,610,715)	1,916,180
	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds				
General				
General fund	724,470	31,376	(60,301)	695,545
Restricted				
Safer Cornwall	628,433	2,402,334	(2,298,053)	732,714
BBC Children in Need	23,969	-	(23,969)	-
Ministry of Justice	3,829	294,582	(107,009)	191,402
NHS England	45,000	-	(45,000)	-

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Police & Crime Commissioner for Devon & Cornwall	142,742	772,772	(873,246)	42,268
NHS England - Wiltshire SARC	131,025	131,123	(63,630)	198,518
NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group	-	185,171	(185,171)	-
NHS, OPCC, Safer Plymouth - Therapy	189,897	162,282	(118,760)	233,419
National Lottery Awards For All	8,978	-	(8,978)	-
Devon Community Foundation	552	-	(55)	497
Cornwall Foundation Trust Emergency Fund	655	999	(927)	727
CAST	1	-	(1)	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	1,768	20,000	(21,768)	-
Charles Hayward Foundation	-	25,000	(25,000)	-
Gloucestershire Health & Care NHS Foundation Trust	-	22,579	(22,579)	-
Henry Smith Charity	-	60,000	(60,000)	-
Northbrook Community Trust	15,000	-	(15,000)	-
Police & Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire and Swindon	-	236,093	(236,093)	-
Ecclesiastical	50,000	-	(50,000)	-
Volant Charitable Trust	5,000	-	(5,000)	-
The Norman Family Charitable Trust	-	2,000	(2,000)	-
Persimmon Homes	-	1,000	(1,000)	-
The Gibbons Family Trust	2,000	-	(2,000)	-
The John Casson Foundation	1,000	-	(1,000)	-
The Truemark Trust	3,000	-	(3,000)	-
Lord Barnby's Foundation	2,000	-	(2,000)	-
ZVM Rangoonwala Foundation	500	-	(500)	-
The Big Give	331	-	(66)	265
Cornwall Community Foundation	20,000	-	(20,000)	-
Access to Justice Foundation	-	13,000	(13,000)	-
Victim Support	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Dutchy Health	-	11,739	(6,941)	4,798
The Hobson Charity	-	4,001	(1,023)	2,978
National Benevolent Charity	10,000	-	-	10,000

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Wiltshire Community Foundation	5,000	-	-	5,000
Cornwall Council - D&C ISVA	-	83,363	(83,363)	-
Children's Society	-	40,199	(40,199)	-
Clear	-	20,000	(20,000)	-
Victim Support - Therapy	-	125,000	(125,000)	-
Great Western Railways	-	2,250	-	2,250
Weinstock Fund	-	3,000	-	3,000
Safe Spaces	-	112,834	(43,196)	69,638
Swindon & Wiltshire ISVA	-	14,939	(5,029)	9,910
Co-op Local Community Fund - Cornwall DA	-	3,219	(3,219)	-
Co-op Local Community Fund - Plymouth Therapy	-	3,801	(3,801)	-
Cash 4 Kids	-	2,350	(950)	1,400
Souter Charitable Trust	-	3,000	(3,000)	-
Jamieson-Bystock Trust	-	2,000	(2,000)	-
Albert Hunt Trust	-	4,000	-	4,000
Total restricted funds	1,290,680	4,769,630	(4,547,526)	1,512,784
Total funds	2,015,150	4,801,006	(4,607,827)	2,208,329

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

18 Purpose of Restricted Funds

Cornwall Foundation Trust Emergency Fund provides funds that support clients needs in Cornwall for travel

Safer Cornwall funds provide Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) and Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (DASV) services across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Safer Plymouth funds are to contribute towards the cost of providing sexual violence therapeutic services in Plymouth.

BBC Children In Need funds are for the salary and related costs for a Family Support Worker and a Children and Young Person's IDVA for the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly DASV Service for 18 months and 12 months respectively. The project will deliver support services for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. The services will reduce feelings of isolation, increase understanding healthy relationships and improve self esteem.

Ministry of Justice funds are to contribute towards the direct costs of providing therapeutic services to victims of sexual violence and abuse, ISVA services and domestic abuse services.

NHS England continue to fund a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) service in Wiltshire. The CCG (Integrated Care Board) contributed to the charity's office rent and rates in Plymouth. Additional funds this year received to provide therapy services for sexual violence clients in Devon.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) funds are contributed specifically for the provision of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) in Devon and Cornwall.

National Lottery Awards for All are to improve our communications to reach men, LGBTQ+, people with learning difficulties, and people who speak a foreign language. By providing funds for marketing material, easy read translations to leaflets/posts and providing telephone and in person language interpretation. Funds are also to contribute towards the cost of providing a therapy triage for abuse victims.

Cornwall Foundation Trust Emergency Fund provides funds that support clients needs in Cornwall for travel and mobile phone credit.

Devon & Cornwall Police provided funds to provide domestic abuse trained staff to cover a rota for a Friday and Saturday evening to work alongside the police during out of hours when the police were called to a potential domestic abuse incident.

Barclays 100x100 UK Covid-19 Community Relief fund supported the recruitment of 4 staff members to expand the Covid Helpline Response team for a period of 12 months.

Tudor Trust funds supported the wellbeing of staff, volunteers and trustees and also to fund a project which aims to appropriately coordinate and grow the therapeutic services offered to victims of historical sexual abuse in response to increasing needs.

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Tesco Bags for Help funds support children and young people requiring therapeutic recovery as a result of abuse and violence during the covid-19 pandemic.

The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust funds support sexual violence triage administrator as a point of contact across Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly.

Devon Community Foundation provide a fund available to support clients in need with travel, accommodation, mobile phones/topups who live in Devon.

Garfield Weston Triage is to fund a .5FTE North Devon & Exeter ISVA post for three years commencing April 2021.

Northbrook Community Trust, The John Casson Foundation, The Gibbons Family Trust, The Truemark Trust, Lorn Barnby's Foundation and ZVM Rangoonwala Foundation are to contribute towards under 11s sexual violence play therapy in Devon over three years.

Ecclesiastical is to support set up and running costs for the Volunteer Mentoring scheme for Cornwall DASV service and to set up a training arm.

Volant Charitable Trust and Noel Buxton Trust are to support set up and running costs for the Volunteer Mentoring scheme for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly DASV service.

The Big Give provides income to enable First Light to fundraise using social media platforms.

National Benevolent Charity and Wiltshire Community Foundation provide contributions towards the salary costs for an Engagement and Outreach role at the Wiltshire SARC.

Cornwall Community Foundation provide a fund available to support clients in need with travel, accommodation, mobile phones/topups, who live in Cornwall.

Charles Hayward contributes towards staff costs for the Recovery Pathway Administrator within the DASV service.

CAST funded a project for multiple organisations in the DASV sector to come together to design a digital tool for use in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Gloucestershire NHS cover the salary costs of the Clinical Director employed by the Swindon & Wiltshire SARC due to a secondment arrangement.

Henry Smith match fund a post within the Devon & Cornwall ISVA service, and further support the ISVA Triage post for the same service that was already funded by Henry Smith.

Police & Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire & Swindon provide funding for a 1.5 FTE Crisis Support Advocate posts their role is to support the ISVA service clients in Swindon & Wiltshire due to there being a waiting list for that service currently.

Norman Family provide funding towards the Devon & Cornwall ISVA triage service.

Persimmon Homes support the Devon Sexual Violence Therapy Service.

Hendy Foundation provided funding for SV advice and support for men. The budget includes promotion costs for males for the SARC and ISVA service, and clothing/toiletries for males at the SARC

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Asda Foundation gifted a donation from the Digital Green Token Giving programme for the Swindon & Wiltshire SARC.

European Regional Development provided funding for translation, proofreading, typesetting and final check for 3 leaflets in Romanian, Nepali and Polish and amendments to include foreign language QR code.

Leathersellers fund is to support victims of historical sexual abuse.

Access to Justice Foundation is a contribution to offer legal clinic sessions and access to legal advice.

Victim Support is commissioned funding for Cornwall Domestic Abuse Isles of Scilly service.

The Hobson Charity is a contribution for IT equipment to allow efficient hot desking for the Cornwall Domestic Abuse helpline.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly- a grant partnership with The Children's Society funding the provision of therapeutic support for children and young people.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly- a grant partnership with Operation Emotion and MoMentum to provide sexual violence and abuse peer support for men.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly - a grant partnership with CLEAR to provide adult therapy within the Plymouth sexual violence therapy service.

Great Western Railways Customer and Communities Improvement Fund is a contribution for client transport to and from the Wiltshire and Swindon SARC.

Weinstock Fund is a contribution to a part time Engagement and Outreach Co-ordinator at the Wiltshire and Swindon SARC service.

Safe Spaces is for national support for victims and survivors of church related abuse.

Co-op Local Community Fund is a contribution for children and young people Plymouth sexual violence therapy service.

Cash4Kids is Bauer Radios Pirate FM cash for kids scheme providing vouchers for children affected by the cost of living crisis.

Souter Charitable Trust is a grant to support the Cornwall Domestic Abuse Volunteer Mentoring programme.

Jamieson-Bystock Trust is a contribution for CYP ISVA in Torbay and South Devon within the Devon and Cornwall ISVA service..

Albert Hunt Trust is a grant towards recovery pathways supporting children and young people in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly within the Cornwall DA service.

First Light South West Ltd

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

19 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31 March 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	15,839	49,101	64,940
Current assets	647,006	1,955,977	2,602,983
Current liabilities	(59,546)	(692,197)	(751,743)
Total net assets	<u>603,299</u>	<u>1,312,881</u>	<u>1,916,180</u>
	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31 March 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	35,753	62,306	98,059
Current assets	735,835	1,715,005	2,450,840
Current liabilities	(76,041)	(264,529)	(340,570)
Total net assets	<u>695,547</u>	<u>1,512,782</u>	<u>2,208,329</u>

20 Analysis of net funds

	At 1 April 2023 £	Financing cash flows £	At 31 March 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>2,031,880</u>	<u>421,953</u>	<u>2,453,833</u>
	At 1 April 2022 £	Financing cash flows £	At 31 March 2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>2,795,100</u>	<u>(763,220)</u>	<u>2,031,880</u>

21 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year.

Key management personnel remuneration totalled £61,936 (2023: £61,387)



FIRST LIGHT

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Support for All

Our Impact

Report 2023 - 2024

First Light South West Ltd

Because
it's
not just
someone
else's story.

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence affects us all.

Every year, thousands of family members, friends, colleagues and children are impacted by sexual violence and domestic abuse.

That's why we offer a range of supportive services in Devon, Cornwall, the Isles of Scilly, Swindon, Wiltshire, and across England & Wales.

First Light represents the strength, courage, and resilience of anyone impacted by abuse, the dedication of all our team members, and every unheard voice.

We stand proudly as an independent voice, where everyone will be believed, heard, and supported, no matter their gender, age, or ethnicity. Because everyone who has experienced abuse deserves to be heard, and blame should be aimed solely at the perpetrators.

Our impact report is just a small reflection of our work and the journey of those affected by abuse.



“For the first time,
someone actually listened.”



OUR MISSION

First Light supports individuals of any age, gender or sexuality who have been affected by domestic abuse and/or sexual violence.

We are independent from statutory agencies, including the Police.

OUR VISION

A society where everyone lives in safety free from sexual violence and domestic abuse.

OUR VALUES

- Trust
- Integrity
- Respect
- Progression
- Collaboration

OUR OBJECTIVES

- Educate & Prevent** through early intervention, training and campaigning.
- Protect & Support** through the provision of services to help safeguard and reach out to those suffering Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.
- Cope & Recover** by providing a full range of services to help people build resilience and move on to healthier happier lives.
- Give a Voice** to those who suffer in silence and influence others to bring about positive change.

Contents Overview

Page	
6	Lyn Gooding - CEO of First Light
7	Michelle Davies - Chair of Trustees
9	Sexual Violence Services
11	Devon & Cornwall - Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service
13	Swindon & Wiltshire - Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service
15	Swindon & Wiltshire - Sexual Assault Referral Centre
17	Plymouth - Sexual Violence Counselling Service
19	Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly - Domestic Abuse Services
21	Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly - Safer Futures - Domestic Abuse Service
23	England & Wales - Safe Spaces - Church-Related Abuse Service
26	16 Days of Action to End Violence against Women and Girls
27	Healthy Relationships & Toxic Behaviours Awareness Month
28	Professional Training
30	Our Charity Partnerships for 2024
33	Community Fundraising
34	Our Impact 2023 - 2024
36	Financial Performance
37	Our Funders and Partners
37	Thank you from First Light
38	Whats next for First Light?

Lyn Gooding

CEO of First Light

As the CEO of First Light, I am honoured to present our annual impact report, which reflects the dedication and resilience of our team and the individuals we support. Over the past year, we have witnessed the strength of many people reaching out for support, whether through the legal and justice system, building a better future, or finding the courage to share their experiences of abuse. Our teams have been dedicated to providing the necessary support, working together to ensure every voice is heard, believed, and supported.

In 2023-2024, we saw a continued and urgent need for our services, leading to the growth of First Light. We secured the Swindon and Wiltshire Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service, joining our Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Swindon & Wiltshire. This vital support is available for anyone who has experienced rape or sexual assault, ensuring easy access to our services.

Our Devon and Cornwall Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service commissioning has been delayed from 2023, but we will continue to operate the service with our funding until 2024, when the commissioning process will resume.

In January 2023, we secured the national Safe Spaces, church-related abuse service, which we have continued to expand and develop over the past year. This includes implementing a new accessible website, increasing the team, and working with survivors’ voices to provide the necessary support. In 2024, Rocket Science published their independent Safe Spaces evaluation report, which found significant improvements in the service since it had been recommissioned in 2023. While there is further work to do, this is a huge credit to the Safe Spaces team and their dedication.

Our integrated Domestic Abuse, Safer Futures service has continued to build new partnerships to ensure everyone has access to the support they need. With our Primary Care service, we have seen an incredible rise in confidence from GPs recognising the signs of domestic abuse and knowing how to help patients access the support they need discreetly and safely, through training and support from our primary care team.

Over the past year, we launched two exciting campaigns. Our #Pledge4Change campaign, part of 16 Days of Change, made three clear pledges: creating change, leaving no voice unheard, and

empowering everyone. Through this, we launched training to enable organisations to provide the right help and support to anyone affected by abuse, understanding how to take a disclosure and the depths of both domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We have also seen tremendous support from the community and volunteers, dedicating their time, skills, and strength to help anyone affected by abuse. Whether raising money to support our services, buying essential equipment, or volunteering their time, their contributions have been invaluable. We have also been chosen as the charity partner of the year for three organisations in 2024. It has been great working with them in the first quarter of the year, and we look forward to what the rest of the year will bring.

On behalf of First Light, I want to thank everyone who has made the past year possible, providing the support needed and helping us ensure every voice is heard. I hope you enjoy reading about our achievements over the past year and some of the incredible stories that have been shared with you.

Lyn Gooding
CEO of First Light

Michelle Davies

Chair of Trustees

On behalf of the board, I wish to extend a huge thanks to every member of staff, our volunteers, and all our partners, sponsors, and supporters for the incredible work that is carried out day in day out for those who need us.

Our mission and vision is central to all we do and this impact report is just a snapshot of what that work looks like day to day. It is more than just a series of impact reports or data that speak to a endemic of sexual violence and domestic abuse but a testimony to the truth of each and every person, regardless of gender or age who accesses our services.

The work that First Light carries out continues to see increasing demand in all the different services we operate across our geography. It is clear from this impact report that we are incredibly fortunate to have such amazing staff and volunteers who despite all the challenges continue to advocate and support people who need us.

The trustees continue to ensure that there is a clear commitment to always doing more for those who need our services but also seeking to educate and prevent by raising awareness of sexual violence and domestic abuse.

In the next 12 months we will look to the:

- Recommissioning of Safer Futures
- Recommissioning of Plymouth Sexual Violence Therapy service
- Mobilisation of Devon & Cornwall ISVA service
- Review our organisational structure
- Launch our organisational voice with a series of campaigns
- Expand our external training offer
- Drive more opportunities through our fundraising
- Look for further expansion opportunities

I do hope you enjoying reading this impact report and seeing the work that we carry out for so many that truly changes lives.

Michelle Davies
Chair of Trustees

Client supported by our multiple services

“I would like to take the opportunity to sincerely thank you for your incredibly kind and compassionate support over the past five years. In my opinion, my First Light counsellors have gone above and beyond any reasonable expectation of customary service.

The support allowed me to comprehend and understand, after 45 years, that I was not responsible for the abuse inflicted upon me at such a young age. Without their encouragement and early identification that the accused demonstrated paedophile characteristics, and that there may be others who had suffered, I would have never considered contacting the police.

Prior to the court case, I was most definitely broken due to the trauma. The support from my ISVA provided the stability that I so desperately needed. I was completely overwhelmed and broken. My ISVA held me together; without their support, I do not believe I could have ever imagined being sufficiently strong enough to attend court.

Leading up to the court hearing and during the daily court sessions, it was particularly traumatic. I'm certain that for a period following this trial and the upcoming sentencing hearing—where I will have the opportunity to read out my “Victim Impact Statement” (another part of the healing process)—I will still face challenges.

I feel as though I have dropped off, at the court, the monster that has been on my back for the past 50 years, particularly as the judge ordered that he should be taken down to prison immediately by the court's sergeants to await sentencing. I do not consider it a win or a victory, just simply a recognition by the highest authority in the land that it was wrong and I have suffered for more than 50 years as a direct result of the abuse inflicted upon me as a child of 10 years old.

Without First Light's incredible support and your initiating actions to allocate resources to support me, this positive outcome may have never been achieved. I want you to be proud of your involvement in my journey to find justice, and to acknowledge the two fabulous counsellors who have assisted in the healing of a lifetime of trauma.

Thank you so much, First Light.”

Sexual Violence Services

We operate several essential sexual violence services across the South West to provide support to anyone who has experienced sexual assault, rape, or sexual abuse. We recognise all forms of sexual violence and know that anyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or sexuality, can be affected.

All of our services ensure that individuals are believed, listened to, and supported in a non-judgemental environment. We are here for anyone, and we will stand with them in their decisions, helping to ensure they have the right advice and guidance during their journey.

All our services are independent of the police and other agencies.

Our Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is here to support people who have experienced sexual assault or rape. This service does not require them to report to the police and provides medical support, guidance, clothing, well-being checks, and forensic examinations. The SARC gives them time and control over what they want to do next. Forensic evidence can be stored for up to 2 years, which can be extended, giving them the time to take the path that is right for them.

If they choose to report, the police can access the forensics to aid with their investigations. The police can also refer them to the SARC after a sexual assault or rape.

There is no time limit to accessing the SARC. We can explain the support options available and make referrals to specialist services to support them on this journey.

Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service

The Independent Sexual Violence Advisory (ISVA) service provides independent support for people who have experienced a recent or historic rape or sexual assault. Their Independent Sexual Violence Advisor will provide one-on-one support, assisting with reporting to the police, the police investigation, and the court process. They will explain each step of what is happening, liaise with agencies on their behalf, and signpost them to other services for additional support.

This service also supports friends and family members of children and young people during this journey, helping them understand what is happening, communicating clearly, and creating a safe environment for everyone. Our ISVA service will support them throughout the criminal justice process, which can take up to 2-4 years to get an outcome. However, if the investigation is closed or does not make it to court, we will continue to help them access other services for ongoing support.

We also provide support to those who have not reported but are considering what they should do. Our ISVAs will discuss their options with them and how these might be best applied to their individual situation.

Sexual Violence Counselling

Our Sexual Violence Counselling service provides free, essential support to anyone who has experienced recent, historic, or childhood sexual violence, rape, or sexual assault. We provide trauma-informed counselling and crucial pre- and post-trial support to those engaged with the legal process.

We offer counselling to children and parents, to anyone who has experienced sexual violence or rape, and help connect them with other services for additional support

Child and Young People ISVA

“As a Child and Young Persons Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (CYP ISVA), my journey with clients is both challenging and rewarding. Each day brings new experiences and opportunities to make a meaningful impact on the lives of young people who have faced unimaginable trauma. My role is to support children and young people who have reported rape and sexual assault to the police and are navigating the complexities of the criminal justice process.

Supporting Young Clients

I work with young people under the age of 18, but if a client turns 18 while under my care, I continue to support them to ensure continuity and stability. When working with very young children, my focus often shifts to supporting their parents, helping them understand the process so they can best support their child. This dual approach ensures that both the child and their family feel supported and informed.

The Police Investigation

During the police investigation, my primary goal is to keep the young person informed and engaged. This involves explaining the police process, providing updates, and helping them make informed choices. I spend a lot of time talking to both the young person and their parents and guardians, reassuring them that, despite the often lengthy timeframes, the police are doing everything they can to investigate thoroughly. This stage is crucial for maintaining the young person's trust and engagement in the process.

Navigating the Court Process

The court process can be particularly daunting for young clients and their families. I ensure they understand what to expect, often arranging pre-trial court visits to make the environment feel less intimidating. I liken these visits to a museum tour, helping the young person feel more comfortable and able to ask questions. On the day of

the trial, I am there to support them as they give their evidence, providing a familiar and reassuring presence. This support extends to the parents, who often find this stage very difficult. If there is a guilty verdict, I also attend the sentencing to help the family understand the outcome and provide emotional support during this overwhelming time.

Emotional and Practical Support

Beyond the criminal justice process, I provide emotional support to my clients. While I am not a counsellor, I offer a listening ear and a non-judgmental space for them to express their feelings. I also advocate on their behalf, often liaising with schools to arrange additional support, such as time-out cards or designated staff members to assist the young person when they are struggling.

Challenges

One of the biggest challenges in my role is the length of the criminal justice process. Keeping young people engaged over such a long period, especially during critical times like their GCSEs, can be difficult. Many young people struggle to understand why the process takes so long, especially when media portrayals suggest it is much quicker. Additionally, working with children who have experienced sexual violence is inherently challenging and emotionally taxing. Hearing their stories can be heartbreaking, but I am continually inspired by their resilience and strength.

The Importance of the CYP ISVA Role

The role of a CYP ISVA is vital in empowering young people to make informed choices during a difficult time in their lives. With many external pressures, such as education, family, and mental health, having a consistent professional to support them through the police process and beyond provides much-needed stability. Despite the challenges, knowing that I have made a difference, even in the smallest way, is incredibly rewarding and motivates me to continue this important work.”

Devon, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service

From 2023 to 2024, our ISVA's supported 3,934 individuals on their journey for justice. We received 1,683 new referrals and continued to assist 2,298 people with their ongoing cases across Devon & Cornwall.

“This will never express how much you have done for me. I wanted to tell you thank you. You were my torch in a very dark tunnel and have helped me so much and I feel like I will never thank you enough.

You made me feel listened to and understood, I will miss you loads. Thank you for listening to me, no matter the subject.”

- Client supported by our Neurodiverse ISVA

First Light has been operating the Devon, Cornwall, and Isles of Scilly ISVA Service since October 2018, providing essential assistance and guidance to victims and survivors of rape and sexual assault.

Over the past year, we have expanded this service with additional funding. We have begun to develop trauma stabilisation for anyone accessing the service and continued to provide 'Options Meetings' for those who haven't reported to the police, helping them understand their options moving forward. We support individuals during the reporting process and assist those not ready to report by connecting them with other services.

We support everyone, regardless of age or gender, throughout their journey in the legal process of criminal investigations. We liaise with the police on their behalf, clearly communicate the process, and answer any questions they may have.

Given the length of the average criminal investigation, we provide ongoing support and guidance to ensure client well-being and safety. We also refer or signpost additional services, such as our Sexual Violence Counselling Service.

We assist those whose cases are closed during police investigations, helping them understand what support and help are available.

For those whose cases proceed to court, we provide support throughout the often lengthy process, assisting with communication with the police and courts.

Our Independent Sexual Violence Advisors accompany and support individuals during court proceedings, explaining the process and their rights and options during a trial. We ensure they are comfortable and understand what to expect, providing support and advice regardless of the outcome, and help them on the road to recovery.

“Just having someone who could empathise and enable me to get myself through it. I'm very self-sufficient and independent so it helped me to protect myself and to stop taking the blame.”

- Service user



Scan to watch Emily's Story.

Funded by





Client supported by our ISVA service

“My ISVA has been the most consistent presence in my life for the past 2 and a half years. Knowing I had a phone call with them lined up allowed me to put aside my worries and questions about the process until our next call, which helped me not obsess over everything.

My ISVA was also incredibly kind and comforting when I was going through difficult times and changes in my life. As well as educating me on the justice process, she gave me practical advice when

I felt overwhelmed that allowed me to calm myself and find it within myself to pull my socks up and keep going.

They listened to me when I was sad but also when I was doing better. It was really important that my ISVA supported me through good times too, because despite everything else going well, having a rape case hanging over you is a big burden, and its when you seem to be doing well that support from others can slip. My ISVA is an asset to your services and I couldn't recommend her highly enough.”

Swindon & Wiltshire Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service

Since taking over the service in 2023, we have reduced the waiting list and assisted 1,205 individuals from the previous provider. Additionally, we have received 670 new referrals, providing vital support to a total of 1,875 people throughout the criminal justice process.

“I would like to provide 100% positive feedback for my ISVA for supporting me through the toughest time in my life. She was always so supportive and kind and made such a massive difference to me. I cannot recommend her enough, you are so lucky to have such a sensitive, caring individual on your team.

Thank you to you all for providing the support when I needed it most, I will be forever grateful.”

- Client support by our ISVA service

Funded by



In April 2023, First Light was awarded the Swindon & Wiltshire Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service. We are delighted to expand our services across Swindon and Wiltshire, where we previously provided support to anyone who has experienced sexual assault or rape through our Sexual Assault Referral Centre. With the Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service, we can now support people on their journey through reporting, the police investigation, and the court process.

Over the past year, we have ensured the transfer of the service did not impact the team or the people accessing our services. We have maintained the quality of service that people expect from First Light in this new offering.

Our team has worked incredibly hard over the last year, adapting to changes and working closely with individuals to keep them informed, reduce stress, and operate in a trauma-informed manner. Ensuring support throughout the police investigation and legal process has been our priority.

Throughout the year, we have introduced new support within

the service, such as our options meeting, which helps people consider their options for reporting to the police if they haven't already. We provide continued support, trauma stabilisation, and signposting to ensure they receive the support they need. Additionally, since taking over the service, we have reduced wait times for accessing the service and offer support for those waiting.

We have upheld the high standards expected from First Light, ensuring everyone who accesses the service is believed, supported, and heard.

“Thank you for all the support you have given me and your kindness for something that I have been holding for many years. I feel able to now let things go and move forward with my life and that would not have been possible without you. You make all the difference for people like myself.” - Service user



Learn more about
the ISVA service



SARC Coordinator Michaela was nominated and won the 2023 Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Together Award for 'Unsung hero in supporting victims of VAWG'.

Swindon & Wiltshire Sexual Assault Referral Centre

In 2023 - 2024, we have seen a **38% increase** in people accessing the SARC, with **441 people supported** over the last year, compared to 319 during 2022-2023.

“I hadn’t been aware of First Light until I needed their services myself. I imagine the night I had would have ended very differently if it weren’t for their initial support.

Michaela, the Crisis Co-ordinator was the first kind face I saw, and you could say maybe that was the first light, after what felt like a very dark series of events.”
- Client supported by our SARC

Over the past year, we have continued to deliver the Sexual Assault Referral Centre services across Swindon and Wiltshire.

We have participated in various community events to ensure everyone is aware of the centre and the support we offer.

Our goal is to reach affected individuals and inform them that support is available, no matter how long ago the incident occurred.

We provide emergency help to anyone who has experienced sexual assault or rape.

The Sexual Assault Referral Centre offers forensic medical examinations, health and well-being checks, and operates 24/7, 365 days a year.

People can access the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, whether or not they have reported the incident to the police.

Our services are designed to provide support and assistance, including storing any evidence and notes about the assault or rape for two years, or longer upon request.

This gives people control over what to do next, providing them with the time to consider their options, which we can support with advice and resources.

If they choose to report, or have already reported, we provide the police with all necessary evidence to support their case.

We also offer continued support through the independent Sexual Violence Advisory service.

“The Crisis Worker was fantastic. She made me feel so comfortable and listened to and I felt as though I could trust her. She were amazing and I can’t fault her at all. I honestly just want to say from the bottom of my heart - thank you!”
- Client supported

“The nurse at SARC was very attentive and reassuring when it came to asking me personal questions and I did not feel judged at all”
- Client supported



Learn more about the SARC service

Funded by

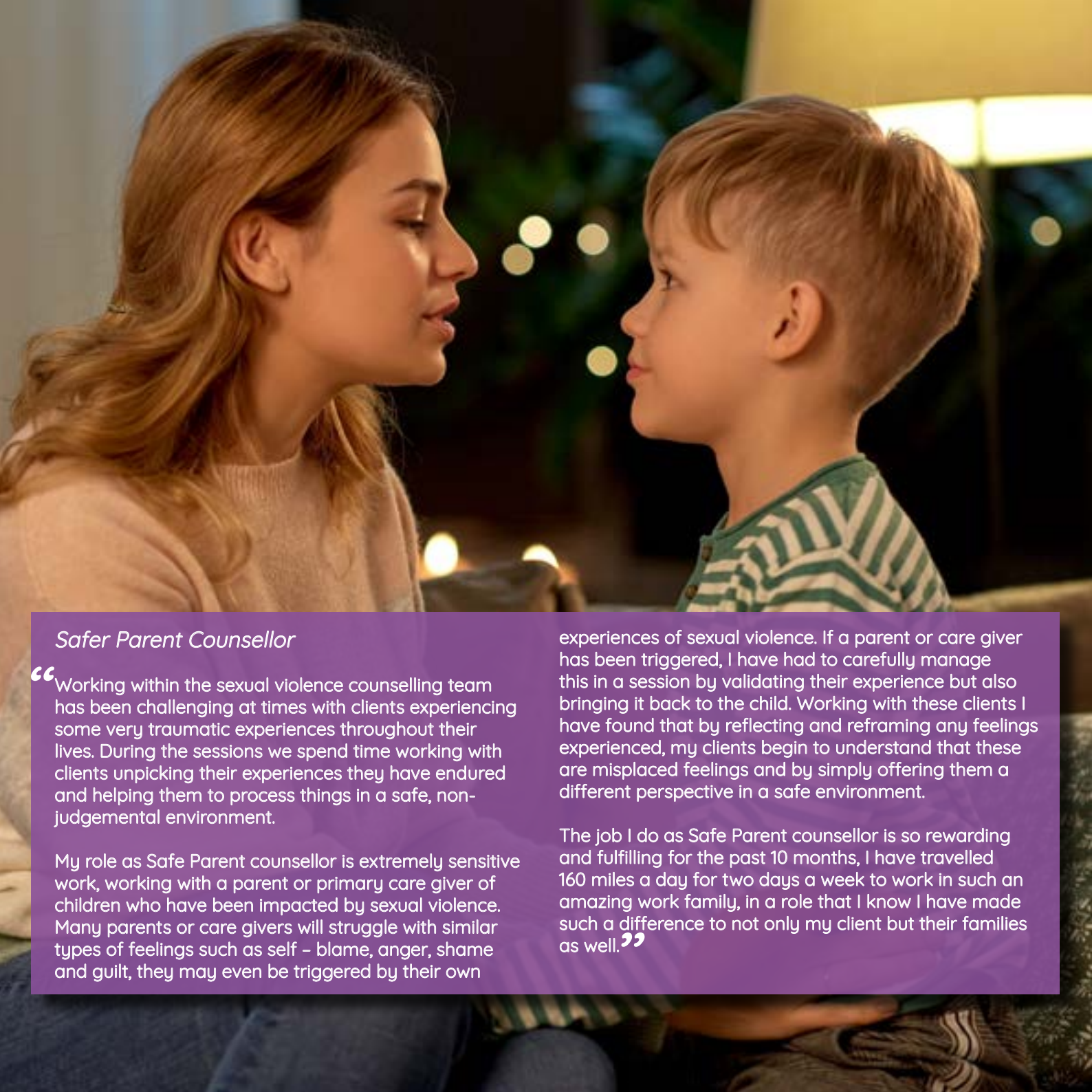

England



The Weinstock Fund







Safer Parent Counsellor

“Working within the sexual violence counselling team has been challenging at times with clients experiencing some very traumatic experiences throughout their lives. During the sessions we spend time working with clients unpicking their experiences they have endured and helping them to process things in a safe, non-judgemental environment.

My role as Safe Parent counsellor is extremely sensitive work, working with a parent or primary care giver of children who have been impacted by sexual violence. Many parents or care givers will struggle with similar types of feelings such as self – blame, anger, shame and guilt, they may even be triggered by their own

experiences of sexual violence. If a parent or care giver has been triggered, I have had to carefully manage this in a session by validating their experience but also bringing it back to the child. Working with these clients I have found that by reflecting and reframing any feelings experienced, my clients begin to understand that these are misplaced feelings and by simply offering them a different perspective in a safe environment.

The job I do as Safe Parent counsellor is so rewarding and fulfilling for the past 10 months, I have travelled 160 miles a day for two days a week to work in such an amazing work family, in a role that I know I have made such a difference to not only my client but their families as well.”

Plymouth Sexual Violence Counselling Service

In 2023 - 2024, we have received **680 referrals** into the service, with 148 from children and young people.

“Being enabled to come back and see the same counsellor and having someone who knew my situation already was so very helpful. It meant not having to go back over it all but moving on and in more depth. To have someone to reflect what is going on, share feelings and have validation that what happened was wrong and in no way my fault has helped so much. This service has been so life changing in helping me to process what has happened and look after myself, confidential time to talk with such a caring and knowledgeable counsellor. I can’t thank my counsellor enough for all she has helped me.”

- Client supported by our
Counselling service

Funded by



John
Casson
Foundation



We continue to support anyone affected by sexual violence in the Plymouth area with our Sexual Violence Counselling Service.

This free service offers people the opportunity for professional support through multiple sessions, which they might not otherwise have access to. We create a safe place for people to talk about their experiences, whether recent or from the past.

This service helps support people dealing with the impacts of sexual violence and abuse, building their confidence to share their experiences and aiding them on their journey of recovery.

We also offer pre-trial and post-trial counselling, helping anyone during the court process to have the confidence to face the challenges of speaking about their experiences in a public setting. Being in court, seeing and hearing the perpetrator, and possibly being questioned about what happened can be extremely difficult.

The support needed for this is vital, as it can bring back a lot of trauma. With the support of our counselling service, we can be there for people during this difficult time.

Additionally, we have our Safe Parent programme, which supports children who have experienced sexual violence or abuse.

We talk to them about their experiences and help them understand what has happened and its impact.

The Safe Parent project also works with parents to open conversations with their children about what has happened, supporting them through this struggle.

Over time, our counselling service can help families, individuals, and anyone impacted by sexual violence or abuse, ensuring they are heard and supported.

“First Light has provided an excellent service to me. It has given me an opportunity to process and work through my emotions. I feel calmer as a result and more equipped to help my daughter through her struggles.”

- Client supported



Scan to watch
Issy's Poem

Family Court Independent Domestic Violence Advisor

“As a Family Court Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA), I support anyone attending the family court or within the family court system who has been impacted by domestic abuse and/or sexual violence.

Working with Clients

My role is rewarding and frustrating in equal measures! Post-separation abuse through the family court often goes unrecognised, and I regularly see the impact that ongoing control and emotional harm has on victims and survivors within this process. However, it feels like a privilege to validate people’s experiences and support them to feel heard and supported. I also seek opportunities to advocate and professionally challenge where possible within the system.

The Support We Provide

I provide risk assessment, safety planning, and support both within court hearings and in between. I can attend court hearings with people and advocate for them in pre-court discussions with legal representatives to ensure that the impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence (DASV) is recognised and considered. I also provide information to professionals about the nuances of domestic abuse, how it can present, and what we can all do to recognise it.

I support those who do not have legal help to seek this, or in cases where they are not eligible, I can attend court with them to ensure they are not alone.

I can signpost to relevant organisations where a need is identified. I provide a victim’s voice within the local family justice board and relevant subgroups to ensure that service user feedback can inform future direction and practice within the family court process.

Challenges

The biggest challenge is not having a voice within the court that can influence outcomes based on my knowledge of risk and the impact of domestic abuse. Although I can support and advocate, I am unable to provide information that would help the court make safe decisions for families,

which can be frustrating. I am not considered a ‘party’ within proceedings and therefore cannot advocate on behalf of the service user in terms of communicating with the court office regarding administrative issues.

The hardest thing about my role is hearing the people I work with say that if they had known how the family court would be used by their perpetrators to continue to control and perpetrate emotional abuse, they would have stayed within the relationship as this was easier to navigate. I find this heartbreaking and scary to think that post-separation abuse can, in many cases, be just as harmful, if not worse, than that experienced within a relationship.

The Importance of the Family Court IDVA

I believe passionately in the need to update and improve the family court system to make it safer for victims and survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence. This need for reform was recently recognised by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner’s Office for England and Wales, and it is a privilege to have an opportunity to bring the victim’s voice into the forefront of decision-making processes and to potentially use this to inform and be a part of much-needed change.

People may not know that I can work with any cases within family court, both public law and private law, child act proceedings, and family act proceedings. I can support those with legal representation and without. I can also support those who may have displayed harmful behaviours if they seek to access support to change for the sake of their children.

It gives them information and authority to make decisions for themselves. They can feel more prepared, less anxious, and empowered to use their voice and say what they need to happen.

I enjoy being able to give people my time and validate their experiences. I only wish there were more of me to go around, as the demand for this support is higher than anyone can imagine! I enjoy the opportunity that this role gives me to use all of my knowledge and experience gained throughout my career to benefit those I work with and the potential impact that I can make on behalf of First Light.”

Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly Safer Futures - Domestic Abuse Service

Over the past year, we have received 10,157 referrals into the Safer Futures service, marking an 18% increase in demand for the service compared to the previous year.

“Helpline was very honest and personable. I feel like I don’t really describe the situation properly and obviously people can’t see it, but was so refreshing to have someone understand and say YES I believe you”

- Client Supported by our Safer Futures service

In the past year, Safer Futures has supported individuals affected by domestic abuse in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. We are here for anyone affected by domestic abuse, offering help and support to family, friends, and others impacted.

Safer Futures integrates multiple services and provides each person with the personal support they need. Individuals can access our services as many times as necessary. From getting advice and relationship support to escaping abusive relationships and receiving tailored recovery support, we are here to help. We also offer legal advice and court support, ensuring every voice is believed, heard, and supported.

We could not do this alone. We are partnered with Barnardo’s, who bring their expertise to Safer Futures, delivering additional services such as trauma-informed support, recovery programmes for children and young people, behaviour change support for healthy relationships, and training.

We have also collaborated with a range of services across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. We provide support and training to GPs to help anyone affected by domestic abuse access our services.

Additionally, our Family Outreach Domestic Abuse Support Advisors work in partnership with Cornwall Council and collaborate with the Family Assessment and Support Teams of Children’s Services. This joint effort aims to identify and support families affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence at an early stage, creating positive changes.

“My DASA was great at explaining to me the process around his behaviours, what they were and why I stayed. This service has given me tools and practical advice, kept me safer and allowed me to process. A bit of explaining the past, helping through the present and strategies for the future”

- Client supported

“The support was brilliant, a safe space to talk things through really helped, I couldn’t have asked for anything better and couldn’t fault it in any way”

- Client Supported



Learn more about Safer Futures

Funded by



Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly Domestic Abuse Services

Together for Families

Our Family Outreach Domestic Abuse Support Advisors work to identify and support families affected by domestic abuse at an early stage. We collaborate with the Cornwall Council Family Assessment team and children’s services to create positive changes.

Primary Care

Our GP project focuses on a grassroots approach, working with GPs to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and build confidence in their response. We support GPs across Cornwall to create private, safe spaces where patients can disclose abuse, seek advice, and gain support.

Safer Futures handled **over 19,000 calls** last year, ranging from **referrals to support** requests for **individuals, family members, and friends**.

“I remember the first call being very validating, to say it out loud and feel heard I felt I wasn’t alone anymore. It was all very factual but I feel understood and positive.”
- Client Supported by our Safer Futures service

“I didn’t know what to expect, in the 12 years of the relationship I can honestly say I had no idea what was happening or the severity of it until it all ended. The gentle but assertive way it was explained to me opened my eyes and helped me see that I was in denial about being in an abuse relationship, it wasn’t my issues, it was his behaviour”
- Client Supported by our Safer Futures service



Domestic Abuse Support Advisory Service (DASAs)

Our Domestic Abuse Support Advisors are trained to help. They’ll listen and advocate on people’s behalf, acting as their voice when they don’t feel able to, and making sure their views are heard.

Independent Domestic Violence Advisory Service (IDVA)

Our Independent Domestic Violence Advisors support hundreds of high-risk individuals and families. From the point of crisis, we’ll work alongside them to understand their personal circumstances, create a personal safety plan, and help them implement it in the short and longer term.

Recovery Pathways Service

Our Recovery Pathways service triage individuals and families to work out the best support to meet their needs. It then provides suitable therapeutic support that takes into account each individual’s trauma experience, focuses on solutions, and is delivered by accredited specialists.

Domestic Abuse Helpline Service

Our Domestic Abuse Helpline team provides support, advice, and information to anyone impacted by domestic abuse, including friends, family, and affected others. Where appropriate, they will carry out a risk assessment, complete safety planning, empower people to understand their options, and refer them to the best support to make decisions about their future.

Family Court Independent Domestic Violence Advisory Service (IDVAs)

The Family Court Independent Domestic Violence Advisors provide emotional and practical support to victims and survivors of domestic abuse going through the family courts by ensuring that they feel safe and informed and therefore better able to navigate proceedings. They will provide wrap-around support throughout the duration of proceedings, make onward referrals, signpost, and attend court where necessary.

Volunteer Mentoring

Our Volunteer Mentors support people affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence who need a little extra time and support to move forward. They help them to feel heard and be listened to.

Barnardo’s, Our Safer Futures delivery partner also provides:

Change4U: A domestic abuse programme that provides single-gender group support to individuals displaying abusive behaviour within their relationships.

Healthy Relationships In Schools: This programme equips children and young people with a clear understanding of what constitutes a healthy and respectful relationship.

Reconnect: A long-term recovery and resilience programme for children and young people who have been affected by domestic abuse.

SUsie project: This programme offers trauma-informed support to men and women recovering from domestic abuse.

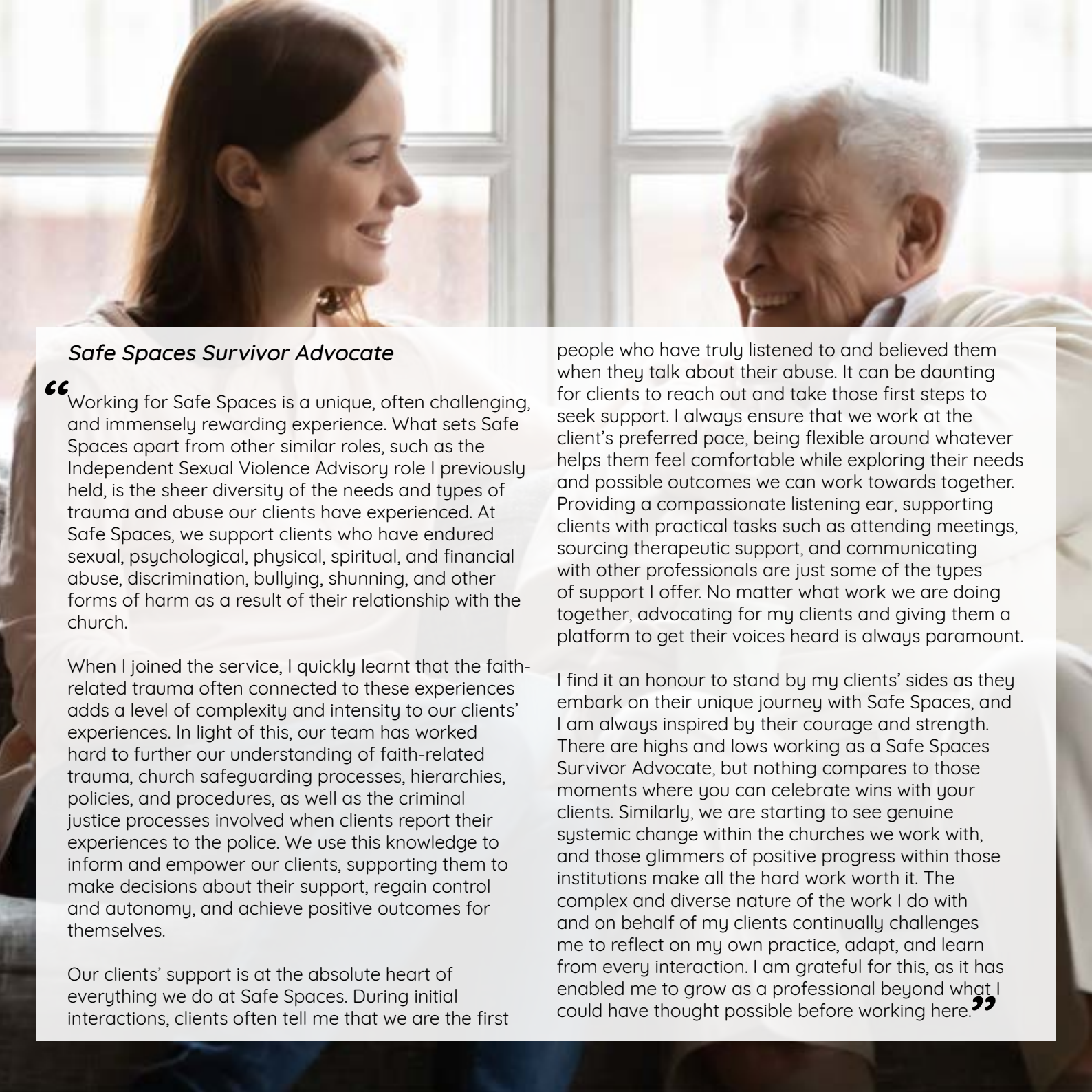
Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Training: Training for professionals across all sectors, empowering them to recognise and address these critical issues.



Legal Clinics

We partner with solicitors, who offer pro-bono legal clinics, providing anyone affected by domestic abuse the opportunity to speak with a specialist Domestic Abuse Lawyer free of charge via video call or telephone conference. They can receive support on legal issues such as non-molestation orders, eligibility for Legal Aid, and information related to divorce or cases involving children.





Safe Spaces Survivor Advocate

“Working for Safe Spaces is a unique, often challenging, and immensely rewarding experience. What sets Safe Spaces apart from other similar roles, such as the Independent Sexual Violence Advisory role I previously held, is the sheer diversity of the needs and types of trauma and abuse our clients have experienced. At Safe Spaces, we support clients who have endured sexual, psychological, physical, spiritual, and financial abuse, discrimination, bullying, shunning, and other forms of harm as a result of their relationship with the church.

When I joined the service, I quickly learnt that the faith-related trauma often connected to these experiences adds a level of complexity and intensity to our clients' experiences. In light of this, our team has worked hard to further our understanding of faith-related trauma, church safeguarding processes, hierarchies, policies, and procedures, as well as the criminal justice processes involved when clients report their experiences to the police. We use this knowledge to inform and empower our clients, supporting them to make decisions about their support, regain control and autonomy, and achieve positive outcomes for themselves.

Our clients' support is at the absolute heart of everything we do at Safe Spaces. During initial interactions, clients often tell me that we are the first

people who have truly listened to and believed them when they talk about their abuse. It can be daunting for clients to reach out and take those first steps to seek support. I always ensure that we work at the client's preferred pace, being flexible around whatever helps them feel comfortable while exploring their needs and possible outcomes we can work towards together. Providing a compassionate listening ear, supporting clients with practical tasks such as attending meetings, sourcing therapeutic support, and communicating with other professionals are just some of the types of support I offer. No matter what work we are doing together, advocating for my clients and giving them a platform to get their voices heard is always paramount.

I find it an honour to stand by my clients' sides as they embark on their unique journey with Safe Spaces, and I am always inspired by their courage and strength. There are highs and lows working as a Safe Spaces Survivor Advocate, but nothing compares to those moments where you can celebrate wins with your clients. Similarly, we are starting to see genuine systemic change within the churches we work with, and those glimmers of positive progress within those institutions make all the hard work worth it. The complex and diverse nature of the work I do with and on behalf of my clients continually challenges me to reflect on my own practice, adapt, and learn from every interaction. I am grateful for this, as it has enabled me to grow as a professional beyond what I could have thought possible before working here.”

England & Wales Safe Spaces - Church-Related Abuse Service



From April 2023 to March 2024, Safe Spaces has **supported 529 people** contacting the service, with **33% of referrals** supported to **report abuse to the police**.

“I appreciate the longevity of the support and would not be anywhere near what we have achieved without Safe Spaces. You have helped me to gently understand things I couldn't at first.”

- Client supported by our Safe Spaces Team

“I had been feeling anxious about attending meetings but with Safe Spaces attending too, I will have the support I need to do it.”

- Client supported by our Safe Spaces Team

In January 2023, First Light began operating Safe Spaces, providing a free, confidential support service for anyone abused by someone in the Church or due to their relationship with the Church of England, the Catholic Church in England and Wales, or the Church in Wales.

This service supports people who have experienced various types of abuse, including sexual, physical, financial, psychological, domestic abuse, coercive behaviour, and conversion therapy. Abuse within the church can have severe impacts, often leaving survivors feeling betrayed by both the abuser and God.

We help people understand and process the impact of abuse. Over the past year, we redesigned the Safe Spaces website to improve accessibility, streamline information, add resources, and create an online referral process and live chat box.

Rocket Science published an independent evaluation report in 2024, noting that, based on the views of survivors engaged in the evaluation, consultations with staff, and monitoring reports, Safe Spaces has had a positive impact on the well-being and resilience of

survivors who have engaged with the service. The report showed strong evidence of the positive impact Safe Spaces has for those with experience of church-related abuse. The support significantly improved survivors' quality of life, including improved mental health and allowing survivors to start feeling more in control of their lives and learning to navigate their trauma.

Since First Light began delivering Safe Spaces, those who witnessed a change said they had a positive experience with the move to First Light, with some identifying improvements they have seen in the service. One noted, “you can sense the difference” and felt that the staff members under First Light are “much more experienced” in supporting them. Similarly, another described the “change in tempo” since First Light began delivery, and that this has been a positive change for them.

We are committed to continually improving the service to meet the needs of abuse survivors within the church, helping them heal and rebuild their lives.



Learn more about
Safe Spaces

Funded by





Client supported by our Safe Spaces Service

“If you’re like me, you rarely bother to read the ‘Terms and Conditions’ when signing up to something online. However, when I was recently allocated a new Survivor Advocate at Safe Spaces (my original Advocate having moved on to a different position) and was asked to sign the ‘Client Agreement’, I realised that this deserved my full attention. I’d actually read and signed the same document 12 months ago, but this time the words meant a lot more to me. One sentence in particular struck me, because it sums up perfectly the impact which Safe Spaces has had, and continues to have, for me:

‘Safe Spaces support is intended to help you cope during the aftermath of historic or acute church related abuse.’

Coping hasn’t always been easy, and it can still be a real struggle, despite the abuse having taken place over 30 years ago. One of the biggest challenges is the tendency I have to withdraw and isolate myself, especially from those who love me. I’ve never understood why I do this; pushing away the very

people who care feels like such a self-destructive thing to do, but it’s so easy to fall back into this default pattern. Safe Spaces is an important part of my life precisely because they’ve helped me to avoid becoming completely isolated. During the past year, I’ve frequently withdrawn from close friends, but for some reason, I never push away my Survivor Advocates. They’ve been a consistent and compassionate presence in my life. I knew from the start, instinctively, that I could trust them and feel safe with them. Their ability to reach out and gently hold on to me has been crucial in helping me to cope.

One final thought. I’ve spent a lot of time in recent years meeting with fellow Survivors, something which has been incredibly helpful. But I always struggle to explain how being abused by a priest has hurt my spiritual life and my relationship with the church. Seeing the faith of an innocent boy exploited and torn apart has broken my heart. It was a huge relief to feel immediately understood at Safe Spaces, to talk about faith and know that my Survivor Advocates ‘get it’. I’m incredibly grateful for the safe space which this amazing service creates for me, a space where I can finally begin to heal and find freedom.”



Client supported by First Light

“I remember calling the Helpline in a very distressed state. At that moment, I wasn’t in a place to make sense of things.

My expectations for that call were met. It was useful to have someone to talk to and get advice from outside of family and friends. Just having someone who could empathise and enable me to get through it was invaluable. Being very self-sufficient and independent, it helped me protect myself and stop taking the blame.

Getting advice about contacting the police was also helpful, as I was unsure whether I should reach out to them. I was guided through that process, which ultimately helped. The advice and confirmation were so needed; it made me realise what I hadn’t been acknowledging.

I now feel a fire to sort out my property situation and move forward. I don’t feel I need further support at this time, but it was made very clear that I can get back in touch if needed.”

16 Days of Action to End Violence against Women and Girls - #Pledge4Change

Last year, we extended an open invitation to all individuals and organisations to join us in making three vital pledges for the coming year. Every person, regardless of their gender, deserves to live free from fear and violence.

Pledge One: Create Change
#WeSeeYou

The first pledge, #WeSeeYou, is dedicated to raising awareness, challenging myths, and highlighting toxic behaviours. Our mission is to establish a society where victims of sexual and domestic violence can seek support and understanding without judgement.

Pledge Two: No Voice Left Unheard
#WeHearYou

The second pledge, #WeHearYou, focuses on giving a voice to survivors of violence. Together, we aim to amplify their stories, inspire change,

challenge perceptions, and transform attitudes. By sharing these stories and highlighting the resilience of survivors, we aim to empower others to speak out and seek help when needed.

Pledge Three: Empower Everyone

#WeBelieveYou

The final pledge, #WeBelieveYou, is dedicated to creating safe spaces and communities where victims can disclose their experiences without fear. We will form partnerships and provide resources to ensure that everyone has access to the support they deserve.

Throughout the year, we are using these pledges to create real change and will be expanding the campaign to ask organisations to join us and make their own pledge for change.

It wasn't because I was drinking.
It wasn't because I was friendly.
It wasn't what I was wearing.
It wasn't the way I looked.
It wasn't that I was alone.
It wasn't just a mistake.
It wasn't my fault.

IT WAS RAPE.

I didn't want the insults.
I didn't want the threats.
I didn't want your photos.
I said that I wasn't interested.
I said no to meeting up with you.
I walked away when you talked to me.
I said get off me when you touched me.
Then you grabbed me

AND I FROZE.

End
the
Violence.

Join us in our journey
to end violence against
women and girls.

#Pledge4Change

 FIRST LIGHT
A Division of The McGraw-Hill Companies

#WeSeeYou

#WeHearYou

#WeBelieveYou

Healthy Relationships & Toxic Behaviours Awareness Month - #LoveActually

In February 2024, we launched our first Healthy Relationships & Toxic Behaviours Awareness Month, focusing on the theme of #LoveActually.

We highlighted various aspects of toxic behaviours and raised awareness about behavioural and attitudinal changes to watch for.

At the same time, we celebrated healthy relationships, showcasing the positive behaviours and attitudes they embody and how they make us feel.

We collaborated with students to share what they appreciate in their relationships, spreading positive messages to those they care about.

Additionally, we partnered with various charities to host webinars throughout the month.

These webinars discussed healthy relationships, their portrayal in TV and film, and ways we can support each other.

**Are you in an
Abusive Relationship?**

- ☐ They know what is best for me.
- ☐ They are the only person I need.
- ☐ They want to make the relationship work.
- ☐ They want to make me a better person.
- ☐ My friends and family don't understand them.
- ☐ I say the wrong thing and upset them.
- ☐ I love them and want to change for them.

If something doesn't feel right or you don't feel safe, help is available

"Hey, I can't wait to see you again!"

"I really like you."

"I tried calling ... why didn't you answer?"

"Are your friends more important than me?"

"Can't you take a joke? Stop being dramatic."

"You're dressed like a slut."

You're kidding. This is what you do like you!

Relationships can change over time.

Page - 27

Campaigns

Professional training

Our professional training is designed to empower you to support team members affected by sexual and domestic violence. We can help you do more, have confident conversations, and provide the right support.

Our courses include:

Confidence in Your Response

This course equips you with the confidence to respond effectively to both sexual and domestic abuse. You'll develop interpersonal skills for handling disclosures, understand the impact on survivors, and learn how to look after yourself.

Challenging Perceptions

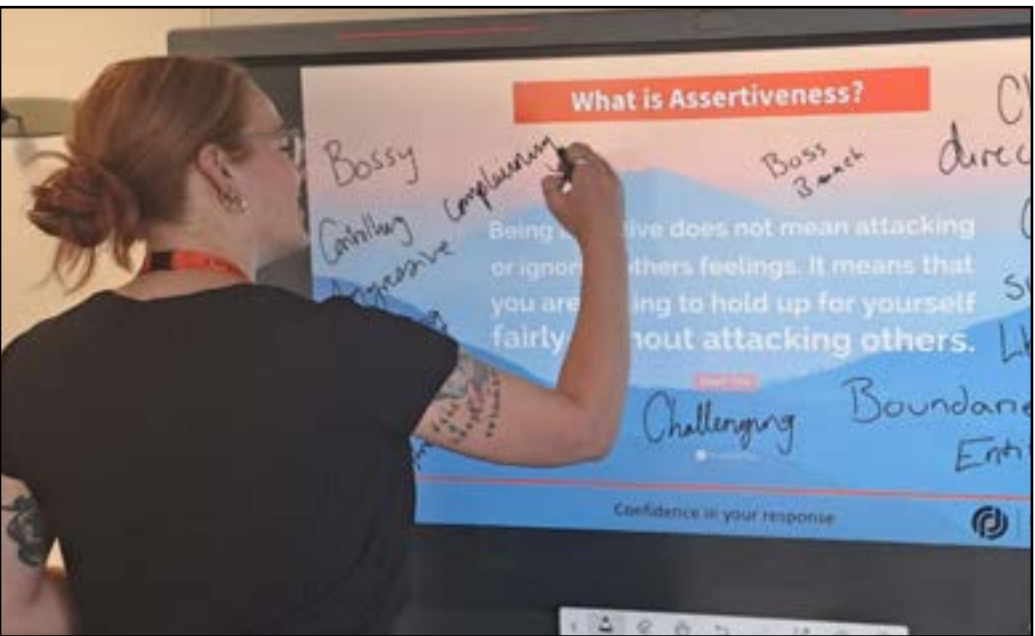
This course helps you challenge perceptions by understanding the impact of society, culture, and history on survivors. You'll learn to appropriately challenge myths and understand their impact on safety, services, and reporting.

ABC's of Sexual Abuse

This course will enhance your understanding of sexual abuse and equip you with a trauma-informed approach to responses and disclosures. You'll gain clarity on professional terminology, learn to challenge myths, and navigate the criminal justice process.

ABC's of Domestic Abuse

This course enhances your understanding and provides a trauma-informed approach to responses. You'll become familiar with professional terminology, learn about the impacts of myths, and understand the roles of professionals.



Empowering organisations to drive meaningful change

Professional Training

Over the past few months, our new training department has been bustling with activity. Following successful recruitment in August 2023, we conducted our first virtual training sessions for a national service on 17th November and 1st December 2023.

Why We Started

Our frontline service revealed a significant gap in understanding among workforces, support networks, and organisations, which negatively impacted survivors' recovery. Poor handling of initial disclosures often led to disengagement and lack of support.

We frequently received training requests on handling disclosures, which we met as best as we could. However, delivering frontline support alongside training was unsustainable and uncoordinated.

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency feedback:
"Thought-provoking."

"Day two was more relevant to our service with helpful refreshers. Trainers were engaging and knowledgeable."

"I liked the mix between theory and practice. It all felt quite up to date and as though a lot of work had gone into developing the course."

"The trainers are clearly passionate about their work and this made the training engaging and informative."

City College Plymouth feedback:
"I feel I have learned a lot and would feel able to support a student making a disclosure."

"Trainers were knowledgeable with good signposting and resources."

Exeter Nightline:
"The legal information, including the definition of rape and sentencing, was very informative."

Initial Goals

Our primary goal was to develop clear training packages leveraging our expertise. We began with a bespoke course for the National Catholic Statutory Safeguarding Agency (CSSA) and City College Plymouth before our formal launch. This provided valuable feedback on direction, delivery style, and content.

Future Plans

We aim to equip more organisations to support survivors and challenge abusive behaviour. Future plans include expanding resources on our website, and developing a trauma-informed inner supervisor role based on feedback from frontline services

Training Impact

Our goal is to create a more informed society that supports disclosures with understanding, safety, and care.

Funded by



Our Charity Partnerships for 2024

At the beginning of 2024, we were chosen by three incredible organisations to be their charity of the year:

Program, a B Corp marketing and branding agency, has provided First Light with their knowledge, creative skills, and digital expertise. <https://program.agency/>

Ventons Conference Centre & Accountancy Services, who have dedicated their time to fundraising throughout the year for First Light. <https://www.ventonltd.co.uk/>



“At Program, we believe our partnership with First Light has the potential to reshape society’s approach to domestic abuse and sexual violence. Together, we can achieve far more than we could alone, creating a ripple effect that extends well beyond individual support services.

By leveraging our network and communication channels, we can significantly amplify First Light’s message. This increased visibility will not only raise awareness about their crucial services but also educate the public about the realities of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Lost Gardens of Heligan, who have allowed us to use their beautiful gardens and helped fundraise through various activities. <https://www.heligan.com/>

These organisations have stood with us, helping us spread awareness about our services and the issue of abuse, creating lasting change.

Thank you for all your support so far. We look forward to continuing our work with you throughout 2024.

We envision a society where these issues are no longer shrouded in silence or stigma, but openly discussed and addressed.

Our combined efforts in education and awareness can lead to profound societal changes. As more people become informed, we anticipate earlier interventions, increased reporting of abuse, and a shift in cultural attitudes that no longer tolerate or minimise these issues. This knowledge empowers communities to recognise warning signs, support survivors, and actively work towards prevention.

By showcasing the impact of our partnership, we hope to inspire other organisations to engage in similar

collaborations. We need to inspire a new standard of corporate social responsibility, where businesses actively contribute to solving critical societal issues.

The bigger picture is a society that’s collectively committed to eradicating domestic abuse and sexual violence. It’s a future where survivors feel supported by their entire community, where prevention is prioritised, and where everyone understands their role in creating a safer world. Through our partnership with First Light, we’re contributing to a fundamental shift in societal values and behaviours, moving us closer to a world free from abuse and violence.”

Program



“The partnership between Venton and First Light is a first for the company, but it’s value in society goes far beyond this.

Our main mission is to raise funds, so more people can access the charities services and to raise the public profile, thus



“Once lost to the brambles of time, The Lost Gardens of Heligan were revived following a decade of restoration. With our horticultural treasures now secure, we work to protect and enhance our land for the well-being of all. We support visitors and our community alike to re-find lost connections, and give greater meaning to all those who walk through our pleasure

empowering people effected by domestic abuse and sexual violence, to take action. We believe the building blocks to transformative change is to think outside the box and our strong client base of businesses (within Cornwall and further afield) is the perfect platform to really promote the charity, as we are tapping into a niche audience that may not otherwise have been reached. Furthermore, as an events space we have the perfect environment to support First Light as a venue for training, so that more stories can be heard, and resources accessed.

Supporting First Light was born from two factors, one being the public’s voice and an overwhelming level of support from women in Cornwall who voted for First Light, the other a family friends experience of using the charity and the positive impact it had. Venton may only be three years old but it has a strong voice. Coupled with a team of five women, we hope that this voice will promote change through active fundraising, encourage more people to think about ways to improve social behaviour, but also through our messaging to keep First Light as a name that everyone knows.”



gardens and meadows. Each year Heligan appoints a ‘chosen charity’, voted by staff, which enables us to support and amplify the work of those providing services and help to our local community.

Heligan is a garden for the soul, where all are welcome and feel safe. We use our voice to share stories with our 350K annual visitors, raising brand awareness of our charity partners, and this year we hope to bring about transformative change for our guests by enabling conversations about the difficult challenges of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We have raised funds to enable more people to access services and resources by running Plymouth half marathon and placing fundraising points at our tills. Plus, through a unique collaboration selling bespoke co-branded Heligan and First Light birdboxes and chopping boards in our highly popular retail space we hope to highlight First Light and their associated partners to visitors – educating, signposting services and increasing awareness so every voice is heard.”



Community Fundraising

"I was seventeen when I chose to fundraise for First Light, inspired to do so by the lovely ladies I encountered following an assault I survived personally."

- Fundraiser

"I just wanted to do something proactive and positive to support people who have experienced sexual violence."

- Fundraiser

"There's not a single day we've regretted our sea swims, it's a crazy start to the day! It's an absolute honour to be able to help raise money for such a vital cause."

- Fundraiser

"People never realise how one gesture such as raising this money, can cause such a ripple effect and actually change people's lives."

- Three Daggers Pub Manager

What a year we have had!

From banger racing around Europe with Batman, daily swimming in the sea during February, pub quizzes, and 12-hour snooker matches, to walking from sunset to sunrise and taking part in the Plymouth Run.

We have had so many amazing fundraisers throughout the year, engaging in a range of activities to raise money and awareness to support anyone impacted by abuse.

Thank you to everyone who got involved over the last year. It has been amazing to see everyone come together to make a difference.

We have also received some incredible donations throughout the year, which have made a huge difference to our services and what we can provide to people who need our help and support. This could not be done without you.

And thank you to everyone who took part in Our Big Give for Women and Girls in 2023, raising an incredible £5,005 to provide vital support.



Why I chose to fundraise for First Light

"My name is Isobel and I decided to fundraise because I wanted to raise money for charity, while challenging myself by running a half marathon. I chose First Light as they are a charity incredibly close to my heart who I know do such incredible work for those in need. I am so grateful to Anna at First Light who gave me so much encouragement, support and advice both before and after my run - I look forward to continuing to fundraise for the charity in the future.

I was referred to First Light at the end of 2021 by the police sergeant dealing with my case and I spoke to a lovely lady called Nikki. Nikki let me express my feelings, gave me advice on coping with what I had been through, as well as talking me through the legal process which I found so helpful. By understanding how the case was going to proceed, I felt I was more in control and everything was much less daunting. From the incredible help I received from First Light I gained autonomy over my body, control of my life and started to heal.

When I began fundraising and training for my half marathon in January, I found myself reflecting on my trauma in a much more peaceful way than I ever have before. After spending 2 years battling so much with my mental health and barely getting out of bed, running became an incredible escape for me. From January this year when I was struggling to run 5km and still felt so terrible about my body, I am so proud that in April I ran the Plymouth Half Marathon in 2 hours 16 minutes. I have raised £900 for First Light and am immensely grateful to everyone who supported me. My parents, siblings and best friends not only helped me raise so much but also helped me throughout my training and the actual event.

My journey to recovery has been long but I am so grateful for everyone along the way who has been there and I am so lucky to have been able to raise so much for First Light while healing myself. I am incredibly proud of myself and thankful for the invaluable support I was given in such a dark time."



53% increase in support provided since 2023.

Over the last year, we have created **1,267 pieces of content** across all our social platforms, reaching an audience of **6,512 followers**.

This content has reached **67,295 users**, generating **144,851 views** across X (Twitter), Facebook, LinkedIn, Threads, and Instagram, with over **7,800 engagements**.

Across our First Light, Safer Futures, and Safe Spaces websites, we have seen **118,694 users** access our platforms over the last year, with **287,849 page views** and **162,478 sessions**.

First Light website

- 74,634 users
- 173,805 page views
- 100,797 sessions

Safer Futures website

- 40,699 users
- 107,629 page views
- 57,292 sessions

Safe Spaces website (since October 2023 update)

- 3,361 users
- 6,415 page views
- 21,481 interactions

Our services have received*

- 74%** referrals from Women and Girls
- 2,269** referrals from Men and Boys
- 189** referrals from people who identify as Non-Binary, Transgender, or other

We supported*

- 11,459 adults**
- 771 children** aged 0 – 12 years old
- 1,198 young people** aged 13 – 17 years old through our sexual violence and domestic abuse services.

Over 2,500* people disclosed having a disability when accessing First Light services.

*The data collected comes from clients who choose to disclose their gender, age, and any disabilities.

Geographical footprint of First Light support

Sexual Violence

We have supported **7,496** individuals impacted by sexual violence over the past year.

- o 2,930* were women and girls
- o 323* were men and boys
- o 2,455* were aged 18 or over
- o 721* were young people aged 13–17 years
- o 170* were children aged 0–12 years
- 3,427 referrals into our sexual violence support services

Swindon & Wiltshire

We have supported **2,316** individuals impacted by sexual violence over the past year.

- o 983* were women and girls
- o 109* were men and boys
- o 848* were aged 18 or over
- o 229* were young people aged 13–17 years
- o 56* were children aged 0–12 years
- 1,111 referrals into our sexual violence support services

Devon, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly

We have supported **5,180** individuals impacted by sexual violence.

- o 1,947* were women and girls
- o 214* were men and boys
- 2,316 referrals into our sexual violence support services

Devon & Plymouth

We have supported **3,060** individuals impacted by sexual violence.

- o 1,994* were women and girls
- o 229* were men and boys
- 2,494 referrals into our sexual violence support services

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly

We have received **502** referrals into our sexual violence support services

- o 451* were women and girls
- o 46* were men and boys

Domestic Abuse support

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly

We have supported **13,264** individuals impacted by domestic abuse over the past year.

- o 8,091* were women and girls
- o 1,792* were men and boys
- o 8,901* were aged 18 or over
- o 477* were young people aged 13–17 year
- o 601* were children aged 0–12 years
- 11,671 referrals into our sexual violence support



Church-related Abuse support

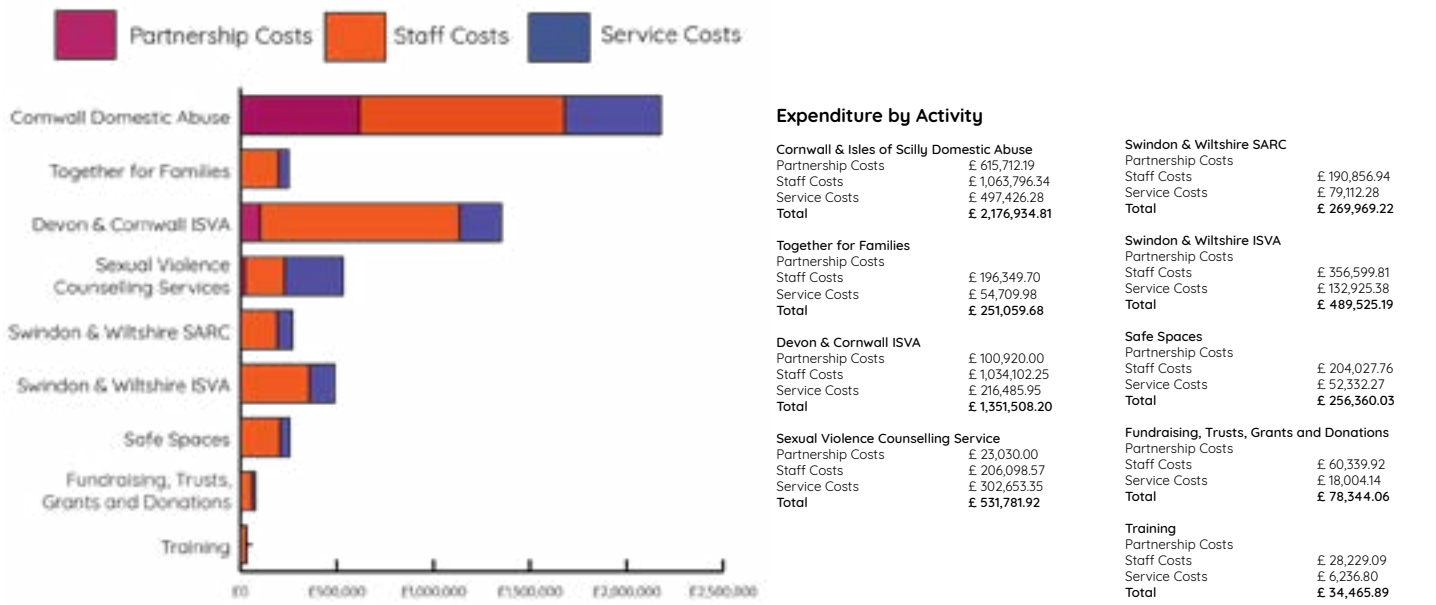
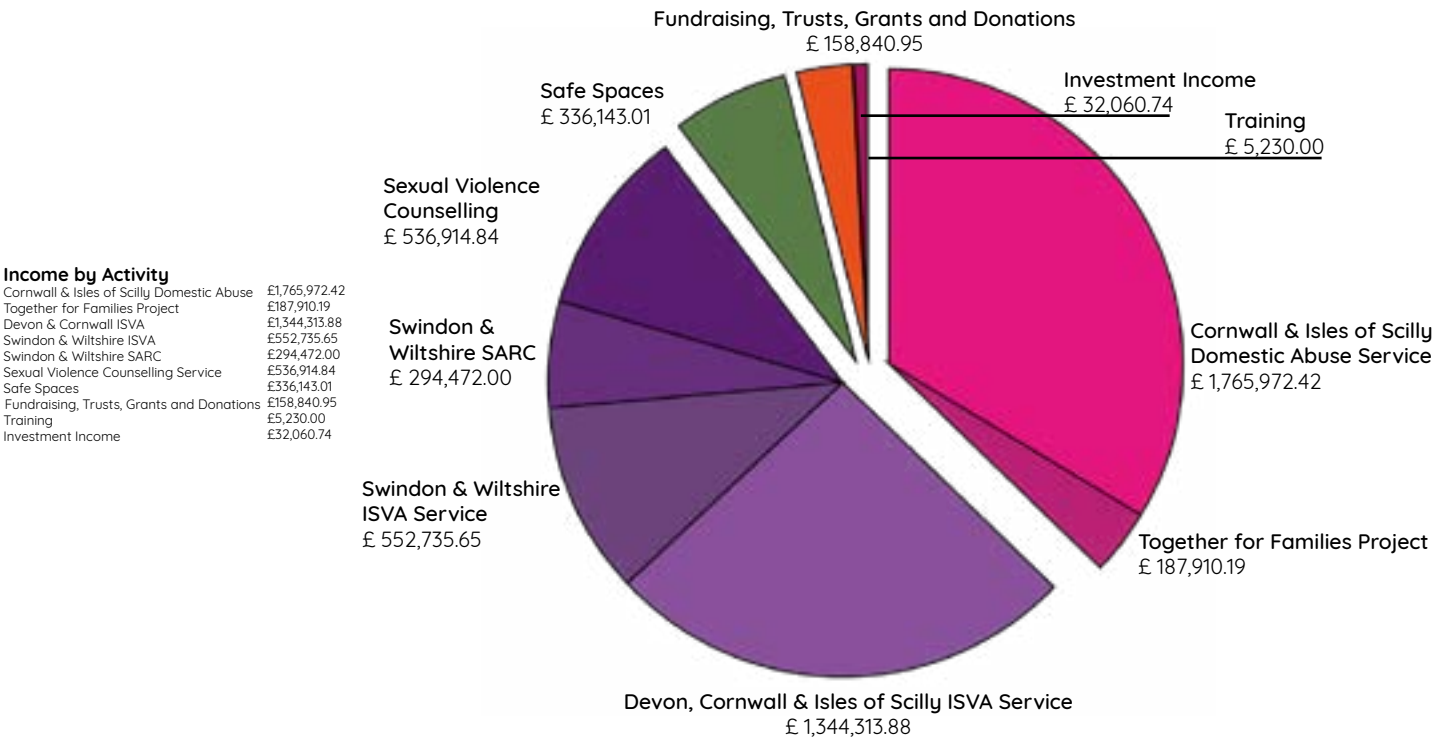
England & Wales

We have supported **632** individuals impacted by church-related abuse over the past year.

- o 273* were women
- o 154* were men
- 103 referrals into our sexual violence support services



Financial Performance



Our Funders and Partners



Thank you from First Light

Our impact report reflects the collective efforts of people and organisations coming together to create change. The life-changing support we have provided over the past year to thousands of people affected by sexual violence, domestic abuse, and church-related abuse would not have been possible without the generous contributions of our volunteers, funders, donors, fundraisers, charity partners, staff, and trustees.

This report is a testament to the positive influence of collaboration in bringing about real societal change and ensuring that support is available to everyone, leaving no voice unheard. As a result, 21,392 people received the support they need and deserve.

On behalf of First Light, thank you.

Whats next for First Light?

We will continue to prioritise anyone impacted by sexual violence, domestic abuse, and church-related abuse, ensuring everyone's voice is heard and that support is always available.

We will also be launching our 5-year strategy over the next year, which we look forward to sharing with you.

We are going to focus more on empowering everyone to help support those affected by abuse. This includes providing friends, family members, guardians, and colleagues with more support, education, training, and resources to understand the important role they play and what they can do to support the people they care about.

We are working to build more partnerships and collaborations to support communities and have an active voice in new campaigns to ensure the conversations around abuse continue. By exploring new approaches and working with survivors' voices, we aim to shape new support models and lead the conversation across the South West Peninsula.

We know there is much more work to do to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, sexuality, gender, or ethnicity, has the support they need and deserve.

We invite you to
join us in this journey,
as we work together
to create a society where

safety,

dignity

and **freedom**

are not just ideals
but lived realities.



FIRST LIGHT

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Support for All

First Light is the operating name of First Light South West Ltd
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