

CHOICES ISLINGTON

England & Wales · Charity number 1124209

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Charitable company

Company number [06517231](#)

Registered 2008-05-27

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Choices Islington
390 Caledonian Road
London
N1 1DN

Phone 020 7700 4475

Email info@choicescharity.org

Website www.choicescharity.org

Activities

Objects: 3.1 THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE SUBJECT OF PREGNANCY AND THE TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY AND INTO THE EFFECTS THEREOF UPON WOMEN WHETHER PHYSICAL, MEDICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL;3.2 THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S HEALTH.3.3 THE PROVISION OF ADVICE COUNSELLING AND ASSISTANCE TO WOMEN AND THEIR PARTNERS AND FAMILIES WHO ARE SUFFERING ANY PHYSICAL OR MENTAL ILLNESS, DISTRESS OR POVERTY DURING OR AS A RESULT OF PREGNANCY OR FOLLOWING AN ABORTION, MISCARRIAGE, COT DEATH, STILL BIRTH, LOSS OF A CHILD OR SEXUAL ABUSE;3.4 THE PROMOTION OF SUCH OTHER CHARITABLE PURPOSES WHICH MAY CONVENIENTLY BE CARRIED ON IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABOVE OBJECTS.

Activities: Advisory and support services for women facing unplanned pregnancy and support for post abortion or other pregnancy or child loss concerns. Befriending service offering practical support, group participation and individual mentoring for vulnerable pregnant women or new mothers. Relationships and Sexual Health Education project for local young people and targeted groups.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives
- **Who:** Children/young People, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** LOCAL
- Camden
- City Of London
- Hackney
- Haringey
- Islington

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£421,984	£380,507	-	-
2024-12-31	£366,263	£350,328	-	-
2023-12-31	£390,232	£305,037	-	-
2022-12-31	£219,674	£226,961	-	-
2021-12-31	£214,356	£183,157	-	-
2020-12-31	£188,621	£163,698	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Elizabeth Dulley	Chair	2019-09-30
Celia Wyatt		2023-11-14
Chloe Selby		2023-07-18
Dr HANNAH RACHEL CARTER		2011-12-22
Matthew Davis		2022-01-26

Accounts



choices

For every woman, no matter her story.

Annual Report and Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 December 2025

Choices

A charity registered in England as Choices Islington

Registered charity number 1124209

Company limited by guarantee number 6517231

Introducing Choices

Our vision

For every woman to find hope, support and compassion in her journey.

Our mission

To provide professional and compassionate support for all women through pregnancy, loss and parenthood.

Our goal

To work with our clients to improve their resilience and ability to: cope with a pregnancy crisis, pregnancy loss or parenting pressure; to make their choices healthily, and to have confidence to face the future with hope. We do this by equipping them practically and with counselling.

Our values

Empathy:	Standing alongside each other with warmth, care and respect
Resilience:	Helping each other to build resilience and have hope for the future
Professionalism:	Working to the highest professional standard

Our ethos

Choices is a Christian organisation, and so we believe that all people deserve to be treated with care, compassion, and respect, regardless of their faith, race, income, sexual orientation or employment status. We are not a campaigning organisation, and we do not have a political agenda. Rather, we offer a safe, hopeful, and empowering space to our clients, our partners and each other.

We work with women and families facing pregnancy crises – from unplanned pregnancy to pregnancy loss, child separation, and parenting under challenging circumstances – and we recognise that these can be sensitive issues. Abortion, particularly, can become a controversial issue that divides people in a polarising debate. We choose instead to unite people by meeting our clients at their point of need, and never passing judgement. Our goal is to provide counselling and practical support so those in crisis can reach a place of resilience and hope for the future.

All Choices staff and volunteers are appropriately trained and supervised to reflect our ethos. We're committed to working at the highest standards of excellence that we can and practice within all national legal frameworks and professional guidelines, including safeguarding and anti-discrimination legislation. We are organisational members of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and adhere to the BACP ethical framework. We take seriously our responsibility to provide a safe space for our clients. Many of them have already experienced coercion and we will never be another coercive voice in their lives.

As a faith-based organisation, Choices reserves the right to apply occupational requirements to key counselling and leadership roles, to preserve the Christian ethos of our organisation in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Our name

We are now known as Choices and use the URL *choicescharity.org*. Our registered name remains Choices Islington. This change was made in 2024 to provide clarity for clients and referrers and to demonstrate the expansion of our services across London and sometimes further afield.

Legal and Administrative Information

Company/Charity Name

Choices Islington (formerly Choices Confidential Pregnancy Advice)

Registered Charity Number

1124209

Registered Company Number

6517231

Registered Office

390 Caledonian Road

London

N1 1DN

Email

info@choicescharity.org

Website

www.choicescharity.org

Telephone

020 7700 4475

Trustees/Directors

Hannah Carter

Matt Davis (Treasurer)

Elizabeth Dulley (Chair)

Damilola Makinde (resigned in 2025)

Chloe Selby

Diana Squires (appointed in 2025)

Celia Wyatt

Company Secretary

Sophie Guthrie-Kummer

Bankers

Charities Aid Foundation Bank

CCLA Investment Management Limited

National Westminster Bank PLC

Independent Examiner

Christopher Clarke

Welcome from the CEO

Choices would not exist without our donors, supporters and volunteers. They are the backbone of this work and they ensure we are able to meet all the women, and their families, who need our support. Everyone who has supported Choices over the last year – and some have been supporters since the charity was established in 1999! – can take pride in being part of something special. The more I, and the dedicated, motivated and highly professional staff team, do this work, the more connection we feel to it, to how important it is, to the difference it makes in people's lives. I am increasingly in awe of our clients for choosing to share their lives with us. Some are at their lowest moments when they come to us and show such courage and honesty as they seek hope and strength for the future. I am so encouraged by the feedback we regularly receive that tells us we provided much-needed and valuable support.



Here are some comments we've received recently that have encouraged me. Please enjoy reading more from our clients through this annual report:

*"I feel **really hopeful** for the future thanks to having the space to talk"*

"I really wish more people knew about Choices.
It was so much easier than waiting for the hospital to get back to me and they got in touch so quickly.
Lots of kind caring words made me feel very comfortable and that my feelings were valid."

We also ask our clients for feedback that can guide us to re-shape our services where we need to better meet their needs. And we value hearing from all who engage with our work, so I hope you get a flavour of the different voices of our clients, volunteers, staff and partners through this annual report.

I look back on 2025 with enormous gratitude and pride. I am grateful for our supporters, for the good work we have been able to do, for our clients for trusting us and for the Choices team. Every single one in the team gives so much energy, thought and care to their work, as well as good humour despite being faced with new challenges every year.

This past year has seen more and more clients reach out for help in each of the prisons we work in, in the community following pregnancy loss, through pregnancy and following child separation (an innovation in the past year which has proved much-needed among a client cohort including those who are leaving prison or known to criminal justice services.). With this growth, we find ourselves recruiting new counsellors at regular points through the year. Where in 2024 we welcomed 12 new staff and volunteers, in 2025, that number was 35 new staff and volunteers!

With this additional resource, we are seeing more clients and the final quarter of 2025 was our busiest yet, with 208 clients being seen for 720 sessions across all Choices' services. We have seen growth across the unplanned pregnancy service, with more clients finding us and then going through to our other services, including the perinatal counselling, which is encouraging as this was the intention of that service to meet a need we were seeing for those feeling pressure in pregnancy to have somewhere to receive support.

2025 was also a turning point for Choices – our growth has meant we have to shift our way of operating to ensure a larger team still feels like a team, and that the correct procedures and safeguarding are in place to meet a greater, and often more complex, client load. The work we put into our brand and how we communicate shows our development as a charity, and our investment into building and growing new partnerships with churches and individuals with the appointment of a new Partnerships Manager, is an indication that we are ready to grow in London and further afield. Finally, the Trustees made the key decision that we will move out of our office of 15 years in September 2026. We will move to a new way of working that enables us to see more clients in person, and better suits our staff team that is already spread across three prisons and is experiencing growth that isn't limited by geographical location.

I'm encouraged that those who need Choices' professional, empathetic and compassionate support through pregnancy, loss and parenthood are finding us. I'm aware so many more might need us and we continue to aim to grow to meet that need where we can, where partnerships emerge and where we are able to continue to grow sustainably.

Sophie Guthrie-Kummer
CEO

"Thanks to my counsellor so much for the last few sessions, *they've been my lifesaver* getting me through a tough patch."

Future Plans

Building change/move - in September 2026

- o Ensuring structures and procedures are in place to support teams with the change and to prepare us for further, future growth
- o Locating new counselling rooms
- o Locating new office / desk space and space for meetings with team
- o Establishing processes and structures to manage more remote working and higher client loads

Internal communications: establishing stronger lines of communication between and within teams to ensure efficient working and good team dynamics as we grow.

Pursuing New Opportunities – in Partnership

- o Boutique Service moving to a new day in conjunction with a 'family focus' in the building
- o New partnerships with churches and individuals
- o Exploring expansion of services in new locations with the support of local churches

Best Practice: an ongoing focus on ensuring all clients have a trauma-informed experience at Choices and that all supporters and volunteers have a professional and high-quality experience.

Our charitable aim

Is to support every woman no matter her story, through pregnancy, loss and parenthood. We aim to help women build resilience to face the challenges they experience and find hope for the future. We offer professional counselling and compassionate practical support, in prison and in the community.

How we accomplish our goal

Our counselling and practical services focus on empowering our clients as they build their own resilience to handle adversity and face the future with hope. We have two main outputs: a counselling service for women in prison and in the community, and practical support for parents in the form of our Boutique – a baby clothes and equipment service – and the Circle of Security Parenting™ course. Where needed or requested, we then signpost all clients on to other statutory and charitable services.

Public benefit

We have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

About our clients

Choices sees clients in all our services from across all London boroughs, with the majority – more than a third – telling us they are based in the London Boroughs of Islington, Camden and Hackney, which reflects our traditional geographical base, with Choices' office being based in Islington and seeing clients from these neighbouring boroughs since the beginning. Interestingly, while another 21% came from across London, 19% came from outside of London entirely. The remainder did not disclose where they came to us from. Our clients tell us they are from a mix of ethnic backgrounds, with no one dominant group represented. The biggest group (at 20%) identified as 'white British', followed by those who identified as 'Black, African and Caribbean' and other (9%). Another 11% as 'other' or 'mixed/multiple ethnic backgrounds', 7% identified as 'white other' and 5% as 'Black British'. Finally, 8% of our clients identified as 'Asian' (Bangladeshi, British, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani or other). We do know that 17% identify as Christian and 5% as Catholic (which might be higher than other mental health charities and indicate the perceived need people of faith feel to be able to express their faith in counselling with a counsellor who has a framework for faith). Another 14% expressed another religious background (the highest constituent being Muslims at 12%) and 7% said they had no religion, and a further 2% identified as atheist. The vast majority of our clients are women but we do sometimes see men in our counselling services (men come with a partner and on their own for an appointment to discuss an unplanned pregnancy) and in the Boutique. Our clients come to us across all ages, with the majority being aged between 20 and 45. As part of our commitment to being a trauma-aware organisation, we continue to explore which groups are under-represented in our services, and how we can address this.

Safeguarding

We take safeguarding very seriously and have a dedicated safeguarding team comprised of two leads and two deputies, and includes the CEO. This team meets monthly to assess and respond to ongoing cases. All reports of concerns are recorded confidentially and responded to as soon as possible after being reported on an ongoing basis. All staff and volunteers complete mandatory safeguarding training once a year. Working with women in the community with often complex mental health needs and especially for those known to social services and criminal justice services, we are conscious of the potential safeguarding risks many of our clients face and so aim to ensure our services are robust in our response to safeguarding needs.

Trauma Awareness

We have worked hard this year to continue to be trauma aware – receiving our bronze quality mark in January 2025. This work has been focused on a few different areas including updating our evaluation framework and putting in place a structure for hearing from our clients specifically on how effectively we put the trauma-aware principles into practice: safety, trustworthiness, choice, empowerment, collaboration, and cultural consideration. We have also identified training for staff to extend our understanding of specific client groups, and are creating a new in-house training for all staff and volunteers on our trauma-informed model of working. Finally, we started to update all of our policies to ensure they were written from a trauma-informed lens.

Our Impact in 2025

2025 in numbers:

788

Service Users

510

Unique Individual Clients

2656

Total Sessions

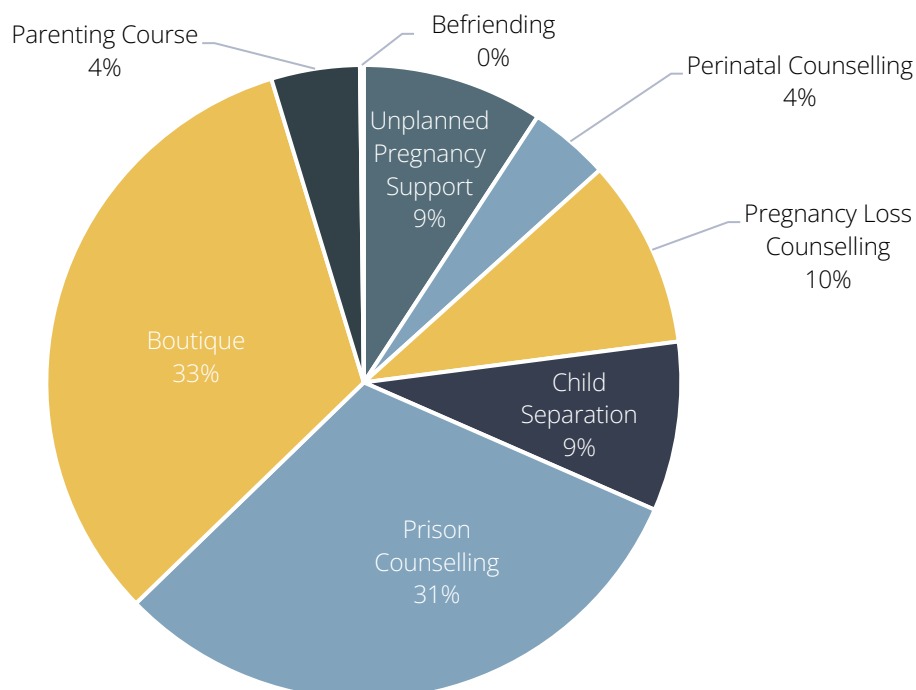
320

Counselling Clients
(in prison and the community)

190

Boutique and Parenting Course
Clients

Total Clients Supported



Cynthia's story

Cynthia* (not her real name, to protect her identity) has always felt she didn't have a voice and that she has been easy to manipulate. Her time in prison meant she couldn't help or protect her children, and her decisions in the past led them to have complex lives themselves. Cynthia carried a lot of guilt and remorse about causing pain to her children - through her absence and her choice of partners. Cynthia was referred to Choices for counselling during her time in HMP Bronzefield, due to her challenging separation from her youngest daughter who had left her official care relative, was refusing school and was self-harming. Cynthia's helplessness and frustration were the hardest things for her to deal with.

Choices was able to offer Cynthia 26, one-to-one counselling sessions in Bronzefield, and upon her release she was referred to Choices' community counselling team where she has been continuing sessions with her counsellor.

Amazingly, especially given everything she has been through, **Cynthia now feels she has a voice.** She has refused to enter back into the abusive relationship with her ex-partner and has gained a greater degree of self-awareness in relation to the abuse she experienced in the past and the decisions she had made throughout her life. She now speaks of having a greater sense of self-worth, is advocating for her youngest daughter with more authority and is making time for herself and her self-care. She is also being supported positively by her probation officer and her allocated key worker and as a result is feeling more heard - perhaps for the first time. Cynthia is back in touch with all of her children, and is finally able to have positive communication with them.



Our Services and their Impact

The goal in Choices' work is to support our clients to be able to harness and use their own resilience to respond to the challenges with pregnancy, loss and parenthood that they face. As a result of the counselling and practical support we offer, we expect that they are better equipped to understand their feelings, accept their reality and face the future with hope. All our services are monitored using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Clients are asked at the beginning and end to evaluate their agreement to statements using this scale. We then monitor how many give a score of 5 or 6 (a high level of agreement) at the end of counselling in response to key statements. These results are shared as a percentage for each service in the following pages. For the ongoing counselling services, we also use NHS-approved psychometrics which indicate levels of anxiety and depression in clients before and after counselling. We measure the percentage change from beginning to end of all clients' scores cumulatively.

About Choices' Counselling Services

All of our counsellors are qualified or are completing their training (registered with an accredited provider). All staff are fully qualified and volunteers are usually on placement while training but some volunteers are qualified and offer their time in support and commitment to the work (usually staying on after a placement). Choices is an organisational member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

Community Counselling

Unplanned Pregnancy Counselling

Our vision is for anyone facing the dilemma of an unplanned pregnancy to be offered immediate, free, compassionate and non-judgmental support with a trained counsellor to express and understand their thoughts and feelings about their situation. Over the years, the feedback we get from those who use our service tells us how valued and valuable this space is. Clients say they couldn't find anything similar elsewhere and that it was often the first place they felt listened to and were able to listen to themselves without feeling any coercion. This is why we offer them the space and ensure it is a free and responsive service.

47

Clients supported

74

One-off sessions

***"I felt understood by my counsellor.** She was very kind and understanding. It reassured me hugely. My biggest concern was I am alone and nobody would understand me. **I felt relieved after talking to the counsellor.** Thank you very much."*

We endeavour to respond rapidly (within 24 hours) to every query and offer an appointment within the next day or so. We also work hard to ensure clients are reassured they will be given space to explore their own feelings and thoughts and will not be judged or coerced to make a decision. Choices is conscious that many will bring biases and judgments about an organisation with a faith ethos operating in the area of unplanned pregnancy and abortion, and we are always clear that it is our faith ethos that underpins our compassionate and non-judgmental response to our clients.

This year, we saw an increase in the number of clients coming to this service, likely a response to the promotion we have done among local healthcare providers. We have also seen an increase in the take up of those coming from this service into ongoing counselling, particularly for those seeking support through pregnancy and beyond.

"My counsellor was fantastic, *I felt completely welcome and safe.* I came away from the session with a refreshed outlook on my current circumstances. Thank you."

"My counsellor has been brilliant. *I felt cared for and heard without judgement,* and she helped me see more perspectives I wasn't taking into account. Cannot thank her and the whole Choices team enough!!"

100% felt equipped to face their situation and make a decision

100% felt able to identify their feelings

100% felt confident about their next steps

"You've been really good, *you have allowed me to explore some very difficult things* and as there are layers to this, you've given me a chance to talk about all of them."

Pregnancy Loss, Perinatal and Child Separation Counselling

Choices has been offering a service supporting women (and sometimes men) who are facing difficulties processing their feelings, thoughts and responses following a pregnancy loss, particularly an abortion since we started. This established counselling service, which operates on a low-cost model, offers 24 weekly sessions and we work online and in person. The service is supported by trainee counsellors who have chosen to have their clinical placement with Choices, as well as members of staff.

"My therapist is one of the best I've had and knows what I need and how to work with me. I just feel I can be honest with her more so than I have before in any therapy."

- Loss Client

"In the beginning I saw myself as a complete disaster, now I see myself working towards a different version of myself."

- Pregnancy Client

Over the last few years, we developed our Perinatal Counselling service, supporting expectant parents and in some instances very new parents who are dealing with birth trauma or perinatal mental health concerns with low-cost counselling throughout pregnancy until around 37 weeks where our counsellors negotiate a break. We then offer around six sessions of counselling in the first four months after birth. The offer is bespoke for each client, in recognition of the different experiences faced by each individual. We aim to operate this service without a waiting list as pregnancy is already such a limited time and we don't want clients to wait any longer than absolutely necessary to access support.

In the last year, we brought a service that used to sit under the 'prison counselling' service into this one: we now also offer counselling to those who have been separated from their children, through voluntary relinquishment for adoption or removal. All of these services are also open to women who have been in prison, or are known to criminal justice services. Each of these strands of our community counselling services is growing rapidly and we have a growing team of nearly 20 volunteers. Training and support is offered to all counsellors throughout the year to ensure the professionalism of the service and a warm connection within the team. We have begun to recruit new counsellors every six months, working together with the prison team to recruit at the same time to ensure efficiency.

The pregnancy loss service has seen referrals grow three-fold from the first quarter of the year to the last. Session numbers for both the loss and the pregnancy counselling service doubled and rose by 40% respectively. Our increasingly close connections with NHS services and growth in the counselling team have led to this rise.

29	Post-Abortion clients supported
20	Post-Miscarriage clients supported
21	Perinatal clients supported
44	Child Separation clients supported
973	Sessions held in total with all clients

"It's been brilliant, just right for me. ***Find it easy to talk to you, not lots of psychobabble.*** You've helped me to understand
 – to do it myself, not told me.
 - Child Separation Client

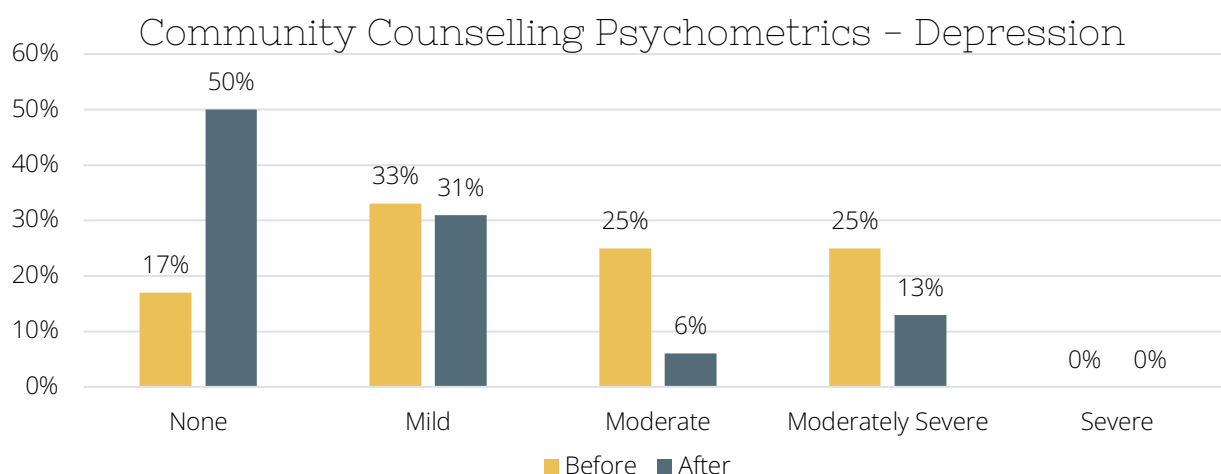
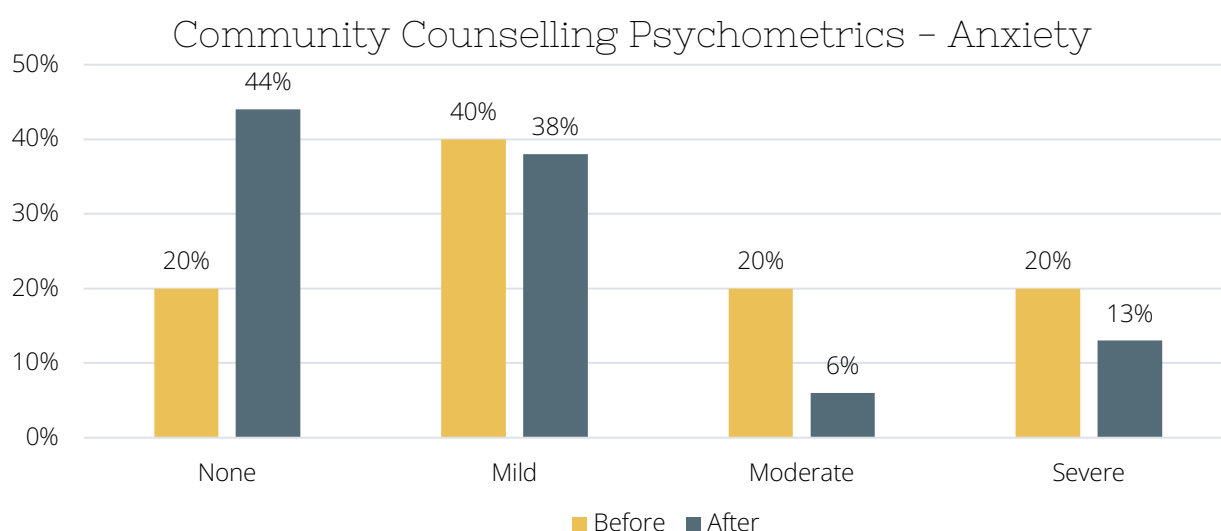
"Thank you, it's hard to put into words. ***I'm grateful for the provision of this form of counselling and that it's affordable.***
 There was not really any offer of aftercare from the hospital services and it could have been very different."
 - Loss Client

"My counsellor taught me to believe I'm good enough. I have caused trauma for myself and my children, but I am doing my best now and I am good enough for my children.
The cycle stops with me."
 - Child Separation Client

"I'm proud to volunteer at Choices, a space free from judgement where women are met with care and can feel seen, heard, and supported."

- Community Counselling Volunteer

Many of our counselling clients experience complex life situations, including relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, financial pressure and pre-existing mental health diagnoses. These are alongside stresses caused by pregnancy, pregnancy loss and child separation. Most report experiencing high depression and anxiety levels when they come to Choices and most see those levels fall dramatically at the end of counselling.



Using NHS-approved psychometrics – GAD-7 and PHQ-9 scales for Anxiety and Depression respectively – we saw that from the start of counselling, the majority were experiencing some form of depression or anxiety. Looking at those in the 'moderate to severe' category for both, we see a 21% fall in those experiencing anxiety and a 31% fall in those experiencing depression. Those experiencing moderate to severe anxiety fell from 40% at the start to 19% at the end and 50% were experiencing moderate to severe depression at the start of counselling while only 19% were at the end. These figures cover all of our community services and it must be noted that for some, particularly those who have very complex lives following prison, or who have chosen to parent under difficult circumstances with poor mental health and financial pressure, these gains represent an enormous change in their lives. This is borne out by the average number of those experiencing 'no' depression or anxiety rose by more than half by the end of counselling.

"I have had a fantastic experience. Ultimately, it has ***provided a lifeline for me when I felt desperate.***"

- Pregnancy Client

"I have been able to ***regain confidence back in myself***, obtain closure on the situation and find myself in a happier space."

- Loss Client

Felicia's Story

This story is told by Felicia's counsellor.

I met Felicia* (not her real name) last April for an initial Unplanned Pregnancy session, following a referral from her perinatal psychiatrist. Felicia, in her early 40s, was approximately 10 weeks pregnant at the time. Although the pregnancy had been carefully planned through IVF, she presented in crisis once it was confirmed. She described feeling unable to access her previous sense of wanting the pregnancy and instead felt overwhelmed and uncertain about how to move forward.

Felicia had been out of work for several years. While she was in a committed relationship, she and her partner had never lived together, and she reported ongoing difficulties within the relationship. She also had a history of bipolar disorder and had previously taken medication for depression over many years.

Over the course of three Unplanned Pregnancy sessions, Felicia began to reconnect with more positive feelings about the pregnancy and to develop an understanding of her initial response.

Following this, she continued to receive support as a pregnancy counselling client. Throughout her pregnancy, the work focused on identifying triggers that led to spiralling anxious and negative thought patterns, and on developing effective coping strategies. Over time, she reported an increased ability to manage these responses, gaining a sense of control, confidence, and relief from her anxiety.

In Autumn 2025, Felicia gave birth to a healthy baby. She had felt very anxious about the possibility of struggling to bond with her child and experiencing postnatal depression. We continued sessions during the postpartum period, focusing on supporting her through this transition. In practice, she experienced no difficulties bonding with her baby and expressed surprise at her own strength and resilience.

Prison Counselling

Choices Prison Counselling supports female prisoners facing pregnancy loss, child bereavement and child separation concerns – abiding issues for women in prison. This service is sub-contracted by the Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS Trust and we are overseen by the Mental Health Teams at HMPs Bronzefield, Downview and Send. This project has also been funded by two major grants by the National Lottery and City Bridge Trust which both agreed to fund us for an additional five years and one year respectively.

Women in prison are universally traumatised from experiences throughout their lives, and including being in prison. In addition, they have experienced multiple losses, including of pregnancies and children through separation and often adoption.

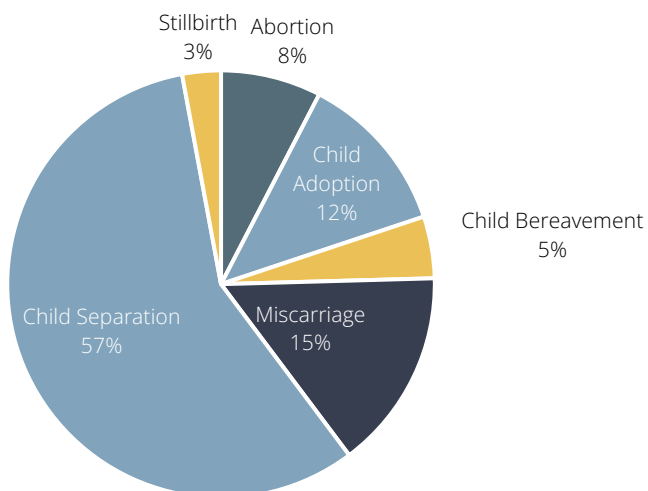
This work is complex and challenging but every year we hear clients tell us what an enormous difference the support has made and given the level of trauma our clients have experienced, any gains at all are to be celebrated. And our evaluations show that even after three months, our clients give scores of 5 or 6 out of 6, showing that they feel more confident about the future, have higher self worth and can understand their feelings better.

The service across the three prisons is supported by around 20 volunteer counsellors, a number of whom stay on following qualification. As the popularity of the service grows, receiving referrals from Mental Health, other prison services and word of mouth, we have moved to a regular rhythm of recruiting new counsellors twice a year with both prison and community counselling services working together on this. Regular meetings for volunteer teams have helped to develop a sense of belonging.

Clients Supported

67	Bronzefield	57	Downview
35	Send	1364	Sessions

Referring Problem



Of the clients who disclosed a referring problem, child separation is by far the largest referring issue we work with in the prison service (57% of clients). At least 39% of the women we work with have experienced adverse childhood experiences such as sexual and domestic abuse and 64% have experienced abuse as an adult. The work that our service offers works directly with the consequences of these experiences.

"Being able to speak to someone without judgement has helped me ***understand my grief and loss*** and move past those feelings."

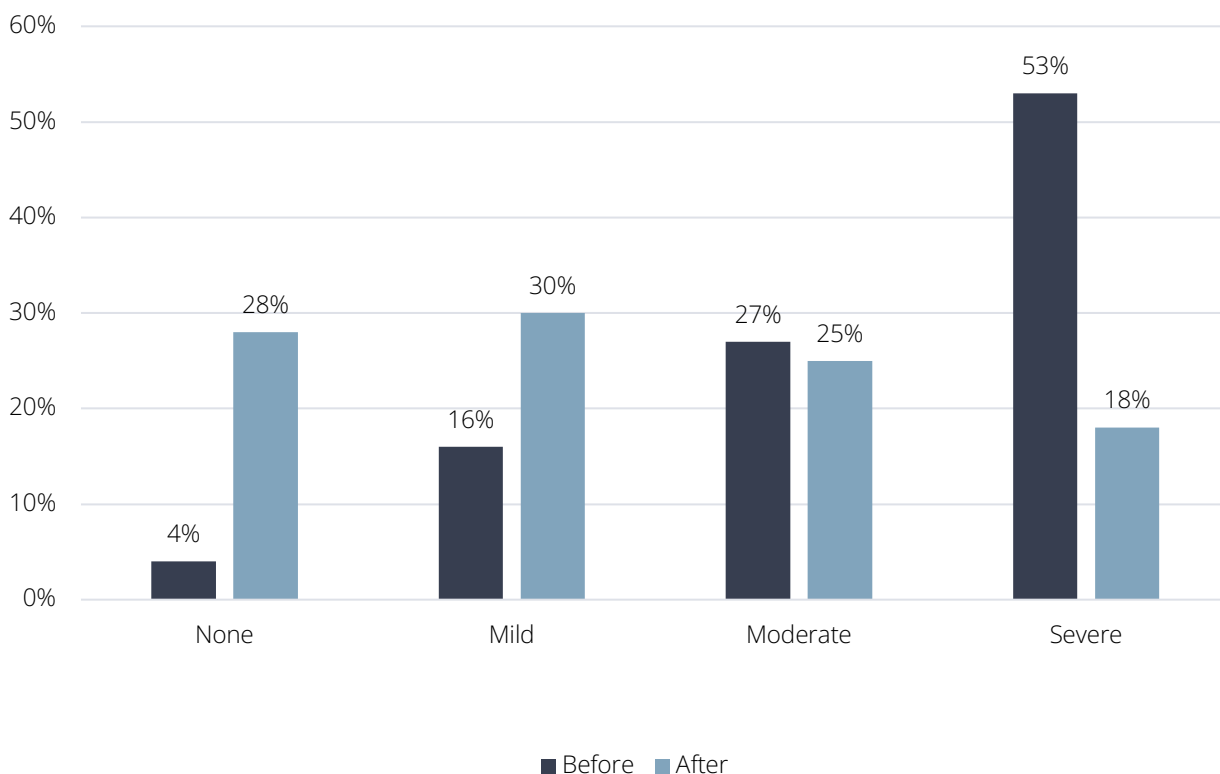
100% feel they can now be honest with themselves about their emotions

100% feel the counselling has improved their self-confidence

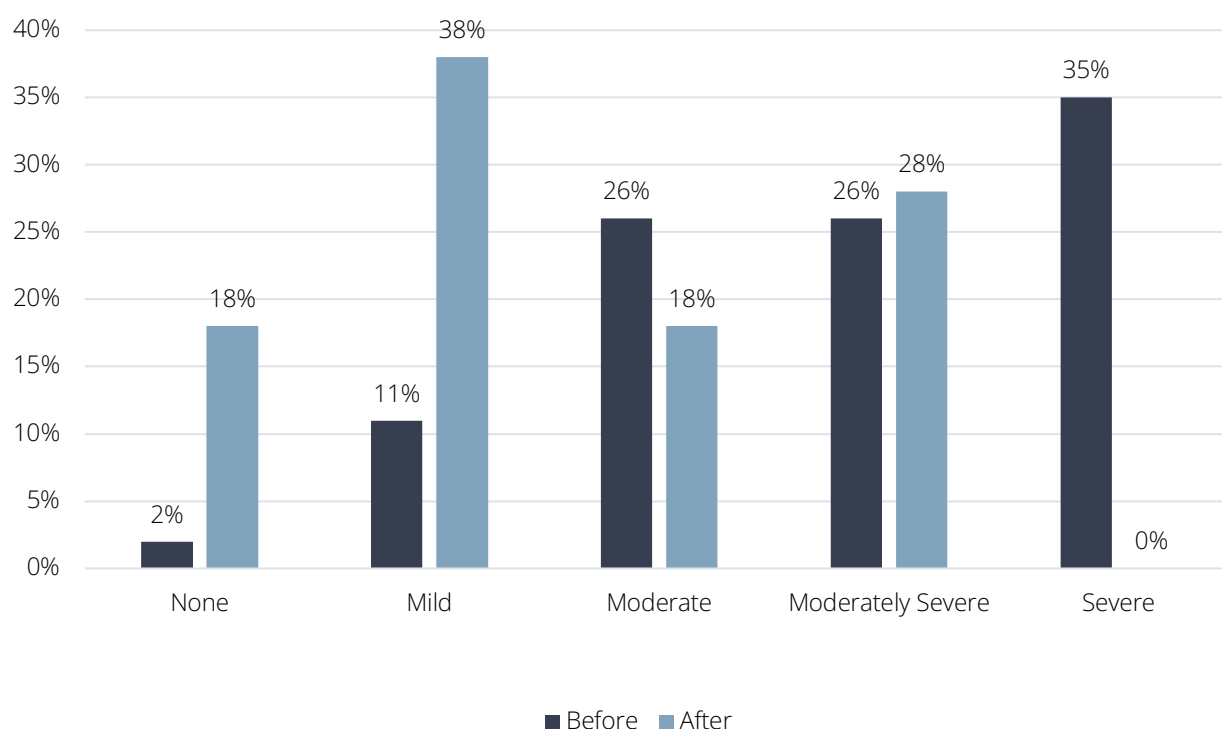
100% feel that counselling has helped them identify their strengths and good qualities

"Choices Prison Counselling is one of the ***best services in the prison.***"

Prison Counselling Psychometrics - Anxiety



Prison Counselling Psychometrics – Depression



The psychometric evaluations our clients filled out before and after counselling demonstrated a very positive experience of counselling. 80% of clients scored as having moderate and severe anxiety before and only 43% after, while 87% of clients had moderate to severe depression before - a figure that fell to 46% after. It is notable that only 2% scored as having 'no' depression before and 4% had no anxiety. But that figure rose to 18% and 28% respectively after counselling. And no clients at all had severe depression at the end of their sessions. For such a vulnerable cohort, these gains are very significant.

"I'm grateful for the **connection**, the **consistency**, the **helpful support** to make me **feel valued** and think about things differently."

"It's been good to have someone to listen to my problems as not many people do; thank you for giving me **a safe space to cry** as there is no other place I can do it."

Sinead's Story

This story is told by Sinead's counsellor.

Sinead (not her real name) came into counselling experiencing extremely high levels of anxiety and significant emotional distress. She was struggling to come to terms with her offence, her time in custody, and the impact of being separated from her daughter.

Throughout our work together, Sinead demonstrated remarkable commitment and resilience, engaging fully both within sessions and in the work she undertook independently. Over time, she was able to process these experiences more openly, gaining meaningful insight into herself, her behaviours, and her emotional responses.

Sinead shared that the support she received was instrumental in helping her through an incredibly dark period, and that she would not have been able to cope without it. As therapy progressed, she developed a stronger sense of self, reporting increased confidence, independence, and emotional awareness.

It was a privilege to work alongside Sinead and to witness the significant progress she made through her dedication and willingness to engage in the therapeutic process.

Following her release, Sinead called Choices to share her thanks with her counsellors.

I'm now outside of prison and ***if it wasn't for them, I wouldn't have made it through the darkest of times.***
I am eternally grateful. They are amazing professionals
and I would just like to give my thanks."

Rebekah's Story

This story is told by Rebekah's counsellor.

I worked with Rebekah (not her real name) for 21 sessions, up to her release. When we started working together, she had come from a world of coercion, and abusive relationships and was in denial about this and therefore lacking accountability. Throughout our sessions we worked on exploring her sense of self, her values and how what she had been involved in fit within these.

Rebekah found herself on a journey of freedom from her past, saying that prison and our work together had given her space to grow and the confidence to be herself. I found this to be a very humbling experience to see such a huge shift in an individual to meet themselves with truth and determination to make better choices.

When we ended our sessions, she presented me with a card with the following message:

"Words will never be enough to say how grateful I am for you. ***I am so proud of the woman I've grown into,*** and I couldn't have done it without the support and kindness you've given me".

Our Partners in Prison

The prison counselling service is hosted in all three prisons by the Mental Health teams in those prisons, and part of the Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS Trust. We work closely with the Heads of Healthcare, psychologists and teams who care for the women and have good relationships with other sub-contractors too.

“Choices have been a great partner organisation to work with in HMP Downview. Our psychology team have benefited from completing joint assessments which have ***enabled us to develop pathway plans that best support women's needs*** in relation to child separation and other mental health needs.”

- Senior Clinical Psychologist at HMP Downview

“Choices offer an ***outstanding service*** that complements the wider mental health team and provides essential support to the therapies service as a whole. The team members are lovely, engaging, compassionate and provide excellent care to the women in custody. [Choices' Prison Service Manager] is very highly regarded by the wider mental health team as well as the women she works with. She is approachable, kind and thoughtful about each case we refer, and her efforts to embed the service within the team have helped us refine our own referral processes. ***An invaluable service all round, and the team are fab to work alongside.***”

- Senior Clinical Psychologist at HMP Bronzefield

Counselling Volunteers

Choices is hugely reliant on a team of dedicated volunteers. We now have around 40 volunteer counsellors on placement or following qualification working with our counselling clients in prison and in the community. They comment that the placement is rewarding, constructive and well organised and we work hard to ensure we train, support and enable them to feel part of a team. We hope to give our volunteers as much as they give to us – you can read below what they have to say.

“Being part of Choices is a ***hugely rewarding and humbling experience***, not just for what it represents, but also for being part of a team that truly honours and values the vital work they do. I feel incredibly grateful to be ***surrounded by people who are so kind, supportive and deeply committed to improving women's lives***. Everyone brings such compassion and understanding to their work. Being a volunteer counsellor strengthens my sense of purpose and it is so important to me to contribute in a way that helps the women I work with feel truly heard, supported and less alone, particularly given the complexity of the challenges they are facing.”

“I've found the work with the women in prison to be challenging at times, frustrating at times, but always extremely rewarding. ***The courage the women have shown me in sharing their experiences and emotions has been humbling.*** I hope in some small way to have helped them understand themselves a little more and it's an experience that will stay with me always. Choices as an organisation has been supportive and kind to me as a volunteer and ***the work you do is absolutely invaluable.*** The professionalism and humanity I've experienced in the organisation has been affirming and positive at all times.”

Practical Parenting Support

This service exists to support those who are parenting in adverse circumstances, including on low income, in insecure housing, and single parenting. We offer a baby clothes and equipment service – the Choices Boutique – and well-regarded attachment-based parenting courses.

Boutique

The Choices Boutique offers pre-loved baby clothes and equipment to those who need them. We are in our fourth year running Boutique from a community building called King's House run by a partner church (KXC). The Boutique is open one day a week for appointments and we receive and sort donations on another day. This service has continued in its popularity and a number of clients come more than once, for instance when children grow out of clothes, or when they need something new or additional.

Sharing this community space at King's House means we can refer on to the KXC Little Haven baby and toddler group which also runs on the same day, and to Growing Hope, a charity which supports families with children with additional needs, as well as a service for refugees and asylum seekers which we have partnered with more this year.

166 Clients Supported

210 Appointments

"Instead of feeling desperate going to a baby bank
I felt like I was part of a community."

"I am very grateful charities like this exist as it gives a
huge support to parents on a low income."

Most of our Boutique clients are on low income, single parent families or struggling with mental health issues. A number speak English as an additional language and struggle to access support and we are increasingly seeing more people who also attend the refugee and asylum seeker service at Kings House. Many of our clients are referred to us by Family Support Workers in Islington and Camden, or from further afield, but a number self-refer. In 2026, we will be changing the day this service is offered on to continue to run on the same day as Little Haven baby and toddler group, and will be recruiting more volunteers, to help to run the service. We value our Boutique volunteers who tirelessly sort baby clothes, work out how to make equipment such as buggies and cots work properly and meet clients with professionalism and warmth.

100% felt accepted and supported by their Boutique advisor

100% feel more able to provide their child/ren with the clothing and equipment they need

100% know where to turn for further support

“Choices has been ***an invaluable resource*** to me and I hope to be able to donate pieces back when my baby outgrows them.”

Parenting Courses

We continue to run *Circle of Security Parenting™* courses three times a year, two in person and one online. And this year we ran one course as a pilot in one of the prisons (HMP Downview) as well as one in a new local church partner and one online. Our counselling manager also ran the course material in a one-to-one setting with a counselling client. Based on attachment theory, the course encourages parents and caregivers to consider how to support their children's emotional needs.

Running the course in partnership with local churches has worked very well, as the church partner has hosted the space and promoted the course. We have continued to ask for a paid contribution towards the costs of the course from those who attended as a way of subsidising those who cannot pay.

In prison, the course was received very well, and there has been interest in us running it more, which we aim to do but do require more funds to do so as a regular service.

“This course has made a huge difference to my parenting. It has helped me to reflect more on how I was parented as well as giving me the knowledge and confidence to parent my children differently than how I was parented. I have learnt the importance of following and responding to my child's needs, the need for me to take a 'time out' when I am feeling overwhelmed, and ***the importance of being with my child when they are sad, upset, anxious or feeling shame,*** rather than trying to distract them or make them feel happy.”

"I feel **more confident and equipped** in responding to both my girls' needs. It is still in process but when my eldest daughter is dysregulated and having a meltdown **I am learning to pause more, to take time to gather my thoughts and consider how best to help her** and I am learning to be uncomfortable so she can know comfort. I feel I have especially grown in learning to 'repair' afterwards as well."

100% feel more able and equipped to understand and manage their child/ren's emotions

100% feel they can think about what their child's behaviour is telling them before reacting

100% feel more able and equipped to cope with challenges in parenting

"I feel equipped to parent better, I have points of reference now and more understanding and patience."

"It has made me understand how I can support my child and respond to his needs and has made me more confident that **I can do a decent job as a mum.**"

Finance and Support

Total incoming resources amounted to £421,984 for the year to 31 December 2025 (2024: £366,263). Total resources expended over the same period were £380,507 (2024: £350,328). The net position for the year amounted to a surplus of £41,477 (2024: surplus of £15,935). Net resources at the end of the year were £276,828, of which £15,387 is restricted and £11,646 is designated. Further details are found later in this report, including details of the grants we gratefully received in the year.

Choices is reliant on gifts from grant-making trusts and foundations, as well as individual and major donors. We would like to thank the following donors for their support in 2025:

AKO Foundation, The Anchor Foundation, Benefact Trust, Borrows Charitable Trust, City Bridge Trust, Joan Ainslie Trust, KXC (Kings Cross Church), M & H Maunsell Charity, National Lottery Community Fund (Awards for All), National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities), Save the Children, Stillwaters Pregnancy Centre, Souter Charitable Trust, St Augustine's Highbury, St Mary's Hornsey Rise, St Mary's Islington, St Saviour's Finsbury Park. And Tesco Stronger Starts.

The charity holds its reserves in a current bank account and in a CAF deposit account which generates interest on monies invested. Last year we opened a further interest yielding account through CCLA. It is the policy of the Trustees to maintain a minimum of six months' expenditure in reserve and up to nine months where it is deemed necessary. The financial management of the charity is supervised and monitored by the Finance Subcommittee of the Board and the Trustees.

Over the course of the last few years, we have received some unexpected large gifts from much-valued donors, some of whom have chosen to remain anonymous. We have also made some savings when, for instance, recruitment for key roles took longer than expected, or due to natural staff movement we have been able to restructure more efficiently. As a result, we have built up reserves which the Trustees have chosen to designate towards much-needed improvements to the structure of the charity. In 2025, some of these funds were put towards a salary for a new Partnerships Manager. However, we continued to raise more than expected as we reached a higher target on our Christmas Appeal, secured a new major donor and received a one-off gift from another charity which closed down. We are aware that a major grant comes to an end next year (City Bridge Trust) and reserves might be needed to cover a shortfall. We will also designate some funds for a potential expansion currently being discussed by the Board, which would involve recruiting to a new role in Oxford.

The people who make it happen

Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the strategic direction, finances and policies of the charity. The Trustees, who are also Directors of the charitable company, meet every three months to review progress and performance, monitor the financial position, monitor risk and make strategic decisions. The Trustees/Directors who served during the year and up to the date of this report are listed on page 3. New trustees are appointed by existing trustees of whom there should be a minimum of three. Trustees are selected for their individual skills, knowledge, passion for the work of Choices and vision. New trustees are appropriately trained and inducted.

Team

Choices is run by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who is accountable to the Board. The CEO manages all the project managers (who run our services) as well as an Operations Manager, Partnerships Manager and a Fundraising Manager. Other than the Partnerships Manager, all staff are part-time, and each service is supported by volunteers. Over the course of 2025, we also worked with freelance consultants, namely our bookkeeper of several years (and her maternity cover at the beginning of the year) and a grant fundraiser. The staff team has grown considerably in the last few years and now numbers 16 (including maternity cover personnel who joined for the past year).

Volunteers

Choices continues to benefit from talented and committed volunteering and we have grown considerably this year. More than 55 volunteers give time across all our services. Choices' goal is that volunteers should derive as much benefit from their work with the organisation as we derive from them. All of our counselling volunteers who are not fully trained use Choices as a placement opportunity as part of their counselling/psychotherapy training at reputable institutions accredited with registered professional bodies.

Governance

- The Trustees maintain a Risk Management register, which is reviewed at least annually, and is operationally reviewed quarterly. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces.
- Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects.
- Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.
- The Trustees oversee Choices' compliance with GDPR legislation at every meeting, and adherence to the Charity Commission's Governance Code on an ongoing basis.
- A smaller finance sub-committee, which includes the Treasurer, Bookkeeper and CEO, meets before each meeting of the Trustees, and examines financial progress on a monthly basis.
- The Trustees have been particularly concerned with exploring inclusion and broad representation at all levels of the organisation – from the Board, through staff and volunteers. We have brought in a new way of including user voice in programme development.
- No trustees claimed expenses this year.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

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 charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and with the applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In determining how amounts are presented within items in the statement of financial activities and balance sheet, the Trustees must have regard to the substance of the reported transaction or arrangement, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles or practice.

Small company provisions and independent examination

For the year ending 31 December 2025, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476. The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011) and that an independent examination is needed. The Trustees have appointed Christopher Clarke ACA as Independent Examiner for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by;



Sophie Guthrie-Kummer

Chief Executive Officer and Company Secretary

21 April 2026

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 December 2025, which are set out on pages 29 to 36.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Christopher Clarke, ACA

22 April 2026

Statement of financial activities

(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2025	Total Funds 2024
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:	2				
Donations and legacies		185,839	129,966	315,805	259,051
Other fundraising activities		14,986	-	14,986	20,664
Income from investments		7,358	-	7,358	2,329
Income from charitable activities		83,834	-	83,834	83,503
Other income		1	-	1	716
Total income and endowments		292,018	129,966	421,984	366,263
Expenditure on:	3				
Expenditure on Raising Funds		8,047	1,832	9,879	34,796
Expenditure on Charitable Activities		243,899	126,729	370,628	315,532
Total expenditure		251,946	128,561	380,507	350,328
Net income/(expenditure)		40,071	1,405	41,477	15,935
Opening balances brought forward		221,369	13,982	235,351	219,416
Total funds carried forward		261,440	15,387	276,828	235,351

All activities are continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses for the year and therefore no statement of total recognised gains and losses has been prepared.

The notes on following pages form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	4	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Rent deposit	5	4,000	-	4,000	4,000
Accrued income and prepayments	5	10,867	-	10,867	2,667
Debtors	5	19,291	-	19,291	20,449
Cash at bank and in hand		237,398	82,255	319,653	236,658
		271,556	82,255	353,811	263,775
Liabilities					
Creditors-amounts falling due in 1 year	6	(10,116)	(66,868)	(76,983)	(28,424)
Net current assets		261,440	15,387	276,828	235,351
Total net assets		261,440	15,387	276,828	235,351
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted	7			249,795	201,302
Designated				11,646	20,067
Restricted				15,387	13,982
				276,828	235,351

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 December 2025 and the members/guarantors have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The trustees/directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 21 April 2026 and signed on their behalf by:



Elizabeth Dulley
Chair of Trustees

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2025

1. Accounting Principles

The principal accounting principles are summarised below and have been applied consistently throughout the year.

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with FRS 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland, and the Charities SORP (FRS 102), and in accordance with the Charities Act 2011.

Basis of preparation of accounts

These accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular limited purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Incoming resources

Incoming resources are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and where it is confident that it will be received.

Performance related income is only included in the SoFA once the related services have been provided.

Deferred income

Grants and donations received in advance and specified by the donor as relating to specific future periods or subject to conditions which are still to be met, are deferred to the period to which they relate.

Tax reclaims on donations

Gift aid tax reclaims on donations are included in the SoFA in the same period as the donations to which they relate.

Volunteer services

The value of volunteer services received is not quantified in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

Investment income

Income from investments is included in the accounts in the period it is receivable.

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Operating leases

Operating lease rentals are expensed on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2025

2. Income and Endowments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2024 £
a Donations and legacies				
Donations	159,273	-	159,273	102,687
Grants from trusts	17,000	129,966	146,966	149,029
Gift Aid	9,566	-	9,566	7,336
	<u>185,839</u>	<u>129,966</u>	<u>315,805</u>	<u>259,051</u>
Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:				
Anchor Foundation		10,000	10,000	
Anton Jurgen			-	5,000
Arsenal Foundation			-	1,250
Arundell Trust			-	500
Benefact Trust		5,000	5,000	5,000
Borrows Charitable Trust	7,000		7,000	
City Bridge Trust		53,320	53,320	49,908
Garfield Weston			-	5,000
Henry Smith Foundation			-	3,500
Joan Ainslie Trust	10,000		10,000	5,000
Morris Trust			-	3,000
National Lottery Community Fund		54,164	54,164	67,871
Save The Children		6,357	6,357	
Souter Charitable Trust			-	3,000
Tesco Stronger Starts		1,125	1,125	
	<u>17,000</u>	<u>129,966</u>	<u>146,966</u>	<u>149,029</u>
b Other fundraising activities				
Donation for office space	14,986	-	14,986	14,925
Fundraising events	-	-	-	5,739
c Income from investments				
Bank interest	7,358	-	7,358	2,329
d Income from charitable activities				
Education practitioner training	-	-	-	300
Community counselling	7,236	-	7,236	7,122
Prison counselling income	75,794	-	75,794	75,006
Parenting course income	804	-	804	1,074
e Other income	1	-	1	716
	<u>106,179</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>106,179</u>	<u>107,211</u>
Total incoming resources	<u>292,018</u>	<u>129,966</u>	<u>421,984</u>	<u>366,263</u>

3. Expenditure

a. by fund

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2024 £
Expenditure on Raising Funds				
Event costs	973	32	1,006	5,457
Publicity and marketing	220	-	220	
Fees and subscriptions	6,854	1,800	8,654	29,339
	8,047	1,832	9,879	34,796
Expenditure on Charitable Activities				
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total expenditure 2025 £	Total expenditure 2024 £
Bank charges	60	-	60	66
Bookkeeping costs	7,382	234	7,617	7,252
Charitable donation - Centres Network	-	-	-	1,000
Fees and subscriptions	4,542	-	4,542	3,743
Freelancer costs	-	-	-	14,400
Independent Examination costs	150	-	150	150
Insurance	368	547	915	936
Office expenses	5,247	419	5,667	4,886
Premises costs	28,091	4,361	32,452	20,547
Publicity	6,247	116	6,362	70
Resources	2,231	643	2,873	1,420
Staff costs	171,578	117,233	288,811	237,936
Staff development/training	3,821	-	3,821	7,539
Supervision costs	12,773	2,417	15,190	13,978
Telephone and communication	1,128	594	1,722	1,200
Volunteer expenses	282	165	447	411
	243,899	126,729	370,628	315,532
Total Expenditure	251,946	128,561	380,507	350,328

b. Expenditure on Charitable Activities - by project

	Community Counselling	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Central costs	Total charitable expenditure 2025
Charitable Activities					
Bank charges	-	-	-	60	60
Bookkeeping costs	-	-	-	7,617	7,617
Fees and subscriptions	-	-	-	4,542	4,542
Independent examination costs	-	-	-	150	150
Insurance	-	-	-	915	915
Office expenses	-	-	-	5,667	5,667
Premises costs	-	-	-	32,452	32,452
Publicity	-	-	116	6,247	6,362
Resources	7	1,519	348	1,000	2,873
Staff costs	62,211	15,939	74,328	136,334	288,811
Staff development/training	-	-	-	3,821	3,821
Supervision costs	6,092	-	9,098	-	15,190
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	1,722	1,722
Volunteer expenses	100	-	65	282	447
Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities	68,410	17,458	83,953	200,807	370,628

Expenditure by project: previous year comparatives

	Community Counselling	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Central costs	Total Charitable Expenditure 2024
Charitable Activities					
Bank charges	-	-	-	66	66
Bookkeeping costs	-	-	-	7,252	7,252
Charitable donation - Centres Network	-	-	-	1,000	1,000
Fees and subscriptions	-	-	-	3,743	3,743
Freelancer costs	-	-	3,150	11,250	14,400
Independent examination costs	-	-	-	150	150
Insurance	-	-	-	936	936
Office expenses	-	-	1,259	3,627	4,886
Premises costs	-	-	4,056	16,491	20,547
Publicity	-	-	50	19	70
Resources	10	1,167	243	-	1,420
Staff costs	42,165	14,874	111,867	69,029	237,936
Staff development/training	73	73	877	6,515	7,539
Supervision costs	4,370	-	9,608	-	13,978
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	1,200	1,200
Volunteer expenses	-	20	110	281	411
Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities	46,619	16,135	131,220	121,559	315,532

c. Employees

	2025	2024
Gross salaries and wages	265,870	220,104
Employer's National Insurance	16,918	12,682
Employer's pension contributions	6,023	5,149

There are no employees who received emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2024:nil).
Key management personnel: Sophie Guthrie-Kummer, CEO.

4. Tangible fixed assets

None to report.

5. Current assets

	2025	2024
Rent deposit	4,000	4,000
Accrued income	8,200	-
Prepayments	2,667	2,667
Debtors	19,291	19,231
Gift aid recoverable	-	1,218
	34,158	27,116

6. Creditors

	2025	2024
Amounts due within one year	563	2,571
Tax and pension contributions payable	5,607	5,853
Wages payable	290	
Deferred income and accruals	70,523	20,000
	76,983	28,424

£66,868 was deferred as grants from City Bridge Trust, National Lottery Community Fund, and Benefact Trust due in January 2026 were received early.

7. Movement of Funds

	Opening balance	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Closing balance
Unrestricted general funds	201,302	292,018	(248,525)	5,000	249,795
Designated funds	20,067	-	(3,421)	(5,000)	11,646
Total unrestricted funds	221,369	292,018	(251,946)	-	261,440
Restricted funds					
Boutique	9,542	27,469	(21,624)		15,387
Counselling	-	15,000	(15,000)		-
Parenting Support	-	-	-		-
Prison counselling	4,440	87,497	(91,937)		-
Total restricted funds	13,982	129,966	(128,561)	-	15,387
Total funds	235,351	421,984	(380,507)	-	276,828

£5,000 was transferred out of designated funds into unrestricted funds as it was previously designated for a short-term increase in the Parenting Support Manager role, which is now funded.

8. Related Party Transactions

Total donations made by trustees were £4,610 (2024: £1,525).

Sophie Guthrie-Kummer, CEO, paid Choices Charity £1,036 (2024: £989) as a donation for use of office space.

9. Trustee Expenses

None claimed.

Accounts



Every pregnancy has a story.
Whatever your story, you have Choices.

Annual Report and Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 December 2024

Choices

A charity registered in England as Choices Islington

Registered charity number 1124209

Company limited by guarantee number 6517231

Introducing Choices

Our vision

For no-one in London to face a pregnancy crisis, pregnancy loss or parenting pressure alone.

Our mission

To provide the gold standard of support for anyone facing a pregnancy crisis, pregnancy loss or parenting pressure.

Our goal

To work with our clients to improve their resilience and ability to: cope with a pregnancy crisis, pregnancy loss or parenting pressure; to make their choices healthily, and to have confidence to face the future with hope.

We do this by equipping them practically and with therapy to support them to understand their thoughts and feelings, and to act congruently with their values.

Our values

Empathy:	Standing alongside each other with warmth, care and respect
Resilience:	Helping each other to build resilience and have hope for the future
Professionalism:	Working to the highest professional standard

Our ethos

Choices is a Christian organisation, and so we believe that all people deserve to be treated with care, compassion, and respect, regardless of their faith, race, income, sexual orientation or employment status. We are not a campaigning organisation, and we do not have a political agenda. Rather, we offer a safe, hopeful, and empowering space to our clients, our partners and each other.

We work with women and families facing pregnancy crises – from unplanned pregnancy to pregnancy loss, child separation, and parenting under challenging circumstances – and we recognise that these can be sensitive issues. Abortion, particularly, can become a controversial issue that divides people in a polarising debate. We choose instead to unite people by meeting our clients at their point of need, and never passing judgement. Our goal is to provide counselling and practical support so those in crisis can reach a place of resilience and hope for the future.

All Choices staff and volunteers are appropriately trained and supervised to reflect our ethos. We're committed to working at the highest standards of excellence that we can and practice within all national legal frameworks and professional guidelines, including safeguarding and anti-discrimination legislation. We are organisational members of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and adhere to the BACP ethical framework. We take seriously our responsibility to provide a non-directive space for our clients.

As a faith-based organisation, Choices reserves the right to apply occupational requirements to key counselling and leadership roles, to preserve the Christian ethos of our organisation in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Our name

We are now known as Choices and use the URL choicescharity.org. Our registered name remains Choices Islington. This change was made in 2024 to provide clarity for clients and referrers and to demonstrate the expansion of our services across London and sometimes further afield.

Legal and Administrative Information

Company/Charity Name

Choices Islington (formerly Choices Confidential Pregnancy Advice)

Registered Charity Number

1124209

Registered Company Number

6517231

Registered Office

390 Caledonian Road

London

N1 1DN

Email

info@choicescharity.org

Website

www.choicescharity.org

Telephone

020 7700 4475

Trustees/Directors

Hannah Carter

Matt Davis (Treasurer)

Elizabeth Dulley (Chair)

Damilola Makinde

Lizzie Osborne (resigned in 2024)

Chloe Selby

Celia Wyatt

Company Secretary

Sophie Guthrie-Kummer

Bankers

Charities Aid Foundation Bank

CCLA Investment Management Limited

National Westminster Bank PLC

Independent Examiner

Christopher Clarke

Our charitable aim

Is to support women through the vulnerable time of pregnancy and beyond, whatever choices they make. We aim to help women build resilience to face the challenges they experience and find hope for the future. We work with women through unplanned pregnancy, pregnancy loss, child separation and parenting under pressure, offering counselling in prison and the community and practical support through parenting courses and baby clothes and equipment services.



How we accomplish our goal

Our counselling and practical services focus on empowering our clients as they build their own resilience to handle adversity and face the future with hope following a pregnancy crisis – from abortion to child separation or loss, or parenting in difficult circumstances.

We have three main outputs – Counselling, Practical Parenting Support and Signposting – which form the basis of our services to our clients:

1. A free crisis service for those facing the dilemma of an unplanned pregnancy
2. Low-cost counselling for up to six months for those struggling following a decision to terminate a pregnancy or following a pregnancy loss. And for those with mental health concerns during pregnancy, we offer counselling through the perinatal period, including postnatally.
3. Free counselling for female offenders in three women's prisons and post-release for up to six months around the same issues of pregnancy crisis, loss and child separation and child loss.
4. Parenting support:
 - One-to-one befriending with a trained befriender for pregnant and new mums
 - A free loan of baby clothes and equipment in the Choices Boutique (open to families of under 5s)
 - Parenting courses focused on building secure attachment relationships for families of under 5s
5. Signposting – supporting and helping all clients to feel more confident to access other relevant services – occurs at all levels of our services.

Public benefit

We have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Our Impact in 2024

In 2024 we saw:

584

clients who used a Choices service
(clients can come more than once for different services)

432

number of unique individual clients

2261

total number of sessions with a client

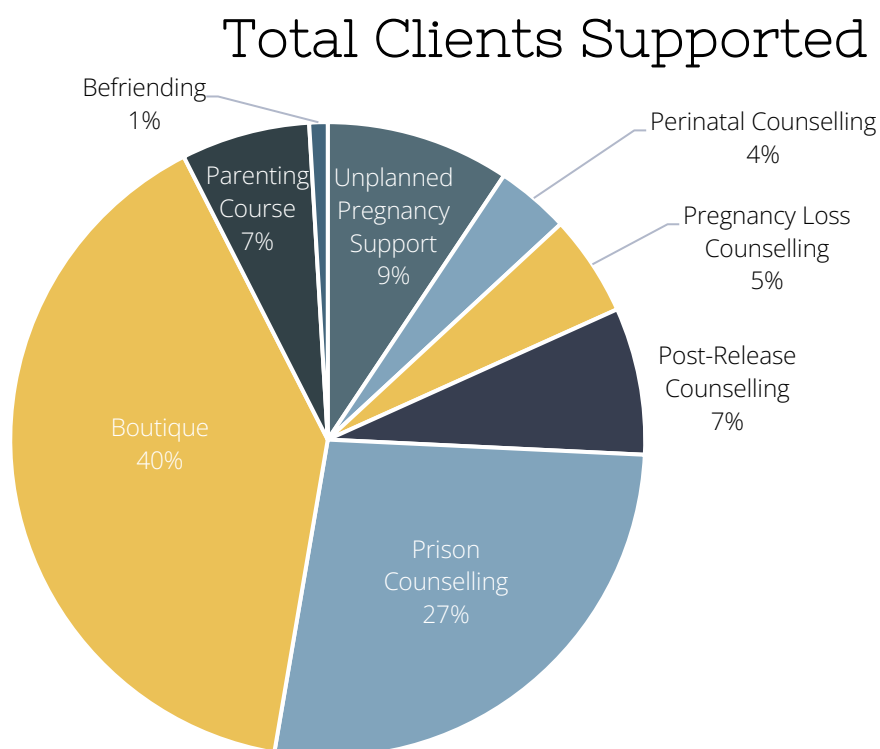
Breakdown of type of clients:

230

Counselling clients

202

Practical Parenting Support clients



100% Prison referrers describe Choices as
'Professional'

100% Boutique referrers describe Choices as
'Non-Judgmental'

100% Counselling referrers describe Choices as
'Collaborative'

A story from prison: reflections of a Choices counsellor

Janette is a biracial female, residing in HMP Bronzefield. Although this is her first time in prison and she has never 'needed counselling before', she started therapy with Choices last year. It was apparent when I first met her, that she was dysregulated. I checked in with her and realised that the loud, chaotic environment she had now found herself in was overwhelming her. She shifted in her seat nervously, looking out the small window on the door. I told her I'd noticed she seemed unsettled, and she said the noise was bothering her. We spent time in that session looking at grounding exercises and coping strategies.

Many of the clients in prison feel a sense of unease. It helps us as counsellors to have a deeper understanding of working with trauma, understanding that clients might continuously feel under threat. I validated what was going on for Janette, helped her regulate and get her to a place of stability, where she was able to engage and utilise the therapy space.

Janette wanted therapy because two years ago she suffered a late miscarriage. She has since split from her husband and said she felt she had never processed her loss. Not just the loss of her relationship, or her baby, but also the life she imagined she'd have. We talked about her seemingly fixed viewpoint, that she saw counselling as being for the 'weak'. That prior to coming to prison she wouldn't have imagined needing or wanting therapy, as she believed she was 'strong'. But after a few sessions, she disclosed that it was helping. It was a space for her to air her fears and feel less alone. Far from what she first imagined, therapy was a source of comfort and support, when previously, she'd seen it as a negative.

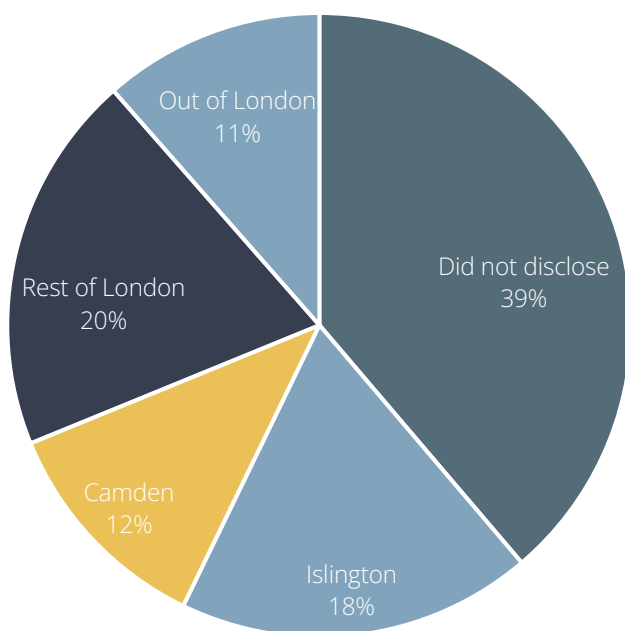
With Janette it was important I established a connection and prioritised her needs. Like many of the women I work with in prison, it sounded as though most of the relationships she'd had with caregivers, partners or friends, were based on dysfunction. It was therefore essential that I modelled a stable relationship for her - a relationship of trust and safety, where her needs were a priority.

It can take time to fully understand the different and multifaceted needs of each of our clients; in therapy, we take time with each one to understand and adapt how we work on a case-by-case basis to help to process and minimise feelings of shame and trauma. Within the prison setting, shame is a core issue. Part of a therapist's role is to help our clients understand, process and minimise those potential feelings of shame and fear about past traumatic events. In my experience empathy is an antidote to shame. I believe shame causes a person to believe they are alone, so it's essential to develop empathy for others, particularly in a place like a prison, where these feelings are intensified, living in a highly judgmental and unaccepting environment. Showing them compassion and understanding, when it seems so many in society have turned their back on them for the things they've done 'wrong', develops rapport and better engagement among those who use our service.

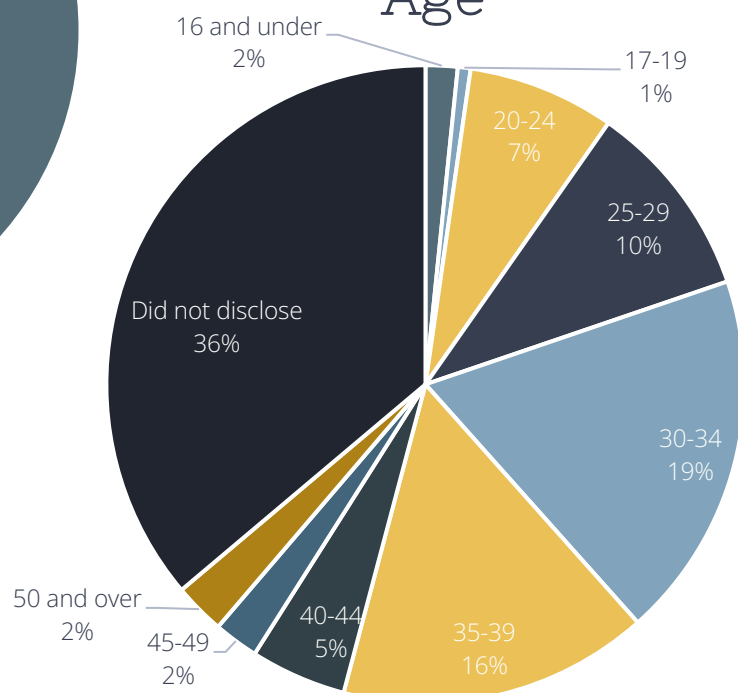
About our clients

Choices sees clients in all our services from across London boroughs, with the majority - a third - being in Islington and Camden, which reflects our traditional base as Choices' office has always been situated in Islington. Another 20% came from another London borough, 11% from outside of London entirely. It is notable that a number of clients do not give us their demographic details, which is something we are working to change as it obviously helps us to understand who we serve and where our blind spots are. The mix of ethnic backgrounds our clients identify as being from is also evident - there is no one dominant group. The biggest group (at 18%) identified as 'white British', followed by those who identified as 'Black, African and Caribbean' and other (11%). Another 7% identified as 'white other' and 4% as 'Black British'. Finally, 8% of our clients identified as 'Asian' (Bangladeshi, British, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani or other). Again, we would like to capture more detailed data on this as a number do not disclose their ethnicity. There are equivalent gaps in our knowledge about our clients' faith or religious affiliations, but we do know that 19% identify as Christian and 4% as Catholic (which might be higher than other mental health charities and indicate the perceived need people of faith feel to be able to express their faith in counselling with a counsellor who has a framework for faith). Another 15% expressed another religious background (the highest constituent being Muslims at 11%) and 5% said they had no religion, and a further 2% identified as atheist. The vast majority of our clients are women but we do sometimes see men in our counselling services (men come with a partner and on their own for an appointment to discuss an unplanned pregnancy) and in the Boutique. Our clients come to us across all ages, with the majority being under 50 and all over 16. As part of our commitment to being a trauma-aware organisation, we continue to explore which groups are under-represented in our services, and how we can address this.

Borough



Age



Our Services and their Impact

The goal running through all of Choices' work is that we support our clients to be able to harness and use their own resilience to respond to the challenges with pregnancy, loss and parenting that they face. As a result of the counselling and practical support we offer, we expect that they are better equipped to make choices healthily and face the future with hope. All our services are monitored using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Clients are asked at the beginning, middle and end to evaluate their agreement to statements using this scale. We then monitor how many give a score of 5 or 6 (a high level of agreement) at the end of counselling in response to key statements. These results are shared as a percentage for each service in the following pages. For the ongoing counselling services, we also use NHS-approved psychometrics which indicate levels of anxiety and depression in clients before and after counselling. We measure the percentage change from beginning to end of all clients' scores cumulatively.

About Choices' Counselling Services

Our counselling services enable clients to address their challenges, painful issues of loss and/or trauma and find healthy ways of processing their experiences, with the goal of increasing their resilience and ability to face future challenges. All of our counsellors are qualified or are completing their training (registered with an accredited provider). All staff are fully qualified and volunteers are usually on placement while training but some volunteers are qualified but offer their time because they support and are committed to the work (usually staying on after a placement). Choices is an organisational member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

Community Counselling

Unplanned Pregnancy Counselling

Our vision is for anyone facing the dilemma of an unplanned pregnancy to be offered immediate, free, compassionate and non-judgmental support with a trained counsellor to think through their thoughts and feelings about their situation. Over the years, the feedback we get from those who use our service tells us how valued and valuable it is. Clients say they couldn't find anything similar elsewhere and that it was often the first place they felt listened to and were able to listen to themselves without feeling any coercion. This is why we offer them the space.

40

Clients supported

57

One-off sessions

"I had not decided what to do by the end of the session but I highly appreciated the space. The person I talked to seemed to really care, gave me a lot of space to talk, and helped me express and think about my feelings and thoughts. She had zero judgment and I felt really supported. She can't make a choice for me but I knew that, and I still benefitted a lot from the session because of how supportive it felt. Also really good that it's an hour and a half so you don't feel pressure."

Unplanned Pregnancy Counselling Client

Every year, our clients tell us how grateful they are to have found Choices at such a critical time in their lives. They also comment that they had no idea that this service existed. In 2024, we saw far fewer people than the year before. We believe this fall in numbers followed a documentary on the BBC exposing bad practice in 'crisis pregnancy centres' around the UK. Despite having been visited by the journalist ourselves, Choices was not given any positive press for working ethically and professionally; the documentary didn't discriminate. Instead, we have seen an increase in statutory agencies directing members of the public away from the voluntary sector for support in this area, in case of the risk of bad practice – leaving organisations such as Choices with little or no platform to reassure those who desperately need our services of our professionalism. We continue to work hard to create links with referrers and other professional bodies to ensure more people are able to access this support at such a crucial time. This year, again, we saw a number of clients as couples, which explains the higher number of clients than sessions.

We endeavour to respond rapidly (within 24 hours) to every query and offer an appointment within the next day or so. We also work hard to ensure clients are reassured they will be given space to explore their own feelings and thoughts, and will not be judged or coerced to make a decision. Choices is conscious that many will bring biases and judgments about an organisation with a faith ethos operating in the area of unplanned pregnancy and abortion, and we are always clear that it is our faith ethos that underpins our compassionate and non-judgmental response to our clients.

70% felt equipped to face their situation and make a decision

100% felt welcome and at ease

100% didn't feel judged by their counsellor

Pregnancy Loss and Perinatal Counselling

Choices has been offering a service supporting women (and sometimes men) who are facing difficulties processing their feelings, thoughts and responses following a pregnancy loss, particularly an abortion since we started. This established counselling service, which operates on a low-cost model, offers 24 weekly sessions and we work online and in person. The service is supported by trainee counsellors who have chosen to have their clinical placement with Choices, as well as members of staff.

Over the last few years, we developed our Perinatal Counselling service, supporting expectant parents and in some instances very new parents who are dealing with birth trauma or perinatal mental health concerns with [low-cost counselling](#) throughout pregnancy until around 37 weeks where our counsellors negotiate a break. We then offer around six sessions of counselling in the first four months after birth. The offer is bespoke for each client, in recognition of the different experiences faced by each individual. We aim to operate this service without a waiting list as pregnancy is already such a limited time and we don't want clients to wait any longer than absolutely necessary to access support.

In the last year, we have brought both services together into one, run by one counselling manager who oversees volunteers who are able to work with any of the presenting issues that bring clients to Choices. This has streamlined and made us more efficient as we continue to meet demand.

22	Post-Abortion clients supported
5	Post-Miscarriage clients supported
16	Perinatal clients supported
493	Sessions held in total with all clients

"I absolutely loved my counselling experience, it helped me so much. My counsellor was so kind, understanding, and knew exactly how to guide me along this journey. The service was also so helpful because it was affordable for me because I have a low income."

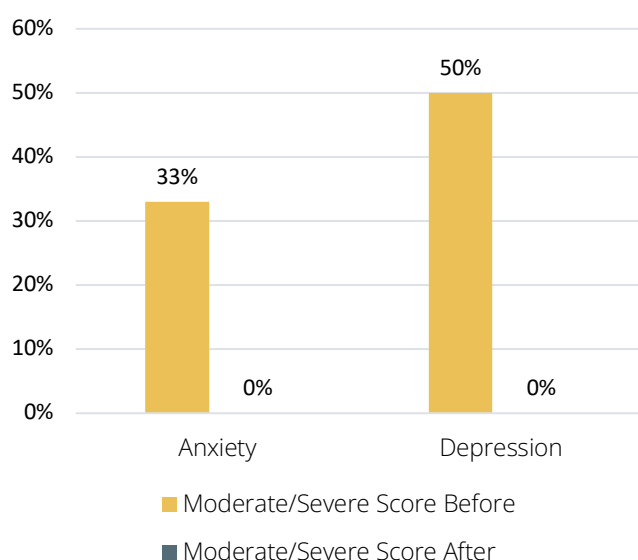
Post-Abortion Client

100% are able to understand their emotions

100% feel significant and valuable

100% feel able to face future challenges

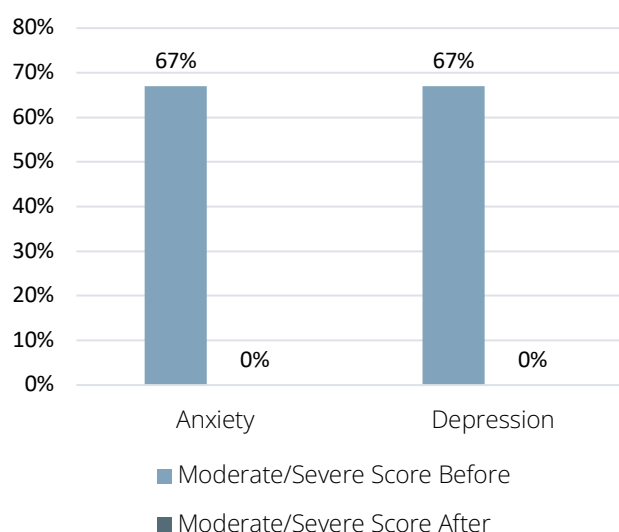
Pregnancy Loss Counselling Psychometrics



Most of our pregnancy loss clients self-report as feeling depressed and anxious when they come to Choices. Increasingly, we are also seeing clients with pre-existing mental health diagnoses including Bi-Polar Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder/Complex trauma, OCD, PTSD, as well as anxiety disorders. Clients have also disclosed childhood sexual abuse, bullying and sexual assault. Clients to the perinatal counselling service are in a similar bracket, and most come with presenting issues such as; unplanned pregnancy, relationship breakdown, financial challenges, domestic violence/ emotional & psychological abuse.

Counselling continues to have a significantly positive impact. Using NHS approved psychometrics – GAD-7 and PHQ-9 scales for Anxiety and Depression respectively – we saw that from the start of counselling in the post- abortion service to the end, our clients' moderate and severe anxiety reduced by 33% and depression reduced by 50% such that all clients ended counselling experiencing only mild or low/no anxiety or depression. The same was true in the perinatal counselling service, where scores for moderate and severe depression and anxiety were both at 67% at the outset and no clients had moderate or severe anxiety or depression by the close of their counselling. It must be noted that the pool of clients who actually completed end evaluations was very small during the year so may not be representative. This may be because the ending is broken up, or that clients feel in a very different place after having their baby, so we are exploring other methods of gathering accurate data from this vulnerable and often very pressurised cohort of clients.

Perinatal Counselling Psychometrics



"My counsellor is amazing! She has supported and guided me through during dark times. I don't know where I would have been without her support. I was in a vulnerable and scary place where I was isolated, which was not good. Being able to have someone to help me build awareness and resilience has been great."

Perinatal Counselling Client

A story from Community Counselling

Nevaeh first came to Choices in early 2022 with an unplanned pregnancy. She was in her early 30's and already had two older children from a previous long-term relationship and she felt she was still grieving the breakdown of that relationship.

The partner in the pregnancy was a friend and not someone she felt could necessarily support her with a child. She came to Choices for a session with one of our counsellors to discuss her unplanned pregnancy and afterwards expressed that she would like more support from Choices, saying that she would like 'someone to walk through this with her'. She was very grateful for the session and in her feedback said 'I appreciate this time, it's been helpful and it was just what I needed.' In a follow up conversation with one of our counsellors Nevaeh commented:

'It made me realise I could do this, I remember coming out of the session feeling much surer about my decision. I can't imagine going through the process without this support. I've already got a few people that I've recommended Choices to.'

Nevaeh subsequently made the decision to continue with the pregnancy and started having Perinatal Counselling with Choices the following month. She had 24 sessions during her pregnancy and in the first few months after giving birth to her son. During the counselling she came to terms with the fact that her previous relationship had been abusive and she started to be able to process the impact this had had on her – and the impact that was having on how she felt about this pregnancy with a new partner. When the counselling ended she commented that she now felt 'stronger, but not her strongest'. At the end of the work her counsellor supported her to self-refer to a local organization that provides specialist counselling around abusive relationships as this was an area she felt she needed to explore with more support. When reflecting on her experience of counselling she said:

'It's been amazing and I'm so grateful. I think it's so helpful to women that are in difficult relationships, especially with pregnancy. I genuinely feel that if I didn't have this process available - the support around my decision to continue the pregnancy – I don't know how I would make and stick with this decision. I was so scared that I wasn't going to be able to do this alone. Had I had not had this service, I don't think I would have continued with this pregnancy. I feel like you've saved my life in a way - which was unexpected. This gives me strength to keep going and to try not to worry about things as much.'

Although the client's psychometric scores (which measure depression and anxiety) didn't change much during counselling – she reflected that the practical challenges she faced were still present but she felt much better equipped to deal with them emotionally.

In early 2023 Nevaeh contacted Choices again as she was again pregnant. This was also an unplanned pregnancy, and she felt she needed the space Choices could provide to process this again. Her son was now 9 months old and his father was the partner in this current pregnancy. Since we'd last had contact with Nevaeh she had experienced some violence in this relationship, so we helped her to go to a local service that supports those experiencing intimate partner violence.

Soon after that session to discuss her unplanned pregnancy, Nevaeh came for Perinatal Counselling – she had 8 counselling sessions during her pregnancy.

Nevaeh then came to our Boutique after being signposted by her counsellor and midwife. She was supported with clothing and equipment for her newborn and 18-month-old children. In her feedback she said she felt this supported her with the financial stress of parenting. The Boutique volunteers also introduced her to Little Haven – the stay and play group that takes place in King's House (where Boutique is based, and run by KXC, a church partner).

After the birth of her daughter, Nevaeh came back for 12 further sessions of Perinatal Counselling in 2024. She continued to use this space to reflect on her relationship with the partner in the pregnancy and the pressures of having four children, two of them under two.

When reflecting on this period of counselling she said 'Being offered the counselling space at a time that was right for me and enabled me to explore life with four children, [and] two under two. I had the space to build my confidence.'

She went on to say she now felt 'Proud and unstoppable.'

When asked if she had any feedback on this service she said: 'Don't stop offering this counselling service because it is a brilliant resource and helps people going through difficult times. It's great support that meets client with their needs - Boutique, counselling etc.'

One of Nevaeh's counsellors reflected:

'My client has developed her self-awareness through her counselling experiences here at Choices. She has had three rounds of counselling and support with unplanned pregnancy. Due to her curiosity in her process and investing time into understand who she is and who she wants to become, her sessions reflected that work outside therapy back to me within sessions. This client did not necessarily want to end this round of counselling but did so with the knowledge that she has built up good resources for managing and coping with her life situation right now. She was able to have a good ending that was positive for her.'

Choices Prison Counselling supports female prisoners facing pregnancy loss, child bereavement and child separation concerns – abiding issues for women in prison. Hosted by the Mental Health Teams at HMPs Bronzefield, Downview and Send, this service is subcontracted by the CNWL NHS trust, which delivers healthcare to the women's prisons we work in. The counselling team has five members of staff and a number of volunteer counsellors in each prison. The support of two major grants, from City Bridge Trust and the National Lottery, have enabled us to expand rapidly in this much-needed work. The post-release counselling service has also continued to grow solidly and now is also beginning to support women known more broadly in the Criminal Justice System, not just directly released from prison.

Clients Supported

41	Bronzefield	55	Downview
19	Send	32	Post-Release

1457 Sessions held

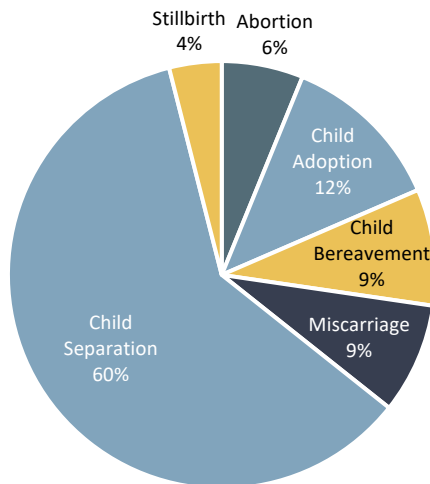
We offer our clients 24 sessions but sometimes due to factors such as transfers to other prisons or release, we are not able to see them for the full number of sessions. Where we know the potential end date, we contract for shorter periods of therapy. We are also able to offer brief therapy of one or two sessions to clients who are facing a difficult anniversary. Our evaluations show the positive impact counselling is having. Even where scores appear quite low, it must be remembered that this is such a vulnerable group, most of whom experience multiple traumas in their lives, so showing positive gains at all, is a real testament to the power of this service.

76% feel they can now be honest with themselves about their emotions

59% feel the counselling has improved their self-confidence

47% feel that counselling has helped them identify their strengths and good qualities

Referring Problem

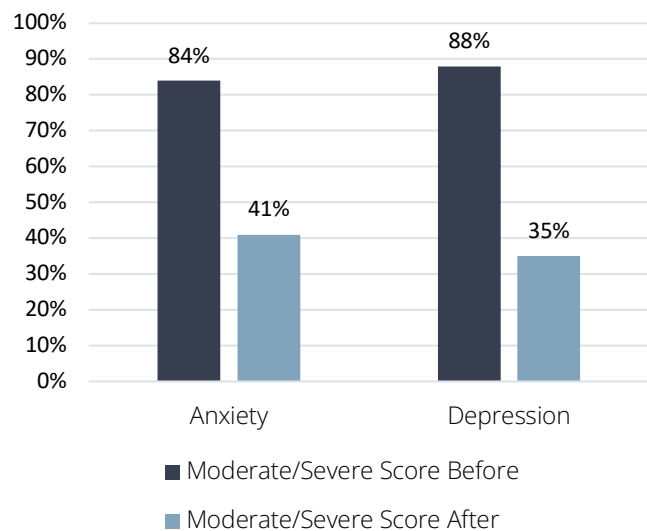


The psychometric evaluations our clients filled out before and after counselling demonstrated a very positive experience of counselling. 84% of clients scored as having moderate and severe anxiety before and only 41% after, while 88% of clients had moderate to severe depression before, a figure that fell to 35% after. These are a fall of 43% and 53% respectively – huge gains for this very vulnerable client group.



Of the clients who disclosed a referring problem, child separation is by far the largest referring issue we work with in the prison estate (60% of clients). At least 38% of the women we work with have experienced adverse childhood experiences such as sexual and domestic abuse and 67% have experienced abuse as an adult. The work that our service offers works directly with the consequences of these experiences.

Prison Counselling Psychometrics



'Talking through my feelings for the first time and knowing that I'm allowed to have them is invaluable.'

'I would suggest counselling to anyone who is struggling'

Prison Counselling Clients

This service exists to support those who are parenting in adverse circumstances, including on low income, in insecure housing, and single parenting. We offer a baby clothes and equipment service – the Choices Boutique – and well-regarded attachment-based parenting courses.

Boutique

The Choices Boutique is a baby and children's clothing and equipment bank. We receive donations of good quality, second-hand items and offer them to families who can use them. In its third year in a community building called King's House run by a partner church (KXC) the Boutique is open one day a week for appointments and we receive and sort donations on another day. This service has continued in its popularity and a number of clients come more than once, for instance when children grow out of clothes, or when they need something new or additional.

Sharing this community space at King's House means we can refer on to the KXC Little Haven baby and toddler group which also runs on Wednesdays, and Growing Hope, a charity which supports families with children with additional needs. Additionally, we are able to refer on to our other services from Boutique, including to our Circle of Security Parenting courses and we supported four women with befriending – practical and emotional support with a trained volunteer – last year. As the need for formal befriending has fallen over the past few years, we are looking at a new model next year to see if it will better support those who need more practical support by partnering with churches who might be more equipped to meet these practical needs.

170 Clients Supported

211 Appointments

"I am so thankful for the service and a huge weight has been lifted off my shoulders. They made me feel welcome, relaxed and offered lots of support and help this being my first pregnancy, I am truly grateful thank you."

Boutique Client

Most of our Boutique clients are on low income, single parent families or struggling with mental health issues. A number speak English as an additional language and struggle to access support. Many of our clients are referred to us by Family Support Workers in Islington and Camden, or from further afield, but a number self-refer. The demographic of our clients attending Boutique appointments is very varied and we are pleased to be able to offer appointments within two weeks of referral. We are very grateful for a hugely dedicated volunteer team who see clients and run appointments, without whom we would not be able to run the service.

95% felt accepted and supported by their Boutique advisor

87% feel more able to provide their child/ren with the clothing and equipment they need

94% know where to turn for further support

Parenting Courses

We continue to run *Circle of Security Parenting™* courses three times a year, two in person and one online. Based on attachment theory, the course encourages parents and care givers to consider how to support their children's emotional needs. This year, we ran Circle of Security courses with two new churches – the first course of the year was run in partnership with St Saviour's Church, Finsbury Park and the third was run in partnership with St George's in the East in Shadwell. The second course was run online in an evening so working parents and couples could attend together.

Running the course in partnership with local churches has worked very well, as the church partner has hosted the space and promoted the course, which means we have not had trouble filling the courses and are operating a small waiting list. This is a model we want to continue with next year. We have continued to ask for a paid contribution towards the costs of the course from those who attended as a way of subsidising those who cannot pay.

86% feel more able and equipped to understand and manage their child/ren's emotions

71% feel they can think about what their child's behaviour is telling them before reacting

86% feel more able and equipped to cope with challenges in parenting

"It has improved my relationship with my mum as well as my child. It has also built on my understanding of what the world is like for my child and how I can respond to that effectively."

Parenting Course Client

Choices has been following a strategic plan to grow sustainably in response to demand for our services. We defined growth as: **Increased organisational resilience – being able to meet more clients while preserving staff wellbeing and without over-stretching our resources and people.** Against our focus areas, we achieved the following:

- **STAFF WELLBEING** – ensuring all our staff are doing well to hold the weight of the work. We now offer staff wellbeing days, and introduced an Employee Assistance Programme for all staff and volunteers. We have increased times of celebration with volunteers, good quality supervision, including non-clinical supervision for Boutique volunteers and greater clarity on KPIs.
- **QUALITY ASSURANCE** – being able to demonstrate the quality of our work. We have developed networks with professional bodies (e.g. BACP and statutory referrers) which we will continue to focus on; invested in training in responding to trauma, was awarded (early in 2025) a Trauma Informed Bronze Quality Mark for Choices, and continued our focus on good governance and procedure.
- **MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS** – raising awareness about Choices and the support we offer among our client audience (building relationships with the statutory and voluntary sector) and our donor audience (clients and church networks). Having rebranded to choicescharity.org in 2024, we have focused on building our network through our mailing list, achieving an increase of 12.5% and anticipate this to increase further.
- **FUNDRAISING** – the need to ensure we are growing sustainably is crucial. Our grant funding income has risen and in launched a new 'Friends of Choices' campaign to increase our regular giving. In 2024 16 new Friends (regular givers) committed to support us, giving an annual increase of just over £6,500.

Focus Areas for 2025

We have five key focus areas for the year ahead, building on the year just gone.

- **Communications:** Developing further our marketing and communications: Choices' evolution over the years has developed to support women through the range of choices and crises they can face in pregnancy and beyond. Further, we are working with some of the most marginalised women in prison. We want to bring our marketing language and materials up to date with how the charity works in order to grow our fundraising and referral pathways.
- **Funding:** Further diversifying our fundraising pathways, increasing the number of 'Friends of Choices' and pursuing other development areas.
- **Partnerships:** expanding our network of partnerships with statutory and other services who refer clients to us, and with churches, who help us to deliver our work.
- **Client focus:** Expanding our community counselling to work with women known to the criminal justice system as a way of linking our work in prisons and community, and working with women facing the devastating reality of child separation in the community (and following pregnancy or parenting crises).
- **Building:** exploring a new venue that is fit for purpose for a charity that is not limited to Islington and has staff across London and in women's prisons outside of London.

In Spring/Summer 2025, the charity who share our building are planning to be moving out as they have outgrown the space, therefore we will also be focusing on bringing in income through a new tenant. We will be considering our needs for building space, recognising that our location in Islington is challenging to reach for team working in Surrey prisons, as well as how much office and counselling space we require.

Finance

Total incoming resources amounted to £366,263 for the year to 31 December 2024 (2023: £390,232). Total resources expended over the same period were £350,328 (2023: £305,037). The net position for the year amounted to a surplus of £15,935 (2023: surplus of £85,196). Net resources at the end of the year were £235,351, of which £13,982 is restricted and £20,067 is designated. Further details are found later in this report, including details of the grants we gratefully received in the year.

Choices is reliant on gifts from grant-making trusts and foundations, as well as individual and major donors. We would like to thank the following donors for their support in 2024:

AKO Foundation, The Anchor Foundation, Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust, All Souls Church, Arundell Trust, Arsenal Foundation, Benefact Trust, Borrowes Charitable Trust, Boston Consulting Group London, City Bridge Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Joan Ainslie Trust, KXC (Kings Cross Church), M & H Maunsell Charity, Morris Charitable Trust, Mrs Smith and Mount Trust, National Lottery Community Fund (Awards for All), National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities), Salluz Ltd., Souter Charitable Trust, St Mary's Hornsey Rise, St Mary's Islington and St Saviour's Finsbury Park.

The charity holds its reserves in a current bank account and in a CAF deposit account which generates interest on monies invested. This year it opened a further interest yielding account through CCLA. It is the policy of the Trustees to maintain at least four (ideally five) months' expenditure in reserve and up to nine months where it is deemed necessary. Where reserves are being held, these will be designated for a specific purpose (such as for specific training, or for laptops/capital projects, or in some circumstances, to pay for a salary). The financial management of the charity is supervised and monitored by the Finance Subcommittee of the Board and the Trustees.

Over the course of the last few years, we have received some unexpected large gifts from much-valued donors, some of whom have chosen to remain anonymous. We have also made some savings when, for instance, recruitment for key roles took longer than expected, or due to natural staff movement we have been able to restructure more efficiently. As a result, we have built up reserves which the trustees have chosen to designate towards much-needed improvements to the structure of the charity. In 2024, these funds were put towards addressing salaries and properly recompensing our staff as well and as transparently as we can sustainably, recognising that our staff are our key asset. In 2025, we plan to use some of our reserves by investing in a salary for new role focused on development – reaching new audiences and donors.

The people who make it happen

Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the strategic direction, finances and policies of the charity. The Trustees, who are also Directors of the charitable company, meet every three months to review progress and performance, monitor the financial position, monitor risk and make strategic decisions. The Trustees/Directors who served during the year and up to the date of this report are listed on page 3. New trustees are appointed by existing trustees of whom there should be a minimum of three. Trustees are selected for their individual skills, knowledge, passion for the work of Choices and vision. New trustees are appropriately trained and inducted.

Team

Choices is run by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who is accountable to the Board. The CEO manages all the project managers (who run our services) as well as an Operations Manager and a Fundraising Manager. Other than the Operations Manager, all staff are part-time, and each service is supported by volunteers. Over the course of 2024, we also worked with freelance consultants, namely our bookkeeper of several years (and recruited another bookkeeper to cover her maternity leave at the end of the year) and a grant fundraiser, as well as a freelance individual giving fundraiser and a social media consultant (both covering our fundraising manager while she was on maternity leave).

Volunteers

Choices continues to benefit from talented and committed volunteering and we have grown again to have nearly 50 volunteers this year, giving time across all our services. Choices' goal is that volunteers should derive as much benefit from their work with the organisation as we derive from them. All of our counselling volunteers who are not fully trained use Choices as a placement opportunity as part of their counselling/psychotherapy training at reputable institutions accredited with registered professional bodies.

Governance

- The Trustees maintain a Risk Management register, which is reviewed at least annually, and is operationally reviewed quarterly. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces.
- Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects.
- Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.
- The Trustees oversee Choices' compliance with GDPR legislation at every meeting, and adherence to the Charity Commission's Governance Code on an ongoing basis.
- A smaller finance sub-committee, which includes the Treasurer, Bookkeeper and Executive Director, meets before each meeting of the Trustees, and examines financial progress on a monthly basis.
- The Trustees have been particularly concerned with exploring inclusion and broad representation at all levels of the organisation – from the Board, through staff and volunteers. We are continuing to explore ways of including user voice in programme development.
- No trustees claimed expenses this year.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

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 charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and with the applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in 2012. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In determining how amounts are presented within items in the statement of financial activities and balance sheet, the Trustees must have regard to the substance of the reported transaction or arrangement, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles or practice.

Small company provisions and independent examination

For the year ending 31 December 2024, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476. The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011) and that an independent examination is needed. The Trustees have appointed Christopher Clarke ACA as Independent Examiner for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by;



Sophie Guthrie-Kummer

Chief Executive Officer and Company Secretary

24 February 2025

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 December 2024, which are set out on pages 23 to 30.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Christopher Clarke, ACA

12 March 2025

Statement of financial activities

(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:	2				
Donations and legacies		118,522	140,529	259,051	306,503
Other fundraising activities		20,664	-	20,664	12,543
Income from investments		2,329	-	2,329	1,422
Income from charitable activities		83,503	-	83,503	69,597
Other income		716	-	716	167
Total income and endowments		225,734	140,529	366,263	390,232
Expenditure on:	3				
Expenditure on Raising Funds		31,385	3,411	34,796	14,683
Expenditure on Charitable Activities		163,539	151,993	315,532	290,354
Total expenditure		194,924	155,404	350,328	305,037
Net income/(expenditure)		30,809	(14,875)	15,935	85,196
Opening balances brought forward		190,560	28,856	219,416	134,220
Total funds carried forward		221,369	13,982	235,351	219,416

All activities are continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses for the year and therefore no statement of total recognised gains and losses has been prepared.

The notes on following pages form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	4	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Rent deposit	5	4,000	-	4,000	4,000
Accrued income and prepayments	5	2,667	-	2,667	14,073
Debtors	5	20,449	-	20,449	22,056
Cash at bank and in hand		222,676	13,982	236,658	187,972
		249,792	13,982	263,775	228,101
Liabilities					
Creditors-amounts falling due in 1 year	6	(8,424)	(20,000)	(28,424)	(8,685)
Net current assets		241,368	(6,018)	235,351	219,416
Total net assets		241,368	(6,018)	235,351	219,416
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted	7			201,302	167,493
Designated				20,067	23,067
Restricted				13,982	28,856
				235,351	219,416

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 December 2024 and the members/guarantors have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The trustees/directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 6 May 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Elizabeth Dulley
Chair of Trustees

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2024

1. Accounting Principles

The principal accounting principles are summarised below and have been applied consistently throughout the year.

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008), the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (effective 1 January 2015), with Accounting Standards and with the Charities Act 2006.

Basis of preparation of accounts

These accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular limited purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Incoming resources

Incoming resources are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and where it is confident that it will be received.

Performance related income is only included in the SoFA once the related services have been provided.

Deferred income

Grants and donations received in advance and specified by the donor as relating to specific future periods or subject to conditions which are still to be met, are deferred to the period to which they relate.

Tax reclaims on donations

Gift aid tax reclaims on donations are included in the SoFA in the same period as the donations to which they relate.

Volunteer services

The value of volunteer services received is not quantified in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

Investment income

Income from investments is included in the accounts in the period it is receivable.

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Operating leases

Operating lease rentals are expensed on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2024

2. Income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
a Donations and legacies				
Donations	102,687	-	102,687	110,502
Grants from trusts	8,500	140,529	149,029	188,532
Gift Aid	7,336	-	7,336	7,470
	<u>118,522</u>	<u>140,529</u>	<u>259,051</u>	<u>306,503</u>
Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:				
Anton Jurgen	-	5,000	5,000	-
Arsenal Foundation	-	1,250	1,250	-
Anchor Foundation	-	-	-	7,000
Arundell Trust	500	-	500	-
Benefact Trust	-	5,000	5,000	9,725
Borrows Charitable Trust	-	-	-	7,000
City Bridge Trust	-	49,908	49,908	34,929
Garfield Weston	-	5,000	5,000	-
Henry Smith Foundation	-	3,500	3,500	15,000
Joan Ainslie Trust	5,000	-	5,000	5,000
Leathersellers	-	-	-	7,500
Morris Trust	-	3,000	3,000	-
National Lottery Community Fund	-	67,871	67,871	97,378
Schroder	-	-	-	3,000
Souter Charitable Trust	3,000	-	3,000	2,000
	<u>8,500</u>	<u>140,529</u>	<u>149,029</u>	<u>188,532</u>
b Other fundraising activities				
Donation for office space	14,925	-	14,925	12,543
Fundraising Events	5,739	-	5,739	-
c Income from investments				
Bank Interest	2,329	-	2,329	1,422
d Income from charitable activities				
Education practitioner training	300	-	300	85
Community counselling	7,122	-	7,122	8,258
Prison counselling income	75,006	-	75,006	61,255
Parenting Course income	1,074	-	1,074	-
e Other income	716	-	716	167
	<u>107,211</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>107,211</u>	<u>83,729</u>
Total incoming resources	<u>225,734</u>	<u>140,529</u>	<u>366,263</u>	<u>390,232</u>

3. Expenditure

a. by fund

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Expenditure on Raising Funds				
Event costs	5,255	202	5,457	95
Fees and subscriptions	26,130	3,208	29,339	14,588
	31,385	3,411	34,796	14,683
Expenditure on Charitable Activities				
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total expenditure 2024 £	Total expenditure 2023 £
Bank charges	66	-	66	66
Bookkeeping costs	6,850	402	7,252	5,254
Charitable donation - Centres Network	1,000	-	1,000	-
Fees and subscriptions	3,316	427	3,743	2,782
Freelancer costs	14,400	-	14,400	-
Independent Examination costs	-	150	150	150
Insurance	936	-	936	847
Office expenses	3,306	1,580	4,886	5,596
Premises costs	15,411	5,136	20,547	30,886
Publicity	19	50	70	372
Resources	978	442	1,420	4,938
Staff costs	102,354	135,582	237,936	215,250
Staff development/training	7,539	-	7,539	10,116
Supervision costs	6,723	7,255	13,978	12,150
Telephone and communication	340	860	1,200	1,677
Volunteer expenses	301	110	411	270
	163,539	151,993	315,532	290,354
		-		
Total Expenditure	194,924	155,404	350,328	305,037

b. Expenditure on Charitable Activities - by project

	Community Counselling	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Central costs	Total Charitable Expenditure 2024
Charitable Activities					
Bank charges	-	-	-	66	66
Bookkeeping costs	-	-	-	7,252	7,252
Charitable donation - Centres Network	-	-	-	1,000	1,000
Fees and subscriptions	-	-	-	3,743	3,743
Freelancer costs	-	-	3,150	11,250	14,400
Independent examination costs	-	-	-	150	150
Insurance	-	-	-	936	936
Office expenses	-	-	1,259	3,627	4,886
Premises costs	-	-	4,056	16,491	20,547
Publicity	-	-	50	19	70
Resources	10	1,167	243	-	1,420
Staff costs	42,165	14,874	111,867	69,029	237,936
Staff development/training	73	73	877	6,515	7,539
Supervision costs	4,370	-	9,608	-	13,978
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	1,200	1,200
Volunteer expenses	-	20	110	281	411
Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities	46,619	16,135	131,220	121,559	315,532

Expenditure by project: previous year comparatives

	Community Counselling	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Central costs	Total Charitable Expenditure 2023
Charitable Activities					
Bank charges	-	-	-	66	66
Bookkeeping costs	-	-	-	5,254	5,254
Fees and subscriptions	-	-	-	2,782	2,782
Independent examination costs	-	-	-	150	150
Insurance	-	-	-	847	847
Office expenses	-	-	-	5,596	5,596
Premises costs	-	-	-	30,886	30,886
Publicity	-	-	165	206	372
Resources	4,542	-	46	350	4,938
Staff costs	44,319	14,627	72,440	83,863	215,250
Staff development/training	-	-	5,665	4,451	10,116
Supervision costs	5,040	-	7,110	-	12,150
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	1,677	1,677
Volunteer expenses	103	-	70	98	270
Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities	54,004	14,627	85,496	136,226	290,354

c. Employees

	2024	2023
Gross salaries and wages	220,104	200,428
Employer's National Insurance	12,682	10,686
Employer's pension contributions	5,149	4,136

There are no employees who received emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2023:nil).

Key management personnel: Sophie Guthrie-Kummer, Chief Executive Officer

4. Tangible fixed assets

None to report.

5. Current assets

	2024	2023
Rent deposit	4,000	4,000
Accrued income	-	11,406
Prepayments	2,667	2,667
Debtors	19,231	19,406
Gift aid recoverable	1,218	2,651
	27,116	40,130

6. Creditors

	2024	2023
Amounts due within one year	2,571	4,500
Tax and pension contributions payable	5,853	4,184
Deferred income and accruals	20,000	-
	28,424	8,685

7. Movement of Funds

	Opening balance	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Closing balance
Unrestricted general funds	167,493	225,734	(191,924)	-	201,302
Designated funds	23,067	-	(3,000)	-	20,067
Total unrestricted funds	190,560	225,734	(194,924)	-	221,369
Restricted funds					
Boutique	10,976	14,250	(15,684)		9,542
Counselling	-	8,500	(8,500)		-
Enterprise Development	-	-	-		-
Parenting Support	-	-	-		-
Prison counselling	17,881	117,779	(131,220)		4,440
Total restricted funds	28,856	140,529	(155,404)	-	13,982
Total funds	219,416	366,263	(350,328)	-	235,351

8. Related Party Transactions

	2024	2023
Total donations of Trustees were	1,525	2,380

Sophie Guthrie-Kummer, employed as Chief Executive Officer, paid Choices Charity £989 in 2024 (2023: £508) as a donation for use of office space.

9. Trustee Expenses

None claimed.

Accounts

Every pregnancy has a story.
Whatever your story, you have Choices.



choices

Choices Islington

Annual Report and Financial Statements
31 December 2023

A company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales number 6517231
Registered charity number 1124209

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Introducing Choices

Our vision

For no-one in London to face a pregnancy crisis alone.

Our mission

To provide the gold standard of support for anyone facing a pregnancy crisis.

Our goal

To work with our clients to improve their resilience and ability to: cope with a pregnancy crisis, make their choices healthily, and to have confidence to face the future with hope.

We do this by equipping them practically and with skills to understand their thoughts and feelings, and to act congruently with their values.

We define a pregnancy crisis as including but not limited to: unplanned pregnancy, pregnancy loss, child separation, parenting under difficult circumstances.

Our values

Empathy: Standing alongside each other with warmth, care and respect

Resilience: Helping each other to build resilience and have hope for the future

Professionalism: Working to the highest professional standard

Our ethos

Choices is a Christian organisation, and so we believe that all people deserve to be treated with care, compassion, and respect, regardless of their faith, race, income, sexual orientation or employment status. We are not a campaigning organisation, and we do not have a political agenda. Rather, we offer a safe, hopeful, and empowering space to our clients, our partners and each other.

We work with women and families facing pregnancy crises – from unplanned pregnancy to pregnancy loss, child separation, and parenting under challenging circumstances – and we recognise that these can be sensitive issues. Abortion, particularly, can become a controversial issue that divides people in a polarising debate. We choose instead to unite people by meeting our clients at their point of need, and never passing judgement. Our goal is to provide counselling and practical support so those in crisis can reach a place of resilience and hope for the future.

All Choices staff and volunteers are appropriately trained and supervised to reflect our ethos. We're committed to working at the highest standards of excellence that we can and practice within all national legal frameworks and professional guidelines, including safeguarding and anti-discrimination legislation. We are organisational members of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and adhere to the BACP ethical framework. We take seriously our responsibility to provide a non-directive space for our clients.

As a faith-based organisation, Choices reserves the right to apply occupational requirements to key counselling and leadership roles, to preserve the Christian ethos of our organisation in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Legal and Administrative Information

Company/Charity Name

Choices Islington (formerly Choices Confidential Pregnancy Advice)

Registered Charity Number

1124209

Registered Company Number

6517231

Registered Office

390 Caledonian Road

London

N1 1DN

Email

info@choicescharity.org

Telephone

020 7700 4475

Website

www.choicescharity.org

Trustees/Directors

Hannah Carter (Chair)

Tamsin Merchant (resigned in 2023)

Matt Davis (Treasurer)

Lizzie Osborne

Elizabeth Dulley (became Chair Jan 2024)

Chloe Selby (joined in 2023)

Ian Gambier (resigned in 2023)

Celia Wyatt (joined in 2023)

Damilola Makinde

John Wyatt (resigned in 2023)

Company Secretary

Sophie Guthrie-Kummer

Bankers

Charities Aid Foundation Bank

National Westminster Bank PLC

Independent Examiner

Christopher Clarke

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Our charitable aims

1. To reduce distress for individuals and couples facing an unplanned pregnancy and facilitate informed decision-making in a non-directive and compassionate manner.
2. To enable women and men troubled by abortion or other pregnancy loss concerns to address and start to resolve these issues through counselling.
3. To enable female offenders troubled by abortion, pregnancy, or other child loss/separation concerns to address and start to resolve these issues through counselling.
4. To support vulnerable mothers, including through provision of practical and emotional help with parenting.
5. To empower young and disadvantaged people, including offenders, to make healthy lifestyle choices in relationships and regarding sexual health and thereby reduce unplanned pregnancy (and sexually transmitted infection rates) and build self-esteem.



Public benefit

We have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

How we accomplish our goal:

Our counselling and practical services focus on empowering our clients as they build their own resilience to handle adversity and face the future with hope following a pregnancy crisis – from abortion to child separation or loss, or parenting in difficult circumstances.

We have three main outputs – Counselling, Practical Parenting Support and Signposting – which form the basis of our services to our clients:

1. A free crisis service for those facing the dilemma of an unplanned pregnancy
2. Low-cost counselling for up to six months for those struggling following a decision to terminate a pregnancy or following a pregnancy loss. And for those with mental health concerns during pregnancy, we offer counselling through the perinatal period, including postnatally.
3. Free counselling for female offenders in three women's prisons and post-release for up to six months around the same issues of pregnancy crisis, loss and child separation and child loss.
4. Parenting support:
 - One-to-one befriending with a trained befriender for pregnant and new mums
 - A free loan of baby clothes and equipment in the Choices Boutique (open to families of under 5s)
 - Parenting courses focused on building secure attachment relationships for families of under 5s
5. Signposting – supporting and helping all clients to feel more confident to access other relevant services – occurs at all levels of our services.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

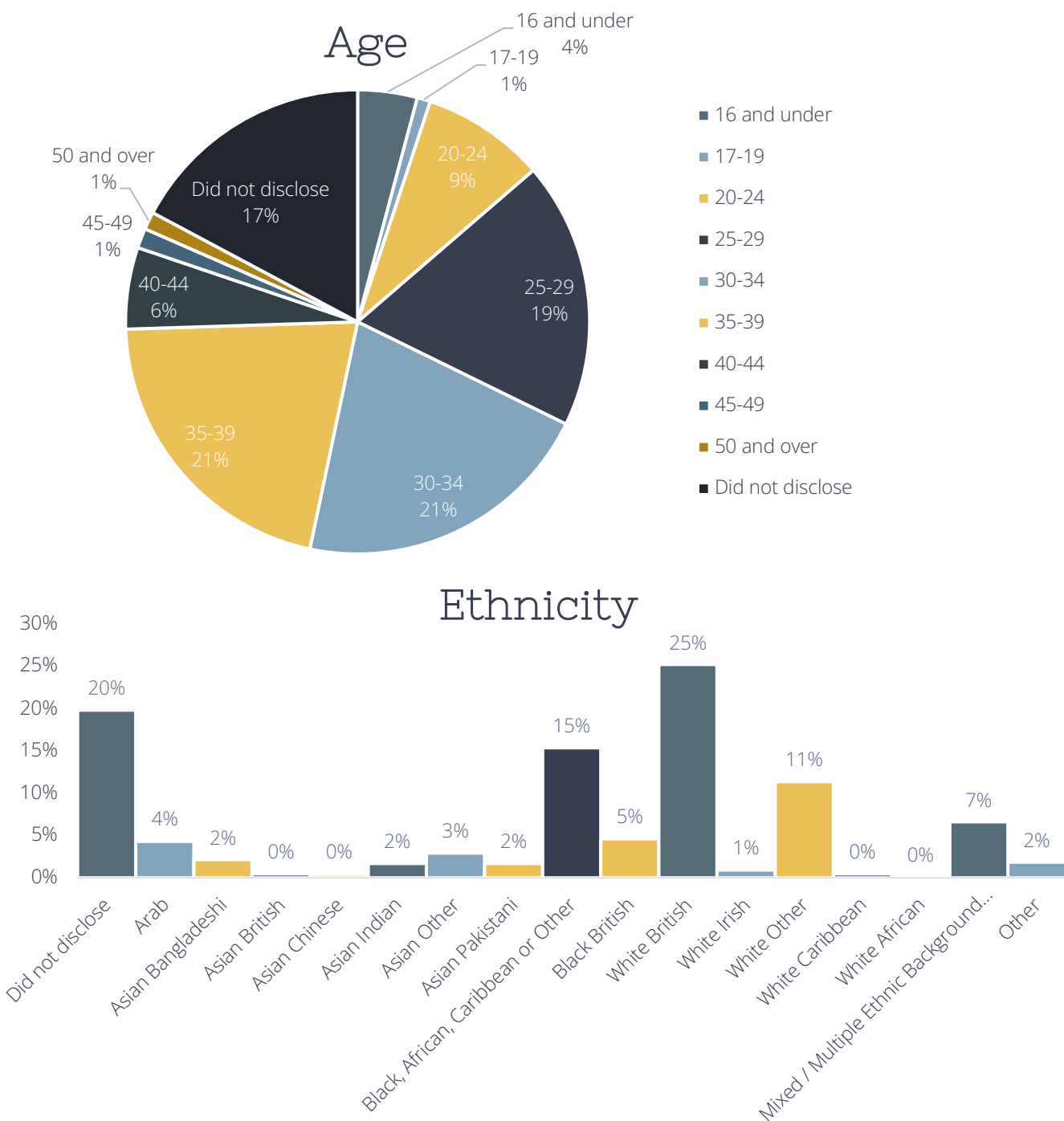
Our Impact in 2023	502	Total Clients Supported
	52	Unplanned Pregnancy Counselling
	14	Perinatal Counselling
	29	Pregnancy Loss Counselling
	141	Prison and Post-Release Counselling
	225	Boutique (baby clothes & equipment)
	8	Befriending
	33	Parenting Courses
	171	Contacted Choices for information but did not attend a service

"They've gone above and beyond choosing beautiful pieces they thought I'd like and have done a brilliant job! They've been enthusiastic, really friendly and made me feel welcome and accepted as a person. This means so much to me ❤️ Even something as small as offering a drink made the experience so wonderful and personalized and I feel that I know where to turn to support if I need it in the future ❤️"

Boutique Client

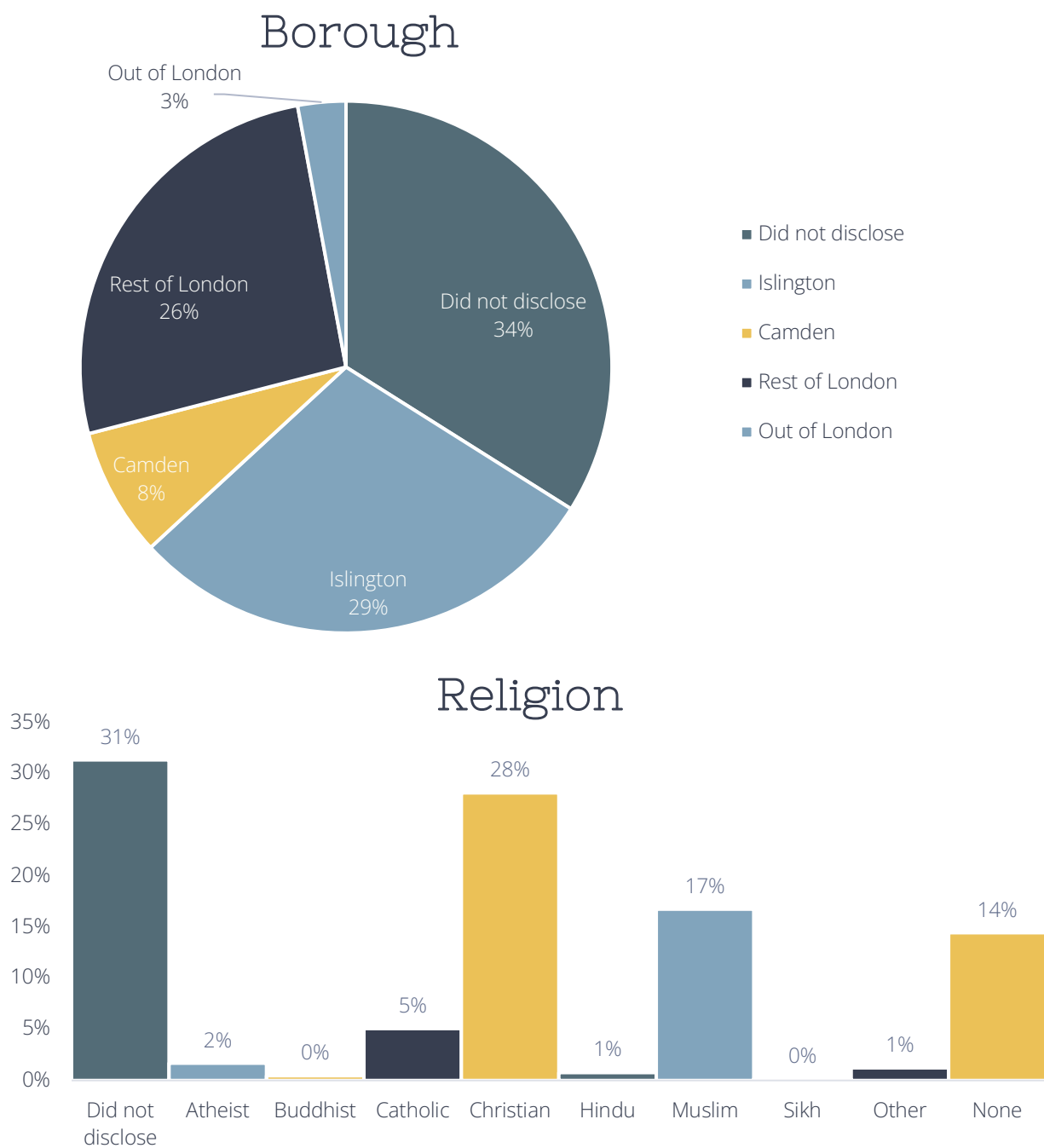
About our clients

Across all of our services, we see clients of all ages, but predominantly those aged between 20 and 40. Most of Choices' clients are women, but we do see some men, particularly parents accessing practical support and couples who come together to unplanned pregnancy sessions. We see clients from across London – and even from further afield, and sometimes internationally – although most are still from Islington and Camden where Choices has had its headquarters for more than 20 years. We do serve clients from all ethnicities, and all faith groups, as well as those with no faith. Some more work needs to be done to reach those from under-represented groups.



Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023



Monitoring & Evaluation

We monitor all our services using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Clients are asked at the beginning, middle and end to evaluate their agreement to statements using this scale. We then monitor how many give a score of 5 or 6 (a high level of agreement) at the end of counselling in response to key statements. For the ongoing counselling services, we also use NHS-approved psychometrics which indicate levels of anxiety and depression in clients before and after counselling. We measure the percentage change from beginning to end of all clients' scores cumulatively. These results are shared as a percentage for each service in the following pages.

About Choices' Counselling Services

Our counselling services enable clients to address their challenges, painful issues of loss and/or trauma and find healthy ways of processing their experiences, with the goal of increasing their resilience and ability to face future challenges.

All of our counsellors are qualified or are completing their training (registered with an accredited provider). Choices is an organisational member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

Unplanned Pregnancy Counselling

We offer clients facing the dilemma of an unplanned pregnancy a compassionate, caring, non-directive one-off session with a trained counsellor who will help them to consider their situation and to understand their thoughts and feelings. We provide a safe environment, and a fee-free session, so our clients can be empowered to make informed and internally resolved choices.

52

Clients Supported

48

One-off sessions

"Massive thanks for the session. [Our counsellor] was amazing, and it was exactly what my partner and I needed. She took us through the exercises in a great manner, helped us clarify our own thoughts and gave space to both of us. And at the end she had a perfect analysis of our situation, how we each felt, and what was blocking us from making a decision. I thought that was really impressive in 1.5 hours."

Unplanned Pregnancy Counselling

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Every year, our clients tell us how grateful they are to have found Choices at such a critical time in their lives. They also comment that they had no idea that this service existed. We are working hard to create links with other referrers to ensure more people are able to access this support at such a crucial time. This year we saw a number of clients as couples, which explains the higher number of clients than sessions.

As ever, some clients (this year 10 in total) made an appointment or got in touch, but for their own reasons – for example, they may have come to their decision – ultimately chose not to attend an appointment. We are conscious this is a very sensitive topic and can feel like a crisis for those experiencing it. We endeavour to respond rapidly (within 24 hours) to every query and offer an appointment within the next day or so. We also work hard to ensure clients are reassured they will be given space to explore their own feelings and thoughts, and will not be judged or coerced to make a decision.

70% felt equipped to face their situation and make a decision

73% were able to identify their feelings as a result of the session they had

70% were confident about their next steps

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Pregnancy Loss Counselling

This service supports women and men who are facing difficulties associated with pregnancy loss, particularly following an abortion. We offer 24 weekly sessions at low cost and work online and in person – which has widened our reach. The service is supported by trainee counsellors who have chosen to have their clinical placement with Choices, as well as members of staff. Each year a number of clients get in touch but then find they aren't ready for counselling and so do not take up the service but may return later in the year or sometimes years later. This year, four clients decided not to continue following their assessment with a counsellor. Sometimes, having a space to go through their experiences with someone who cares provides the support these clients were looking for at that point in their lives.

"Being able to talk freely to someone who listens and helps me find answers has given me the capability to be able to identify an emotion and deal with it accordingly. Some days are harder than others, but counselling has helped me realise that I shouldn't be that hard on myself."

Post-Abortion Client

22

New Post-Abortion Clients Supported

6

New Post-Miscarriage Clients Supported

1

Ongoing Client from 2022 Supported

430

Sessions held in total with all clients

Report of the trustees

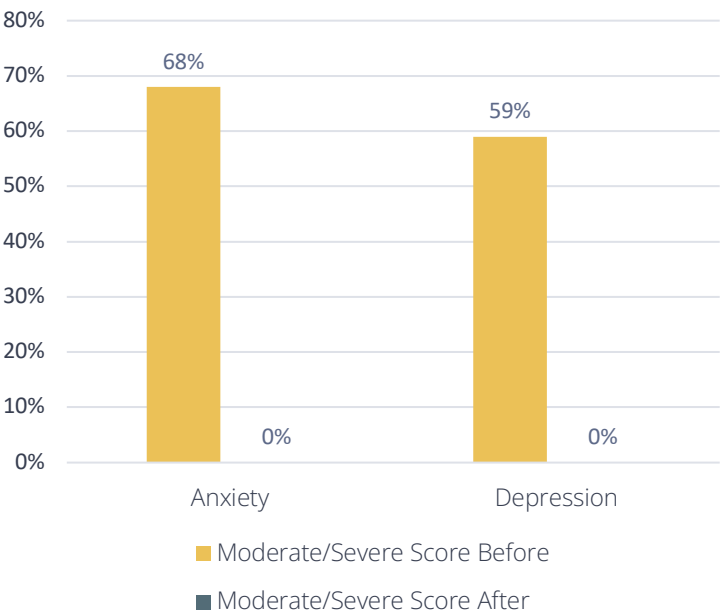
(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

86% are able to understand their emotions

100% feel significant and valuable

100% feel able to face future challenges

Pregnancy Loss Counselling
Psychometrics



Most of our clients self-report as feeling depressed and anxious when they come to Choices. Increasingly, we are also seeing clients with pre-existing mental health diagnoses including Bi-Polar Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder/Complex trauma, OCD, PTSD, as well as anxiety disorders. Clients have also disclosed childhood sexual abuse, bullying and sexual assault.

Counselling continues to have a significantly positive impact. Using NHS approved psychometrics – GAD-7 and PHQ-9 scales for Anxiety and Depression respectively – we saw that from the start of counselling to the end, our clients' anxiety reduced by 68% and depression reduced by 59%.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Perinatal Counselling

Our Perinatal Counselling service provides low-cost counselling to expectant parents and in some instances very new parents who are dealing with birth trauma or perinatal mental health concerns. We provide counselling throughout pregnancy until around 37 weeks where our counsellors negotiate a break. We then offer around six sessions of counselling in the first four months after birth. The offer is bespoke for each client, in recognition of the different experiences faced by each client.

17 Clients Supported

14 Clients receiving ongoing counselling

135 Sessions

This service supports women (and men) through a pregnancy that feels under pressure for any reason, or following a traumatic birth experience that is putting pressure on the early days of parenting. We support those who may face significant challenges but would not meet the threshold for perinatal support on the NHS which can only see the most complex cases. Over the course of the year, this service has grown from being a pilot to a fully-fledged service. Thanks to a grant from the Benefact Trust, we were able to recruit another counsellor to support the team one day per week for most of the year, and we recruited three placement counsellors to ensure we were able to meet demand. We aim to operate this service without a waiting list as pregnancy is already such a limited time and we don't want clients to wait any longer than absolutely necessary to access support.

We supported 14 clients in counselling over the year, and supported an additional three with an assessment, which provided enough 'holding' support for the time being. The cohort of clients accessing this service are often vulnerable and are not always able to take up this type of support once a week. In addition, nine clients got in touch with interest in the service, but chose not to take it up, which demonstrates our growing reach as a service.

Where during the pilot stage, most of our clients were referred via our unplanned pregnancy service, we have built relationships with referral partners such as Birth Companions, as well as statutory services (including mental health services and midwives) over the past year, and now see more clients referred from other services.

100% are able to understand their emotions

100% feel able to face future challenges

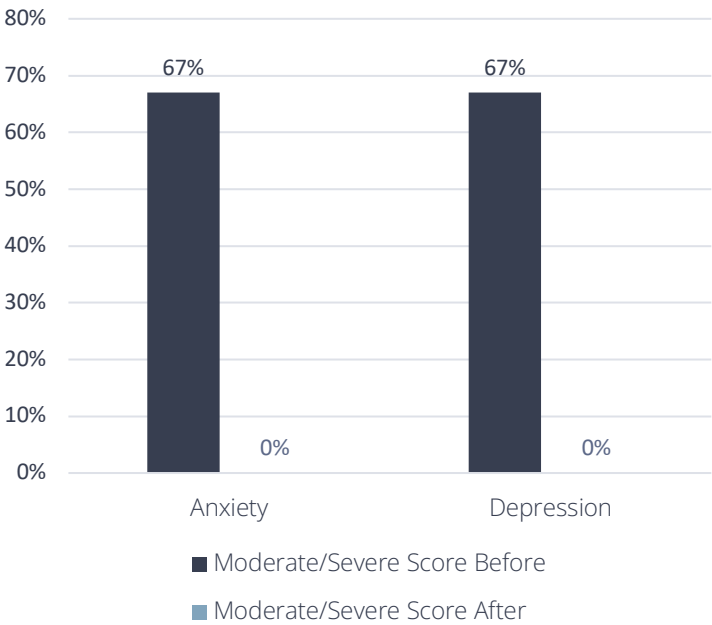
Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Many of our clients report that they feel anxious and depressed. When starting counselling 67% of our clients have psychometric scores suggesting they had moderate/severe levels of anxiety and depression. They come with presenting issues such as; unplanned pregnancy, relationship breakdown, financial challenges, domestic violence/ emotional & psychological abuse.

From our end evaluations, we can see that both anxiety and depression scores dropped by 67% to 0% from the beginning to the end of counselling which is a tremendous gain. However, it must be noted that the pool of clients who actually completed end evaluations was very small during the year so may not be representative and we are exploring other methods of gathering accurate data from this vulnerable and often very pressurised cohort of clients.

Perinatal Counselling
Psychometrics



“[I appreciate the] space to explore what I am feeling, make sense of ...
[and] see the positives of my situation.”

Perinatal Counselling Client

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Prison Counselling

Choices Prison Counselling supports female prisoners facing pregnancy loss, child bereavement and child separation concerns – abiding issues for women in prison. Hosted by the Mental Health Teams at HMPs Bronzefield, Downview and Send, this service entered a new phase at the end of 2022 when Choices was subcontracted to provide it by the CNWL NHS trust, which delivers healthcare to the women's prisons we work in. The counselling team has now grown to five members of staff and around eight volunteer counsellors each year, and is supported by two major grants, from City Bridge Trust and the National Lottery, as well as the NHS. We have also grown the post-release counselling element of this service with grant support for a new member of staff and were able to more than double the number of clients we saw last year.

New Clients Supported

48	Bronzefield	48	Downview
17	Send	28	Post-Release
1041	Sessions	35	Declined Support

Across the three prisons and post release, our Prison Counsellors worked with 176 clients last year including 35 clients who started support in 2022. We offer our clients a course of 24 sessions but sometimes due to factors such as transfers to other prisons or release, we do not manage to see them for the full number of sessions. Where we know the potential end date, we are able to contract for shorter periods of therapy. We are also able to offer brief therapy of one or two sessions to clients who are facing a difficult anniversary. Our evaluations show the positive impact counselling is having. For such a vulnerable group, most of whom experience multiple traumas in their lives, to show positive gains, is a real testament to the power of this service.

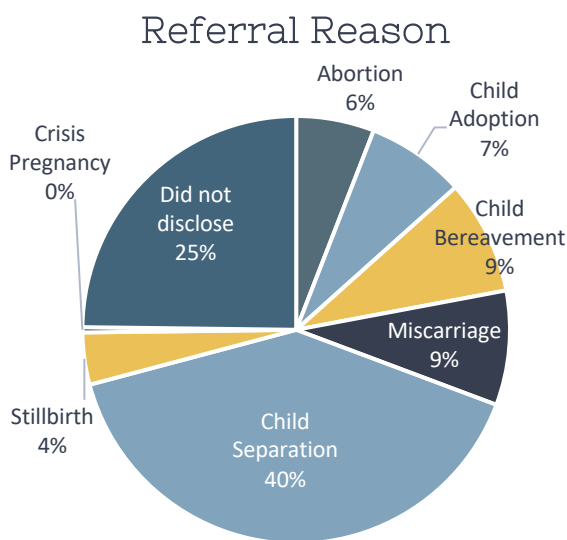
81% feel they can now be honest with themselves about their emotions

45% feel the counselling has improved their self-confidence

58% feel that counselling has helped them identify their strengths and good qualities

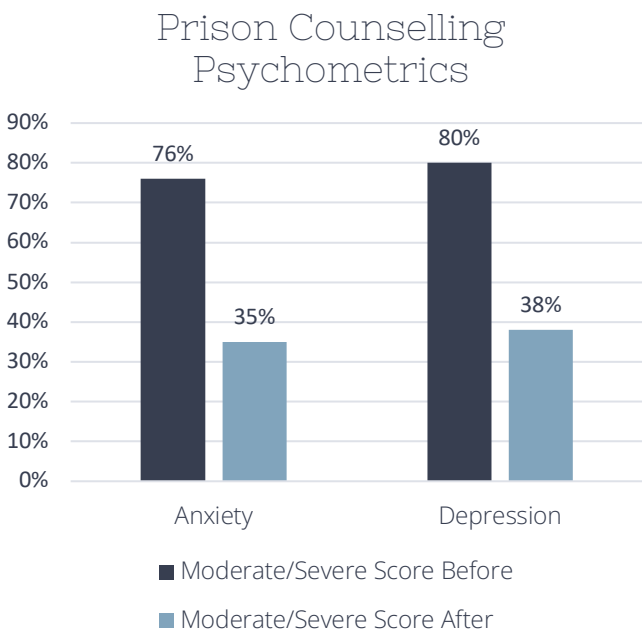
Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023



The psychometric evaluations our clients filled out before and after counselling demonstrated a very positive experience of counselling. 76% of clients scored as having moderate and severe anxiety before and only 35% after, while 80% of clients had moderate to severe depression before, a figure that fell to 38% after. These are a fall of 41% and 42% respectively – huge gains for this very vulnerable client group.

Child separation is by far the largest referring issue we work with in the prison estate (40% of clients). At least 25% of the women we work with have experienced adverse childhood experiences such as sexual and domestic abuse and 35% have experienced abuse as an adult. The work that our service offers works directly with the consequences of these experiences.



Client A was seen for 10 sessions in Downview and was then transferred to Send where we picked her up and she has now referred herself for post release counselling. She said that it was the most consistent support she has had in her whole life.

Prison Counsellor

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

This service exists to support those who are parenting in adverse circumstances, such as on low income, in insecure housing, or single parenting. We offer a baby clothes and equipment service – the Choices Boutique – and parenting courses, as well as a befriending service for new parents.

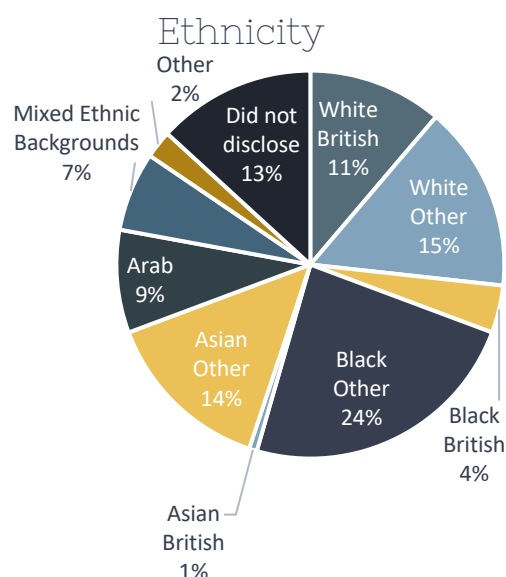
Boutique

The **Choices Boutique** is a baby and children's clothing and equipment bank. We receive donations of good quality, second-hand items and offer them to families who can use them. In its second year in a new location – a community building called Kings House run by a partner church (KXC) – the Boutique is open one day a week for appointments and we receive and sort donations on another day. This service has grown by more than 60 per cent in the last year – most probably driven by rising living costs leaving our clients with less disposable income for items for their children.

Sharing this community space at Kings House means we can work closely with our partners, including the KXC Little Haven baby and toddler group which also runs on Wednesdays, and Growing Hope, a charity which supports families with children with additional needs.

225 Clients Supported

275 Appointments



"The service was impeccable, I felt very welcomed from the moment I entered the building and not judged, I will be back in future and recommend to other mums I know are in need"

Boutique Client

Most of our clients are on low income, single parent families or struggling with mental health issues. Many of our clients are referred to us by Family Support Workers in Islington and Camden, or further afield, but a number self-refer because they need the extra support. The demographic of our clients attending Boutique appointments is very varied and we are pleased to be able to offer appointments within two weeks of referral.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

96% felt accepted and supported by their Boutique advisor

86% feel more able to provide their child/ren with the clothing and equipment they need

94% know where to turn for further support

Befriending

Our **befriending** service supports new parents and parents-to-be by providing one-to-one weekly practical and emotional support with a trained befriender. While we were able to support eight clients across the year, we saw a reduction in the number of clients able to commit to befriending and are exploring how to help more pregnant and new mums to access the support if they would like to. We aim to increase the numbers of cross-referrals between Boutique, befriending and the parenting courses and are trialling next year having a befriending volunteer in the Boutique who can offer the service to the clients who attend.

"[My Befriender] supported me with applications I didn't really understand how to go about, and helped ... emotionally as whenever my befriender calls I can talk and share, and also physically by meeting up with me and my child for coffee. Mentally it helped knowing there is always someone to speak with if there is any sort of concern."

Befriending Client

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Parenting Courses

We continue to run **Circle of Security Parenting™ courses** in partnership with Growing Hope three times a year. Based on attachment theory, the course encourages parents and care givers to consider how to support their children's emotional needs. This year, we ran two additional courses – one for paying clients and one in partnership with a local GP surgery for parents who were referred. We are exploring how we can share this resource with a wider range of parents and are also asking for a paid contribution towards the costs of the course.

We continue to offer the course in a hybrid fashion with at least one in person and usually at least one in the evenings online to increase accessibility.

At the outset most parents say they feel quite confident with their parenting ability and skills, however, at the end of the course 100% of parents respond with scores of 5 and 6 (out of 6) to all the questions, and comment that they feel much more confident.

100% feel more able and equipped to understand and manage their child/ren's emotions

71% feel they can think about what their child's behaviour is telling them before reacting

100% feel more able and equipped to cope with challenges in parenting

"[The Parenting Course has been] really helpful and has given me more confidence to continue my parenting journey and feel I have a better understanding in how to continue to support my daughter and her additional needs."

Parenting Course Client

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Choices' business strategy in 2023 was to grow to meet the demand for our services, and to ensure growth is sustainable, backed up by organisational resilience. And with a 20% increase in client numbers over the course of the year and income growth of around a third, the strategy has been successful so far.

We are aiming for sustainable growth, however, and so have invested in our staff too. With a new Services Manager starting this year, the much-needed support for all operations and administration across the services that we have needed for years is finally in place, and we have invested in a greater level of training for staff who are seeing increasingly traumatised and complex clients. Full supervision for all staff has always been a priority, and the trustees were able to approve a new wellbeing policy for staff to encourage them to take wellbeing days though the year to look after themselves while they carry the weight of the work we do.

Focus Areas for 2024

Choices plans to grow sustainably in response to demand for our services. We define growth as: **Increased organisational resilience – being able to meet more clients while preserving staff wellbeing and without over-stretching our resources and people.**

We will do this by a combined focus on INCREASING INCOME (focus on individual gifts) and RAISING CHOICES' PROFILE (among donors and clients).

In 2024, these are our focus areas as we work towards these two goals:

- **STAFF WELLBEING** – ensuring all our staff are doing well to hold the weight of the work. This includes offering staff wellbeing days, increasing times of celebration with volunteers, good quality supervision and greater clarity on KPIs.
- **QUALITY ASSURANCE** – being able to demonstrate the quality of our work. This includes developing networks with professional bodies (e.g. BACP), increased training in responding to trauma, working towards a Trauma Informed Quality Mark for Choices, and continued focus on good governance.
- **MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS** – raising awareness about Choices and the support we offer among our client audience (building relationships with the statutory and voluntary sector) and our donor audience (clients and church networks). In Q1 of 2024, there will be a URL change to CHOICESCHARITY.ORG – a move planned for a number of years since clients began to question whether they could access support if they lived outside of Islington.
- **FUNDRAISING** – the need to ensure we are growing sustainably is crucial. Our grant funding target has risen and we must also increase our focus on individual giving, particularly regular donors. Plans to derive income from Circle of Security courses as a small part of the income diversification picture have not been realized and so the focus is on individual giving in the immediate term. To further professionalise our efforts, we worked with two freelance fundraising consultants and will employ an individual giving specialist through 2024 as maternity cover.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Finance

Total incoming resources amounted to £390,232 for the year to 31 December 2023 (2022: £219,674). Total resources expended over the same period were £305,037 (2022: £226,961). The net position for the year amounted to a surplus of £85,196 (2022: deficit of £(7,287)). Net resources at the end of the year were £219,416, of which £28,856 is restricted and £23,067 is designated. Further details are found later in this report, including details of the grants we gratefully received in the year.

Choices is reliant on gifts from grant-making trusts and foundations, as well as individual and major donors. We would like to thank the following donors for their support in 2023:

The Anchor Foundation, Ako Foundation, All Souls Church, Benefact Trust, Borrows Charitable Trust, City Bridge Trust, Enterprise Development Fund, Henry Smith Foundation, Joan Ainslie Trust, John Lewis, KXC (Kings Cross Church), M & H Maunsell Charity, The Fitton Trust, The Leathersellers Company, National Lottery Community Fund, Schroder Charity Trust, The Souter Charitable Trust, St Mary's Hornsey Rise.

The charity holds its reserves in a current bank account and in a CAF deposit account which generates interest on monies invested. It is the policy of the Trustees to maintain at least three months' expenditure in reserve and up to nine months where it is deemed necessary. Where reserves are being held, these will be designated for a specific purpose (such as for specific training, or for laptops/capital projects, or in some circumstances, to pay for a salary). The financial management of the charity is supervised and monitored by the Finance Subcommittee of the Board and the Trustees.

Over the course of the last few years, we have received some unexpected large gifts from much-valued donors, some of whom have chosen to remain anonymous. We have also made some savings when, for instance, recruitment for key roles took longer than expected, or due to natural staff movement we have been able to restructure more efficiently. As a result, we have built up reserves which the trustees have chosen to designate towards much-needed improvements to the structure of the charity. In 2024, these funds are being put towards increasing our reach across north London, and towards addressing salaries and properly recompensing our staff as well and as transparently as we can sustainably, recognising that our staff are our key asset.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

The people who make it happen

Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. The Trustees, who are also Directors of the charitable company, meet every three months to review progress and performance, monitor the financial position, monitor risk and make strategic decisions. The Trustees/Directors who served during the year and up to the date of this report are listed on page 3. New trustees are appointed by existing trustees of whom there should be a minimum of three. Trustees are selected for their individual skills, knowledge and vision. New trustees are appropriately trained and inducted.

Team

Choices is run by the Executive Director, who is accountable to the Board. The Executive Director manages all the project managers (who run our services) as well as a Services Manager and a Fundraising Manager. Other than the Services Manager, all staff are part-time, and each service is supported by volunteers. Over the course of 2023, we also worked with freelance consultants, namely our bookkeeper of several years and a grant fundraiser. Towards the end of the year, we also employed an individual giving freelance consultant and a social media consultant to support and develop this work while our fundraising manager is on maternity leave.

Volunteers

Choices continues to benefit from talented and committed volunteering and we have had around 30 volunteers again giving time across all our services, including offering administrative and communications support. Choices' goal is that volunteers should derive as much benefit from their work with the organisation as we derive from them. All of our counselling volunteers who are not fully trained use Choices as a placement opportunity as part of their counselling/psychotherapy training at reputable institutions accredited with registered professional bodies.

Governance

- The Trustees maintain a Risk Management policy, which is reviewed at least annually. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces.
- Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects.
- Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.
- The Trustees oversee Choices' compliance with GDPR legislation at every meeting, and adherence to the Charity Commission's Governance Code on an ongoing basis.
- A smaller finance sub-committee, which includes the Treasurer, Bookkeeper and Executive Director, meets before each meeting of the Trustees and examines financial progress on a monthly basis.
- The Trustees have been particularly concerned with exploring inclusion and broad representation at all levels of the organisation – from the Board, through staff and volunteers. We are continuing to explore ways of including user voice in programme development.
- No trustees claimed expenses this year.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

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 charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and with the applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in 2012. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In determining how amounts are presented within items in the statement of financial activities and balance sheet, the Trustees must have regard to the substance of the reported transaction or arrangement, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles or practice.

Small company provisions and independent examination

For the year ending 31 December 2023, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476. The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011) and that an independent examination is needed. The Trustees have appointed Christopher Clarke ACA as Independent Examiner for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by;



Sophie Guthrie-Kummer

Executive Director and Company Secretary

29 February 2024

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on pages 24 to 31.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Christopher Clarke, ACA

16 April 2024

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Statement of financial activities

(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:	2				
Donations and legacies		154,471	152,032	306,503	181,727
Other fundraising activities		12,543	-	12,543	12,640
Income from investments		1,422	-	1,422	140
Income from charitable activities		69,597	-	69,597	25,166
Other income		167	-	167	
Total income and endowments		238,201	152,032	390,232	219,674
Expenditure on:	3				
Expenditure on Raising Funds		12,689	1,994	14,683	13,079
Expenditure on Charitable Activities		158,751	131,603	290,354	213,882
Total expenditure		171,440	133,597	305,037	226,961
Net income/(expenditure)		66,761	18,435	85,196	(7,287)
Opening balances brought forward		123,799	10,421	134,220	141,507
Total funds carried forward		190,560	28,856	219,416	134,220

All activities are continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses for the year and therefore no statement of total recognised gains and losses has been prepared.

The notes on following pages form part of these accounts.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Balance Sheet

for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	4	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Rent deposit	5	4,000	-	4,000	4,000
Accrued income and prepayments	5	14,073	-	14,073	2,667
Debtors	5	22,056	-	22,056	3,420
Cash at bank and in hand		157,701	30,271	187,972	159,348
		197,830	30,271	228,101	169,435
Liabilities					
Creditors-amounts falling due in 1 year	6	(7,270)	(1,414)	(8,685)	(35,215)
Net current assets		190,560	28,856	219,416	134,220
Total net assets		190,560	28,856	219,416	134,220
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted	7			167,493	102,674
Designated				23,067	21,125
Restricted				28,856	10,421
				219,416	134,220

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 December 2023 and the members/guarantors have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The trustees/directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 16 April 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Elizabeth Dulley
Chair of Trustees

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2023

1. Accounting Principles

The principal accounting principles are summarised below and have been applied consistently throughout the year.

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008), the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (effective 1 January 2015), with Accounting Standards and with the Charities Act 2006.

Basis of preparation of accounts

These accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular limited purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Incoming resources

Incoming resources are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and where it is confident that it will be received.

Performance related income is only included in the SoFA once the related services have been provided.

Deferred income

Grants and donations received in advance and specified by the donor as relating to specific future periods or subject to conditions which are still to be met, are deferred to the period to which they relate.

Tax reclaims on donations

Gift aid tax reclaims on donations are included in the SoFA in the same period as the donations to which they relate.

Volunteer services

The value of volunteer services received is not quantified in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

Investment income

Income from investments is included in the accounts in the period it is receivable.

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Operating leases

Operating lease rentals are expensed on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2023

2. Income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
a Donations and legacies				
Donations	110,502	-	110,502	86,671
Grants from trusts	36,500	152,032	188,532	84,984
Gift Aid	7,470	-	7,470	10,072
	<u>154,471</u>	<u>152,032</u>	<u>306,503</u>	<u>181,727</u>
Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:				
Ako Foundation			-	5,000
Anchor Foundation		7,000	7,000	-
Arundell Trust			-	500
Barnabas Trust			-	1,600
Benefact Trust		9,725	9,725	3,775
Borrows Charitable Trust	7,000		7,000	1,000
City Bridge Trust		34,929	34,929	11,643
Enterprise Development Fund			-	11,550
Henry Smith Foundation	15,000		15,000	30,000
Joan Ainslie Trust	5,000		5,000	
Leathersellers	7,500		7,500	-
National Lottery Community Fund		97,378	97,378	19,916
Schroder		3,000	3,000	
Souter Charitable Trust	2,000		2,000	-
	<u>36,500</u>	<u>152,032</u>	<u>188,532</u>	<u>84,984</u>
b Other fundraising activities				
Donation for office space	12,543	-	12,543	12,640
c Income from investments				
CAF bank deposit interest	1,422	-	1,422	140
d Income from charitable activities				
Education practitioner training	85	-	85	-
Community counselling	8,258	-	8,258	5,166
Prison counselling income	61,255	-	61,255	20,000
e Other income	167	-	167	-
	<u>83,729</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>83,729</u>	<u>37,946</u>
Total incoming resources	<u>238,201</u>	<u>152,032</u>	<u>390,232</u>	<u>219,674</u>

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

3. Expenditure

a. by fund

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
Expenditure on Raising Funds				
Event costs	95	-	95	1,575
Fees and subscriptions	12,594	1,994	14,588	11,505
	12,689	1,994	14,683	13,079
Expenditure on Charitable Activities				
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total expenditure 2023 £	Total expenditure 2022 £
Bank charges	66	-	66	83
Bookkeeping costs	5,254	-	5,254	4,720
Charitable donation - Centres Network	-	-	-	-
Fees and subscriptions	2,482	300	2,782	2,621
Freelancer costs	-	-	-	-
Independent Examination costs	150	-	150	150
Insurance	656	191	847	883
Office expenses	5,313	283	5,596	2,412
Premises costs	20,776	10,110	30,886	22,818
Publicity	206	165	372	446
Resources	814	4,124	4,938	10,341
Staff costs	111,815	103,435	215,250	154,598
Staff development/training	4,451	5,665	10,116	3,964
Supervision costs	5,040	7,110	12,150	8,980
Telephone and communication	1,526	151	1,677	1,324
Volunteer expenses	201	70	270	542
	158,751	131,603	290,354	213,882
		-		
Total Expenditure	171,440	133,597	305,037	226,961

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

b. Expenditure on Charitable Activities - by project

Charitable Activities	Community Counselling	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Central costs	Total Charitable Expenditure 2023
Bank charges	-	-	-	66	66
Bookkeeping costs	-	-	-	5,254	5,254
Fees and subscriptions	-	-	-	2,782	2,782
Independent examination costs	-	-	-	150	150
Insurance	-	-	-	847	847
Office expenses	-	-	-	5,596	5,596
Premises costs	-	-	-	30,886	30,886
Publicity	-	-	165	206	372
Resources	4,542	-	46	350	4,938
Staff costs	44,319	14,627	72,440	83,863	215,250
Staff development/training	-	-	5,665	4,451	10,116
Supervision costs	5,040	-	7,110	-	12,150
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	1,677	1,677
Volunteer expenses	103	-	70	98	270
Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities	54,004	14,627	85,495	136,227	290,354

Expenditure by project: previous year comparatives

Charitable Activities	Community Counselling	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Central costs	Total Charitable Expenditure 2022
Bank charges	-	-	-	83	83
Bookkeeping costs	-	-	-	4,720	4,720
Fees and subscriptions	-	-	-	2,621	2,621
Independent examination costs	-	-	-	150	150
Insurance	-	-	-	883	883
Office expenses	-	-	-	2,412	2,412
Premises costs	-	-	-	22,818	22,818
Publicity	-	50	-	396	446
Resources	-	1,937	130	8,275	10,341
Staff costs	23,317	20,160	49,168	61,952	154,598
Staff development/training	-	-	-	3,964	3,964
Supervision costs	4,020	-	4,960	-	8,980
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	1,324	1,324
Volunteer expenses	-	97	125	320	542
Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities	27,337	22,244	54,383	109,918	213,882

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

c. Employees

	2023	2022
Gross salaries and wages	200,428	145,014
Employer's National Insurance	10,686	6,671
Employer's pension contributions	4,136	2,913

There are no employees who received emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2022:nil).
Key management personnel comprise Sophie Guthrie-Kummer, Executive Director.

4. Tangible fixed assets

None to report.

5. Debtors, accrued income and prepayments

	2023	2022
Rent deposit	4,000	4,000
Accrued income	11,406	392
Prepayments	2,667	2,667
Debtors	19,406	362
Gift aid recoverable	2,651	2,666
	40,130	10,087

6. Creditors

	2023	2022
Amounts due within one year	4,500	627
Tax and pension contributions payable	4,184	3,386
Deferred income and accruals	-	31,202
	8,685	35,215

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the Directors' Report) for the year ended 31 December 2023

7. Movement of Funds

	Opening balance	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Closing balance
Unrestricted general funds	102,674	238,201	(168,632)	(4,750)	167,493
Designated funds	21,125	-	(2,808)	4,750	23,067
Total unrestricted funds	123,799	238,201	(171,440)	-	190,560
Restricted funds					
Boutique	-	12,991	(2,015)		10,976
Counselling	-	16,725	(16,725)		-
Enterprise Development	3,887	-	(3,887)		-
Parenting Support	-	-	-		-
Prison counselling	6,534	122,316	(110,969)		17,881
Total restricted funds	10,421	152,032	(133,597)	-	28,856
Total funds	134,220	390,232	(305,037)	-	219,416

Reasons for transfers: £4,750 was designated out of surplus reserves. Designated funds consist of £2,000 for branding changes, £4,000 for training, £2,000 for laptops, and £15,067 for one year of an additional 1.5 days/week for the Therapeutic Parenting Support Manager.

8. Related Party Transactions

Sophie Guthrie-Kummer, employed as Executive Director, paid Choices Charity £508 in 2023 (2022: £478) as a donation for use of office space.

Donations made by trustees in 2023 totalled £2,380 (2022: £890).

Accounts



Every pregnancy has a story. Whatever your story, you have choices.

Choices Islington

Annual Report and Financial Statements
31 December 2022

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Introducing Choices Islington

Our vision

For no-one in London to face a pregnancy crisis alone.

Our mission

To provide the gold standard of support for anyone facing a pregnancy crisis.

Our goal

To work with our clients to improve their resilience and ability to: cope with a pregnancy crisis, make their choices healthily, and to have confidence to face the future with hope.

We do this by equipping them practically and with skills to understand their thoughts and feelings, and to act congruently with their values.

We define a pregnancy crisis as including but not limited to: unplanned pregnancy, pregnancy loss, child separation, parenting under difficult circumstances.

Our ethos

Choices is a Christian organisation, and so we believe that all people deserve to be treated with care, compassion, and respect, regardless of their faith, race, income, sexual orientation or employment status. We are not a campaigning organisation, and we do not have a political agenda. Rather, we offer a safe, hopeful, and empowering space to our clients, our partners and each other.

We work with women and families facing pregnancy crises – from unplanned pregnancy to pregnancy loss, child separation, and parenting under challenging circumstances - and we recognise that these can be sensitive issues. Abortion, particularly, can become a controversial issue that divides people in a polarising debate. We choose instead to unite people by meeting our clients at their point of need, and never passing judgement. Our goal is to provide counselling and practical support so those in crisis can reach a place of resilience and hope for the future.

All Choices staff and volunteers are appropriately trained and supervised to reflect our ethos. We're committed to working at the highest standards of excellence that we can and practice within all national legal frameworks and professional guidelines, including safeguarding and anti-discrimination legislation. We are organisational members of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and adhere to the BACP ethical framework. We take seriously our responsibility to provide a non-directive space for our clients.

As a faith-based organisation, Choices reserves the right to apply occupational requirements to key counselling and leadership roles, to preserve the Christian ethos of our organisation in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Legal and administrative information

Company/Charity name	Choices Islington (formerly Choices Confidential Pregnancy Advice)	
Registered charity number	1124209	
Registered company number	6517231	
Registered office	390, Caledonian Road Islington London N1 1DN	
Email	info@choicesislington.org	
Telephone	020 7700 4475	
Website	www.choicesislington.org	
Trustees/Directors	Hannah Carter (Chair) Matt Davis (Treasurer) John Wyatt Damilola Makinde	Tamsin Merchant Lizzie Osborne Ian Gambier Elizabeth Dulley
Company Secretary	Sophie Guthrie-Kummer	
Bankers	Charities Aid Foundation Bank National Westminster Bank plc	
Independent examiner	Christopher Clarke	

Our charitable aims

1. To reduce distress for individuals and couples facing an unplanned pregnancy and facilitate informed decision-making in a non-directive and compassionate manner.
2. To enable women and men troubled by abortion or other pregnancy loss concerns to address and start to resolve these issues through counselling.
3. To enable female offenders troubled by abortion, pregnancy, or other child loss/separation concerns to address and start to resolve these issues through counselling.
4. To support vulnerable mothers, including through provision of practical and emotional help with parenting.
5. To empower young and disadvantaged people, including offenders, to make healthy lifestyle choices in relationships and regarding sexual health and thereby reduce unplanned pregnancy (and sexually transmitted infection rates) and build self-esteem.



Public benefit

We have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

How we accomplish our Goal:

Our counselling and practical services focus on empowering our clients as they build their own resilience to handle adversity and face the future with hope following a pregnancy crisis – from abortion to child separation or loss, or parenting in difficult circumstances.

We have three main outputs – Counselling, Practical Parenting Support and Signposting – which form the basis of our services to our clients:

1. A free crisis service for those facing the dilemma of an unplanned pregnancy
2. Low-cost counselling for up to six months for those struggling following a decision to terminate a pregnancy or following a pregnancy loss. And for those with mental health concerns during pregnancy, we offer counselling through the perinatal period, including postnatally.
3. Free counselling for female offenders in three women's prisons and post-release for up to six months around the same issues of pregnancy crisis, loss and child separation and child loss.
4. Parenting support:
 - One-to-one befriending with a trained befriender for pregnant and new mums
 - A free loan of baby clothes and equipment in the Choices Boutique (open to families of under 5s)
 - Parenting courses focused on building secure attachment relationships for families of under 5s
5. Signposting – supporting and helping all clients to feel more confident to access other relevant services – occurs at all levels of our services.

Our impact in 2022

'An amazing team of lovely people willing to provide help and support for mothers-to-be like myself. I was made to feel very comfortable. It was an absolute pleasure meeting everyone involved at Choices.'

- Boutique client

'I've recommended Choices to other people I know who need access to this service. I didn't find anything else like it when I was looking and am grateful for the support I received.'

- Post-Abortion Counselling client

'I thought it was fantastic, I'm incredibly grateful for how seriously you took me and the situation I am in and how non-judgmental the space was. It was surprisingly hard to find that elsewhere, even in other counselling spaces, and I could really feel that throughout. It was very valuable, thank you'

- Client facing an unplanned pregnancy

We worked with around 400 clients again, over the course of the year.

65 men and women came to us to discuss their unplanned pregnancy; 165 parents and carers came to the Choices Boutique for baby clothes and equipment; 21 parents came on one of the three parenting courses we ran; we worked with 36 women in the community setting, offering counselling following an abortion, 17 women had counselling during pregnancy and postnatally, and we counselled 120 women in the prison setting and following release from prison, and four women were given befriending support with parenting.

On top of this, we supported a further 59 people who got in touch for any of our services but didn't choose to go ahead with an appointment.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

In short, demand for support through a pregnancy crisis – from an unplanned pregnancy to responding to the consequences of whatever choice our clients have made – continues to grow, so Choices aims to continue to grow sustainably and with organisational resilience to meet that demand.

Community Counselling

Our counselling service enables clients to address their challenges, painful issues of loss and/or trauma and find healthy ways of processing their experiences, with the goal of increasing their resilience and ability to face future challenges. All our counsellors are qualified or completing their training (registered with an accredited provider). Choices is an organisational member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

Unplanned Pregnancy/Pregnancy Crisis

We offer clients facing the dilemma of an unplanned pregnancy a compassionate, caring, non-directive one-off session with a trained counsellor who will help them to consider their situation, to understand their thoughts and feelings in a safe environment, so that they can be empowered to make informed and internally resolved choices. In 2022, four staff members and one volunteer provided 80 unplanned pregnancy counselling sessions to 65 individuals. Despite seeing the same number of clients as last year, we provided 24 more sessions than in 2021 as just over 25% of clients received more than one session. We had 94 enquiries – which was 22% higher than in 2021. 12 clients booked an appointment but cancelled, and 17 clients did not respond to our follow-up after their initial enquiry – which is a normal drop-off rate for this service which requires a level of vulnerability from the client to even get in touch. We believe the larger reach of this service was due to increased marketing to local organisations across the year, something that we would like to continue for all our services in 2023.

Our evaluations show that all our clients find these sessions helpful. 99% of our clients who offered feedback gave the top mark of 6/6 when asked if they did not feel judged by their counsellor. They all said that they felt able to explore their dilemma and think creatively about their options in our sessions giving scores of at least 5/6.

One client said:

'You were way more helpful than I thought or hoped you could be, I was just googling desperately and got a call back straight away and was able to see someone for an appointment straight away, it's been so helpful I just can't tell you'

We offer all clients a six-week follow up session if they'd like to use it as a way of checking-in and offering support.

One client said during a follow-up session:

'It was a really positive experience - I didn't know there was help out there like this, it was such a good experience'

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Pregnancy Loss Counselling

This service supports women and men through difficulties experienced through pregnancy loss with a focus on post abortion concerns. We offer a maximum of 24 sessions at low cost and work online and in person – which has widened our reach. The service is supported by five trainee counsellors who have chosen to have their clinical placement with Choices, and three members of staff. The aim is to recruit two to three more placement trainees over the course of 2023 as we expect demand for the service to increase.

We have supported 36 clients over the last year, delivering a total of 399 sessions. Almost all of these were for post abortion concerns, and all were women this year. Of these, eight clients were carried over from the previous year, 22 were assessed in 2022 and six were supported with an assessment one-off session.

Over the course of the year, we continued to offer one-off sessions for those who were interested in counselling and who attended an assessment but did not go on to access ongoing counselling. For some, one session was enough. However, we are aware that for many, this is a sensitive subject and one which they need to feel ready to work on. Some clients return a year or two later.

We were contacted by a further 32 clients where the contact went no further than the initial enquiry. Again, the sensitive nature of the counselling often means clients can take some time before they are ready to proceed.

Clients over the past year have mainly identified as White British (60%), White Other (11%), Black British (11%), Black African (13%), Asian Other (5%). They range in age from 20 to 45 with the majority in the 25-29yr age range (50%). The majority come from Choices' unplanned pregnancy service, via an online search or word of mouth.

Since working online has become an established feature of our service offering our reach has extended throughout London, nationwide and even internationally (with clients in Thailand and Hong Kong).

Most clients self-report as feeling depressed and anxious. However, increasingly, our clients have pre-existing mental health diagnoses including Bi-Polar disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder/Complex trauma, OCD, PTSD, as well as anxiety disorders. Clients have also disclosed childhood sexual abuse, bullying and sexual assault.

Counselling is having a significantly positive impact. Using NHS approved psychometrics – GAD7 and PHQ9 scales for Anxiety and Depression respectively – we saw that from the start of counselling to the end, our clients' anxiety reduced by 48.5% and depression reduced by 63%.

Our clients said:

"I appreciate the space I was given to talk about things I didn't feel able to discuss with anyone else, so now I can speak with people I choose to with greater clarity and purpose."

"I came in wanting to be less hurtful to myself, I feel like I have got out of it what I wanted to as I have learnt the ways that I've been hurting myself so that I can be more kind to myself."

"Thank you for helping me to understand my feelings. It has helped in my relationships and in life."

"It has been really challenging but extremely rewarding and I feel like the counselling has made me more able to explore the deeper issues around my abortion."

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Pregnancy Counselling

Our Pregnancy Counselling service provides low cost counselling to expectant parents and in some instances very new parents who are dealing with birth trauma. We provide counselling from around 12 weeks of pregnancy until 37 weeks where our counsellors negotiate a break until after the individual has given birth. We then offer around six sessions of counselling in the first four months after birth.

We are open to providing counselling to partners in the pregnancy, however we are yet to work with any. We have supported one client who was referred to us after a traumatic labour and birth experience. She was offered 14 sessions. We have supported 13 clients over the past year. We also held one-off assessments with another four clients who did not go on to receive counselling. We have at times been working to full capacity over the past year so we are encouraged that the service has grown and we have recruited three placement counsellors and thanks to a grant from the Benefact Trust, another counsellor joined the team one day a week from November for a year. We aim to operate this service without a waiting list as pregnancy is already such a limited time and we don't want clients to wait any longer than absolutely necessary to access support.

Most of our clients come from our unplanned pregnancy service, however one or two heard about the service via word of mouth and another was referred from another similar organisation to ours. Our clients range in age from 18 to late 30s and come from all over London (Islington, Camden, Barnet, Westminster, Wandsworth). Most of our clients self identify as being White British, Black British or White Other.

Many of our clients report that they feel anxious and depressed. When starting counselling at least 50% of our clients have psychometric scores suggesting they had high/severe levels of anxiety and depression. They come with presenting issues such as; unplanned pregnancy, relationship breakdown, financial challenges, domestic violence/ emotional & psychological abuse.

About half of our clients' anxiety and depression scores decrease over the course of counselling. However, these scores do not tell the whole story: in our evaluations, we can see that the way clients speak about their struggles changes hugely during counselling – however the reality is that their situations remain challenging. Becoming a new parent can be full of unforeseen anxieties and challenges and for many these situations do not change. What changes is their ability to face their situation with hope and resilience.

Our clients said:

"I have thoroughly valued this service; it saved my mental health during the most difficult situation I have faced in my life. It provided me with support when I felt completely lost and alone, and helped me to find a way forward, so I am extremely grateful."

"It has helped me get through a particularly challenging time professionally and personally and I am very grateful for that. I feel much better prepared to face future challenges and this service has reminded me just how capable I am of dealing with whatever life throws at me and I will definitely move into the next phase of my life with more confidence. Thank you."

"I was so scared that I wasn't going to be able to do this alone. Had I had not had this service, I don't think I would have continued with this pregnancy. I feel like you've saved my life in a way - which was unexpected. This gives me strength to keep going and to try not to worry about things as much."

Prison Counselling

Choices Prison Counselling (C4C), formerly known as Choice for Change, is a counselling service for female prisoners for pregnancy loss and child bereavement/child separation issues – abiding issues for women in prison. C4C is hosted by the Mental Health Teams at HMPs Bronzefield, Downview and Send, under a Service Level Agreement with CNWL NHS Foundation Trust, and is integrated into the overall Mental Health provision at the prisons, where we work closely with their teams. The counselling team is made up of three members of staff and eight volunteer counsellors, three of whom joined in 2022.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Across the three prisons and post release, C4C counsellors worked with 120 clients last year. Most of the clients we worked with had a short contract of 6-12 weeks although we worked with some for up to 24 weeks, but we also offered a crisis or holding session to some women as they faced a difficult date such as an anniversary, birthday or adoption hearing. As we are now working in an additional prison and have a greater number of volunteers following the COVID-19 pandemic, our client numbers are up about 25% on last year and 12% from 2020. 12 of our clients were also seen in our new 'post release' service which was started during lockdown.

Child separation is by far the largest referring issue we work with (78% of clients) followed by adoption and miscarriage. Our clients range from the ages of 17-59 years old, with 30-34 years being the greatest age represented. 45% of all clients are White British, followed by Black British and White Irish (12% and 11%). At least 88% of the women we work with have experienced adverse childhood experiences such as sexual and domestic abuse. The work that our service offers works directly with the fallout and consequences of these experiences.

The psychometric feedback we received from clients indicates a positive experience of counselling. Pre-counselling scores show 73% of clients presented with moderate to severe anxiety and 76% with moderate to severe symptoms of depression. At the end of therapy, the majority of clients reported a significant reduction in their symptoms: only 26% of clients reported symptoms of moderate to severe anxiety and 31% reported symptoms of moderate to severe depression. Sometimes the ending can be an anxious time for clients, especially if it is before release and this can be reflected in the scores.

In terms of the impact of counselling, clients showed a significant improvement in our evaluations: we ask clients to rate statements on a scale from 1-6 (6 being 'strongly agree'), focusing on issues such as understanding emotions, self-confidence and the ability to 'move on'. 71% of clients gave scores of between 1 and 3 at the beginning of therapy and 92% of clients gave scores of 4 and above at the end, which shows a marked improvement for this vulnerable and complex cohort.

Our clients said:

"My counselling sessions exceeded my expectations, and I would not have been able to deal with my sentence without it. I understand myself; I control my emotions better. I was free to talk about anything in a non-judgmental space. I see myself ready to face anything now."

"Talking to someone and not feeling judged was very helpful and being able to vent. I feel stronger mentally."

"Being able to trust my counsellor has enabled me to start to open up."

"Keep doing what you are doing and expand if you can."

Practical Parenting Support

This service exists to support those who are parenting in adverse circumstances, such as on low income, in insecure housing, or single parenting. We offer befriending and a baby clothes and equipment service – the Choices Boutique.

Our **befriending** service supports new parents and parents-to-be by providing one-to-one regular support with a trained befriender. This support can be both emotional and practical.

This service (which has about six volunteers) has been quiet over the past year: we assessed six clients and three of these turned into befriending clients. One client was supported for three months off the back of attending a Circle of Security parenting course. Two clients started befriending with us after accessing other services (Pregnancy Counselling and Boutique).

This number is down on previous years which may be due to low staff resource, and also highlights the need to build referral pathways up between Boutique and the befriending service. All of our befriending clients in the past year, who are more often than not lone parents, have come from another Choices service. Our befriending clients have identified as mixed race (White and Black British) or Black British. They have been based in Islington, Camden and Westminster.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Our clients indicated that befriending made them feel less lonely and more confident in their parenting decisions and ability. We are also building up the referral pathway between pregnancy counselling and befriending – for some of our clients this works as a good step down once counselling has ended.

The **Choices Boutique** is a baby and children's clothing and equipment bank. We receive good quality, second-hand items and offer them to families who can use them. Run out of a community building run by a partner church (KXC), it is open one day a week for appointments and we receive and sort donations on another day.

Most of our clients are on low income, single parent families or struggling with mental health issues. Many of our clients are referred to us by Family Support Workers in Islington and Camden, but a number self-refer because they need the extra support.

The Choices Boutique opened at its new location in Kings House (Kings Cross in central London) in March 2022 and this new location provides a great space for clients to feel connected and welcomed in.

The Boutique continues to be a springboard into accessing some of our other parenting services, such as the Circle of Security Parenting™ course or the opportunity to be befriended. We also work closely with Growing Hope, a charity providing therapy to children and young people with additional needs. Sharing this community space at Kings House means we can work closely with these partners, including the KXC Little Haven baby and toddler group which also runs on Wednesdays.

We ran 162 boutique sessions to the end of 2022 – an increase in numbers from last year and including a gap in services while we moved the location of the Boutique. Choices Boutique is managed by one staff member and three volunteers who all joined in the last year.

A number of our Choices Boutique clients return for repeat appointments and keep in touch, such as one who also receives befriending support. She is a single parent with an older son who has autism and a young daughter aged two.

She said:

'I have known Choices for four years. The support has been amazing. From baby Boutique to practical support, it has just been superb. The kindness is so gifted here. what is amazing about Choices is no matter whatever religious or general background you come from you are treated with so much respect so thank you for everything.'

We also have some volunteers who also benefit from the Boutique. One has two children and is both a client and volunteer with Choices. She took a break from volunteering when she had her baby but has been collecting items from Boutique as well as recycling some of our unsuitable donations for sewing projects. We are excited that she is coming back to volunteering and discussing ways she can make it work to bring her child along too.

We continue to run **Circle of Security Parenting™ courses** in partnership with Growing Hope three times a year. This COS course is based on attachment theory and runs over 7-8 weeks. This year Choices ran all three courses (the final one alongside Growing Hope) while one of their staff members was being trained to run it. Over these three courses we have supported 21 parents, with the help of one volunteer.

Most of our clients for COS courses come from referrals from Growing Hope, other Choices services or local partner churches. The age range is wide and we have supported parents in their 20s to 50s over the past year. Parents mainly identify as White British, Mixed, Black British or Asian British. Almost all of our attendees in 2022 were female. Parents attending the courses shared issues such as single parenting, children with a SEND diagnosis and intervention from social services. Parents attending have been from Islington, Haringey and Camden. Two of the three courses were run online, the third was in person.

At the outset most parents say they feel pretty confident with their parenting ability and skills, however, at the end of the course 100% of parents respond with scores of 5 and 6 (out of a 1-6 scale) to all the questions, and comment that they feel much more confident.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

We ran a one-off reunion session for one of the courses, where the attendees came to share their reflections on COS and meet with each other. This played a dual role in supporting them with ongoing parenting challenges, and enabling them to be more connected with each other, growing their support networks with other parents. It is now our goal to run follow-up sessions each year.

Our clients said:

"I really responded to the idea of 'being good enough.' While I feel I am good at delighting in my kids and offering a secure base, I also know I make lots of mistakes as a parent. Knowing that I can 'repair' these mistakes is a huge comfort to me."

"I'm overwhelmingly pleased that I went on this course. The facilitators were great and very kind and understanding of every parent's individual needs. I also enjoyed meeting a lot of new parents, who were lovely and very welcoming. This course has allowed me to build my confidence as a parent and has given me further strengths to parent my little ones to the best of my ability. I would just like to say a massive thank you to the facilitators, who were just fantastic!"

Summary of operations

Choices' business strategy continues to be to grow to meet the demand for our services, and to ensure growth is sustainable, backed up by organisational resilience.

Following the years of lockdowns and related challenges to our operations, we have been pleased to be able to move our Boutique service into a community premises managed by a partner church, KXC. This has enabled us to welcome clients into an attractive, open and airy space, and been better able to signpost them to other services using the same space as well as further afield. Despite the challenges, we have successfully evolved and now offer mixed-mode counselling, such that the majority of our clients now see their counsellors via an online platform.

Our work in the women's prison estate has also continued to grow as the service has expanded into a third prison, and we have trialled offering counselling to women post release. Our relationship with the NHS mental health teams who host us in the prisons has also solidified further – culminating in being included in the CNWL (Central and North West London) NHS Trust's successful bid to run health services in the prisons for the next seven years, and Choices becoming a sub-contractor to provide our services.

However, all of our staff have felt the pressure of supporting marginalised and vulnerable people on a shoestring budget. We identified that our biggest needs as an organisation trying to grow sustainably were:

- To support Staff:
 - Recruit Services Manager to enable Choices' services to run smoothly and pressures on staff to be relieved (and to release our Operations and Fundraising Manager, as well as our Director, to focus on fundraising)
 - Create more avenues for supporting staff wellbeing
 - Consider staff training needs
- To raise more money:
 - Create new Fundraising Manager role to enable focused time on fundraising
 - To start a Major Gifts fundraising strand
 - Find new ways to grow earned income
- To serve more clients:
 - Advertise services with healthcare and sector stakeholders
 - Advertise the work of Choices through church and other networks (eg Christian Medical Fellowship) through speaking engagements

These have developed into our organisational goals for 2023.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Grant fundraising was a challenge through the year. We changed our approach to begin to apply for much larger multi-year grants as we had strong enough reserves to cope with a planned deficit for the year. A mixture of a tough fundraising climate, and perhaps the fact that we held our reserves to tide us over against the tough climate, saw us being turned down for a number of grant applications. However, the risk paid off and we secured two multi-year grants from the City Bridge Trust and National Lottery (Reaching Communities) at the end of the year, which has enabled us to embark more fully on this strategy of growth and to advertise for a new Services Manager role in early 2023.

Thanks to a little more profile-raising work (speaking in churches and a supporters' event in September 2022), we also received a higher amount of regular giving and some very generous one-off donations last year. Our Christmas Appeal also raised just over its target of £20,000. All of this meant that our deficit as we closed 2022 was not as significant as we expected and we have been able to designate some funds to much-needed upgrades to technology/laptops, training for staff and towards expanding an important role.

Lease negotiations have continued over the past year and we have entered into a license agreement with another charity, Growing Hope, to share our office space. Both charities currently work part-time in the office and part-time at home, which works for both and provides a form of earned income for Choices.

Thanks to a grant from the Enterprise Development Programme, we have also spent the last year exploring the feasibility of charging for running the Circle of Security Parenting™ course as a way of subsidising other charitable activities. With the increasing challenge of fundraising from grants and not wanting to be overly reliant on any one stream of income, we look to increase our earned income (so far made up of low-cost counselling and rent). Following the feasibility study, we aim to trial the parenting course in the first quarter of 2023.

We continue to take safeguarding very seriously and offered another update training to all staff and volunteers, while the two designated safeguarding leads went on a more advanced training course to ensure we are up to date with best practice.

Future Plans

- As outlined above, the three-tiered goal: to support staff; to raise more money; to serve more clients

In addition:

- Pilot the paid-for Circle of Security Parenting™ course as a sustainable revenue stream
- Continue to use, develop and test our evaluation framework reflecting Choices' Theory of Change
- Continue to strengthen the governance of the board of Trustees and promote inclusion

Finance

Total incoming resources amounted to £219,674 for the year to 31 December 2022 (2021: £214,356). Total resources expended over the same period were £226,961 (2021: £193,589). The net position for the year amounted to a deficit of £(7,287) (2021: surplus of £20,766). Net resources at the end of the year were £134,220, of which £10,421 is restricted. Further details are found later in this report, including details of the grants we gratefully received in the year.

Choices is reliant on gifts from grant-making trusts and foundations, as well as individual and major donors. We would like to thank the following donors for their support in 2022:

Ako Foundation, All Souls Church, Arundell Trust, Barnabas Trust, Benefact Trust, Borrows Charitable Trust, City Bridge Trust, Enterprise Development Fund, Henry Smith Foundation, KXC (Kings Cross Church), M & H Maunsell Charity, The Leathersellers Company, National Lottery Community Fund, The Prince of Wales Charitable Fund, St Mary's Hornsey Rise.

The charity holds its reserves in a current bank account and in a CAF deposit account which generates interest on monies invested. It is the policy of the Trustees to maintain at least three months' expenditure in reserve and up to nine months where it is deemed necessary. Where reserves are being held, these will be designated for a specific purpose (such as for

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

specific training, for laptops etc). The financial management of the charity is supervised and monitored by the Finance Subcommittee of the Board and the Trustees.

The people who make it happen

Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. The Trustees, who are also Directors of the charitable company, meet every three months to review progress and performance, monitor the financial position, monitor risk and make strategic decisions. The Trustees/Directors who served during the year and up to the date of this report are listed on page 3. New trustees are appointed by existing trustees of whom there should be a minimum of three. Trustees are selected for their individual skills, knowledge and vision. New trustees are appropriately trained and inducted.

Team

Choices is run by the Executive Director, who is accountable to the Board. The Executive Director manages all the project managers (who run our services) and a Fundraising and Operations Manager. All staff are part-time, and each service is supported by volunteers.

Volunteers

Choices continues to benefit from talented and committed volunteering and we have had around 30 volunteers again giving time across all our services, including in the office, offering administrative support, and at events. Choices' goal is that volunteers should derive as much benefit from their work with the organisation as we derive from them. All of our counselling volunteers who are not fully trained use Choices as a placement opportunity as part of their counselling/psychotherapy training at reputable institutions accredited with registered professional bodies.

Governance

- The Trustees maintain a Risk Management policy, which is reviewed at least annually – more frequently during the past year with respect to responding to COVID-19 regulations and risk. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces.
- Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects.
- Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.
- The Trustees oversee Choices' compliance with GDPR legislation at every meeting, and adherence to the Charity Commission's Governance Code on an ongoing basis.
- A smaller finance sub-committee, which includes the Treasurer, Bookkeeper and Executive Director, meets before each meeting of the Trustees and examines financial progress on a monthly basis.
- The Trustees have been particularly concerned with exploring inclusion and broad representation at all levels of the organisation – from the Board, through staff and volunteers. We are continuing to explore ways of including user voice in programme development.
- No trustees claimed expenses this year.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

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 charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

- State whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and with the applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in 2012. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In determining how amounts are presented within items in the statement of financial activities and balance sheet, the Trustees must have regard to the substance of the reported transaction or arrangement, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles or practice.

Small company provisions and independent examination

For the year ending 31 December 2022, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476. The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011) and that an independent examination is needed. The Trustees have appointed Christopher Clarke ACA as Independent Examiner for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by;



Sophie Guthrie-Kummer

Executive Director and Company Secretary

25 April 2023

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on pages 15 to 21.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Christopher Clarke, ACA

19 March 2023

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Statement of financial activities

(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

for the year ended 31 December 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2a	133,243	48,484	181,727	186,869
Other fundraising activities	2b	12,640	-	12,640	6,036
Income from investments	2c	140	-	140	1
Income from charitable activities	2d	25,166	-	25,166	21,450
Total income and endowments		171,189	48,484	219,674	214,356
Expenditure on:					
	3				
Expenditure on Raising Funds		11,854	1,225	13,079	10,432
Expenditure on Charitable Activities		176,620	37,262	213,882	183,157
Total expenditure		188,474	38,487	226,961	193,589
Net income/(expenditure)		(17,284)	9,997	(7,287)	20,766
Opening balances brought forward		141,083	424	141,507	120,741
Total funds carried forward		123,799	10,421	134,220	141,507

All activities are continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses for the year and therefore no statement of total recognised gains and losses has been prepared.

The notes on following pages form part of these accounts.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

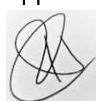
Balance Sheet

for the year ended 31 December 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	4	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Rent deposit		4,000	-	4,000	4,000
Accrued income and prepayments		2,667	-	2,667	3,443
Debtors	5	3,420	-	3,420	3,809
Cash at bank and in hand		117,724	41,623	159,348	146,198
		127,811	41,623	169,435	157,451
Liabilities					
Creditors-amounts falling due in 1 year	6	(4,013)	(31,202)	(35,215)	(15,943)
Net current assets		123,799	10,421	134,220	141,507
Total net assets		123,799	10,421	134,220	141,507
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted	7			102,674	141,083
Designated				21,125	-
Restricted				10,421	424
				134,220	141,507

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 December 2022 and the members/guarantors have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The trustees/directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 25 April 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Hannah Carter

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Chair of Trustees

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2022

1. Accounting Principles

The principal accounting principles are summarised below and have been applied consistently throughout the year.

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008), the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (effective 1 January 2015), with Accounting Standards and with the Charities Act 2006.

Basis of preparation of accounts

These accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular limited purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Incoming resources

Incoming resources are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and where it is confident that it will be received.

Performance related income is only included in the SoFA once the related services have been provided.

Deferred income

Grants and donations received in advance and specified by the donor as relating to specific future periods or subject to conditions which are still to be met, are deferred to the period to which they relate.

Tax reclaims on donations

Gift aid tax reclaims on donations are included in the SoFA in the same period as the donations to which they relate.

Volunteer services

The value of volunteer services received is not quantified in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

Investment income

Income from investments is included in the accounts in the period it is receivable.

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Operating leases

Operating lease rentals are expensed on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2022

2. Income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021 £
a Donations and legacies				
Donations	86,671	-	86,671	80,151
Grants from trusts	36,500	48,484	84,984	97,260
Gift Aid	10,072	-	10,072	9,457
	<u>133,243</u>	<u>48,484</u>	<u>181,727</u>	<u>186,869</u>
Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:				
Ako Foundation	5,000		5,000	2,500
Anchor Foundation			-	4,500
Arundell Trust	500		500	
Barnabas Trust		1,600	1,600	-
Benefact Trust		3,775	3,775	-
Borrows Charitable Trust	1,000		1,000	1,000
Charities Aid Foundation			-	11,675
City Bridge Trust		11,643	11,643	-
City of London			-	10,000
Enterprise Development Fund		11,550	11,550	-
Fitton Trust			-	200
Garfield Weston Foundation			-	7,500
Henry Smith Foundation	30,000		30,000	30,000
Leathersellers			-	7,500
Marsh Charitable Trust			-	500
Mayor's Community Fund			-	900
Morris Charitable Trust			-	2,500
National Lottery Community Fund		19,916	19,916	485
Pilgrim Trust			-	5,000
Rank Foundation			-	10,000
Souter Charitable Trust			-	2,000
Voluntary Sector Mental Health Fund			-	1,000
	<u>36,500</u>	<u>48,484</u>	<u>84,984</u>	<u>97,260</u>
b Other fundraising activities				
Donation for office space	12,640	-	12,640	6,036
c Income from investments				
CAF bank deposit interest	140	-	140	1
d Income from charitable activities				
Education practitioner training	-	-	-	225
Community counselling	5,166	-	5,166	6,225
Prison counselling income	20,000	-	20,000	15,000
	<u>25,166</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,166</u>	<u>21,450</u>
Total incoming resources	<u>171,189</u>	<u>48,484</u>	<u>219,674</u>	<u>214,356</u>

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

3. Expenditure

a. by fund

Expenditure on Raising Funds

Event costs	1,575	-	1,575	424
Fees and subscriptions	9,538	1,225	10,763	9,144
Bank charges	742	-	742	864
	11,854	1,225	13,079	10,432

Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total expenditure 2022 £	Total expenditure 2021 £
Bank charges	83	-	83	107
Bookkeeping costs	4,317	403	4,720	4,507
Charitable donation - Centres Network	-	-	-	525
Fees and subscriptions	2,621	-	2,621	2,474
Freelancer costs	-	-	-	750
Independent Examination costs	150	-	150	150
Insurance	883	-	883	399
Office expenses	1,823	589	2,412	2,466
Premises costs	20,680	2,138	22,818	23,185
Publicity	446	-	446	115
Resources	1,592	8,749	10,341	1,732
Staff costs	131,138	23,459	154,598	136,125
Staff development/training	3,652	312	3,964	1,258
Supervision costs	7,465	1,515	8,980	6,760
Telephone and communication	1,324	-	1,324	1,486
Volunteer expenses	445	97	542	1,118
	176,620	37,262	213,882	183,157
Total Expenditure	188,474	38,487	226,961	193,589

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

b. Expenditure by Charitable Activities - by project

	Community Counselling	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Central costs	Total Charitable Expenditure 2022
Charitable Activities					
Bank charges	-	-	-	83	83
Bookkeeping costs	-	-	-	4,720	4,720
Fees and subscriptions	-	-	-	2,621	2,621
Independent examination costs	-	-	-	150	150
Insurance	-	-	-	883	883
Office expenses	-	-	-	2,412	2,412
Premises costs	-	-	-	22,818	22,818
Publicity	-	50	-	396	446
Resources	-	1,937	130	8,275	10,341
Staff costs	23,317	20,160	49,168	61,952	154,598
Staff development/training	-	-	-	3,964	3,964
Supervision costs	4,020	-	4,960	-	8,980
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	1,324	1,324
Volunteer expenses	-	97	125	320	542
Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities	27,337	22,244	54,383	109,918	213,882

In prior years, costs not incurred directly in the provision of counselling projects were shown apportioned equally by project, but are now shown as central costs.

	Community Counselling	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Central costs	Total Charitable Expenditure 2021
Charitable Activities					
Bank charges	-	-	-	107	107
Bookkeeping costs	-	-	-	4,507	4,507
Fees and subscriptions	-	-	-	2,474	2,474
Freelancer costs	-	-	-	-	-
Independent examination costs	-	-	-	150	150
Insurance	-	-	-	399	399
Office expenses	-	-	-	4,066	4,066
Premises costs	-	-	-	22,036	22,036
Publicity	-	-	23	92	115
Resources	-	1,772	373	1,149	3,294
Staff costs	16,953	20,460	42,293	55,189	134,894
Staff development/training	-	-	-	1,538	1,538
Supervision costs	3,192	-	3,568	-	6,760
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	1,486	1,486
Volunteer expenses	111	14	1,105	100	1,330
Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities	20,256	22,246	47,362	93,294	183,157

c. Employees

	2022	2021
Gross salaries and wages	145,014	127,376
Employer's National Insurance	6,671	5,080
Employer's pension contributions	2,913	2,439

There are no employees who received emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2021:nil).
Key management personnel comprise Sophie Guthrie-Kummer, Executive Director.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2022

4. Tangible fixed assets

None to report.

5. Debtors

	2022	2021
Gift aid recoverable	2,666	3,398
Counselling income	362	412
Other accrued income	392	-
	<u>3,420</u>	<u>3,809</u>

6. Creditors

	2022	2021
Amounts due within one year	627	985
Tax and pension contributions payable	3,386	2,656
Deferred income and accruals	31,202	12,303
	<u>35,215</u>	<u>15,943</u>

7. Movement of Funds

	Opening balance	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Closing balance
Unrestricted general funds	141,083	171,189	(188,474)	(21,125)	102,674
Designated funds	-	-	-	21,125	21,125
Total unrestricted funds	<u>141,083</u>	<u>171,189</u>	<u>(188,474)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>123,799</u>
Restricted funds					
Counselling	-	3,775	(3,775)		-
Enterprise Development	-	11,550	(7,663)		3,887
Parenting Support	424	10,778	(11,202)		-
Prison counselling	-	22,382	(15,847)		6,534
Total restricted funds	<u>424</u>	<u>48,484</u>	<u>(38,487)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,421</u>
Total funds	<u>141,507</u>	<u>219,674</u>	<u>(226,961)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>134,220</u>

Reasons for transfers: £21,125 was designated out of surplus reserves for additional prison counselling staff training, new laptops, and funding for one year of an additional 1.5 days/week for the Therapeutic Parenting Support Manager.

8. Related Party Transactions

None.

Accounts



Every pregnancy has a story. Whatever your story, you have choices.

Choices Islington

Annual Report and Financial Statements
31 December 2021

A company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales number 6517231
Registered charity number 1124209

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Introducing Choices Islington

Our vision

For no-one in London to face a pregnancy crisis alone.

Our mission

To provide the gold standard of support for anyone facing a pregnancy crisis.

Our ethos

As a Christian organisation, we believe that all people deserve to be treated with care, compassion and respect, regardless of their faith, race, income, sexual orientation or employment status. We are not a campaigning organisation, and we do not have a political agenda.

We recognise that abortion is a controversial issue that divides people in a polarising debate. We choose instead to unite people by meeting our clients at their point of need, and never passing judgment. Our goal is to provide accurate information, counselling and practical support so those in crisis can reach a healthy, well informed decision that is their own. We will safeguard our clients to ensure this decision is not influenced by coercion, manipulation, or misleading information.

All Choices staff and volunteers are appropriately trained and supervised to reflect our ethos. We're committed to practice within all national legal frameworks and professional guidelines, including anti-discrimination and child protection legislation. As a faith-based organisation, Choices reserves the right to apply occupational requirements to key counselling and leadership roles, to preserve the Christian ethos of our organisation in line with the Equality Act 2010.

How we accomplish our mission

We offer clients facing the dilemma of a pregnancy crisis a compassionate, caring, non-directive one-to-one session with a trained counsellor who will help them to consider their situation, to understand their thoughts and feelings in a safe environment, so that they can be empowered to make informed and internally resolved choices in the present.

We provide time-limited counselling (up to six months) for those who are struggling following a decision to terminate a pregnancy, following a pregnancy loss or during pregnancy/the perinatal period. This service is low-cost, and all counsellors are qualified or completing their training (registered with an accredited provider). Choices is a member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). Counselling is offered in the community and to female offenders in two women's prisons (as a free service). Female offenders are also offered counselling for issues surrounding child separation and child loss – abiding themes for women in prison.

We support mothers practically by offering:

- One-to-one befriending with a trained befriending volunteer for pregnant and new mums
- Counselling for women during pregnancy and in the first year, to explore relationship and attachment issues as well as trauma, anxiety and depression during the perinatal period
- A free loan of baby clothes and equipment in the Choices Boutique
- Parenting courses and signposting to community support

The focus of these services is on building our clients' resilience to handle adversity and face the future with hope following a pregnancy crisis – be that an abortion, child loss or separation, or when parenting in difficult circumstances.

Legal and administrative information

Company/Charity name	Choices Islington (formerly Choices Confidential Pregnancy Advice)
Registered charity number	1124209
Registered company number	6517231

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Registered office	390, Caledonian Road Islington London N1 1DN
Email	info@choicesislington.org
Telephone	020 7700 4475
Website	www.choicesislington.org
Trustees/Directors	Hannah Carter (Chair) Tamsin Merchant Charlotte Quarmby (Treasurer) Sarah Rose Feeney John Wyatt Ian Gambier Ann Wiltshire Elizabeth Dulley
Company Secretary	Sophie Guthrie-Kummer
Bankers	Charities Aid Foundation Bank National Westminster Bank plc
Independent examiner	Christopher Clarke

Our charitable aims

1. To reduce distress for individuals and couples facing an unplanned pregnancy and facilitate informed decision-making in a non-directive and compassionate manner.
2. To enable women and men troubled by abortion or other pregnancy loss concerns to address and start to resolve these issues through counselling.
3. To enable female offenders troubled by abortion, pregnancy or other child loss/separation concerns to address and start to resolve these issues through counselling.
4. To support vulnerable mothers, including through provision of practical and emotional help with parenting.
5. To empower young and disadvantaged people, including offenders, to make healthy lifestyle choices in relationships and regarding sexual health and thereby reduce unplanned pregnancy (and sexually transmitted infection rates) and build self-esteem.

Public benefit

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

Choices' Theory of Change

The main goal of Choices is **to improve the resilience of our clients to: cope with a pregnancy crisis, make their choices healthily, and to have confidence to face the future with hope.**

We do this by equipping them practically and with skills to understand their thoughts and feelings, and to act congruently with their values.

We define a pregnancy crisis as including but not limited to: unplanned pregnancy, pregnancy loss, child separation, parenting under difficult circumstances.

The Outcomes we aim to see all lead towards the main goal: to help our clients to build resilience and to face the future with hope.

Key outcomes that we want to see in our clients as they reach that goal and through the programmes we offer are:

- clients are better able to freely express and explore their emotions
- clients are better able to safely and creatively explore all of their options
- clients feel more connected to a positive person
- parents learn parenting skills and have more financial/practical support

Leading to:

- clients have increased self-acceptance.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

- clients have increased confidence in themselves.
- clients feel less traumatized by their experiences of pregnancy crisis.



Review of achievements in 2021

"Befriending – and Choices – has given me the ability to believe I can take care of my kids. I now have the courage and feel confident and strong that I can do it!"

- Befriending client

"I just want to say thank you because it's been really what I needed. I was in crisis and felt abandoned by the healthcare system so I'm so happy I found this service."

- Counselling client

"I'd like to say how helpful that was. I found the format very helpful, I was guided through very nicely, I didn't feel pushed or forced, you listened. This was something I really needed right now."

- Client facing an unplanned pregnancy

Working with women at a vulnerable point in their lives during an ongoing pandemic has continued to be challenging. But the need for Choices' services remains evident – and the change and resilience that we see building in the lives of the women we work with continues to inspire and galvanise us.

Through another year of lockdowns and working from home, most of Choices' services have continued online – offering counselling, befriending and one-off decision-making sessions for those facing unplanned pregnancy on online platforms, as well as parenting courses and training events. Prison counselling moved back to in-person working for most of the year and our 'Boutique' (baby clothes and equipment service) continued to operate in a socially-distanced way – providing packs of clothes and equipment for clients where before we would have invited them in for a personal one-hour session, choosing items and identifying other needs they might have.

Changes in our staff team meant we recruited five new members of staff across the year, as well as up to 10 new volunteers across counselling and parenting support projects. The NHS trust Choices operates under invited us to participate in a funded pilot project to support women during the perinatal period in HMP Send, for which we also recruited to a fixed-term counselling post. One of the new staff posts was a development of a new role formalising a piloted service we started last year: offering pregnancy counselling for those experiencing mild to moderate anxiety and depression, or processing trauma and attachment issues as well as other at-risk factors during pregnancy.

In summary: over the course of 2021, Choices worked with just under 400 clients. We saw 161 counselling clients in prison and in the community and saw 65 clients for one-off sessions facing a pregnancy crisis. We delivered 164 'Boutique packs' to parents in need of clothes and equipment as well as basics such as nappies and baby food; we ran three online parenting courses with groups of parents, and befriended at least 7 mums or mums-to-be across the year. Finally, we resourced and trained two partner organisations to run 'I Am Project' courses.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

To reach our goal, and Choices' charitable aims, we have three main outputs. We define these outputs as the programmes we run to meet our clients' needs.

These are:

- Community and prison counselling services (with trained or trainee counsellors):
 - o one-off decision-making for those facing an unplanned pregnancy or other pregnancy crisis (eg diagnosis of foetal abnormality/relationship breakdown) in the community
 - o ongoing counselling (low cost) with a trained counsellor for those struggling to come to terms with pregnancy loss in prison and in the community
 - o ongoing counselling for women struggling with child loss or separation in the prison setting.
 - o Ongoing counselling (low cost) for women during pregnancy
- Practical parenting support:
 - o Befriending with a trained volunteer befriender for pregnant or new mums in the perinatal period
 - o Group courses for parents (Circle of Security Parenting TM) focused on building secure attachment relationships.
 - o 'Boutique' – baby clothes and equipment service
- Signposting
 - o Supporting and helping all clients to feel more confident to access other relevant services

A Summary of achievements across our main outputs follows:

Community Counselling

Our counselling service enables clients to address their painful issues of loss and/or trauma and find healthy ways of processing their experiences, with the goal of increasing their resilience and ability to face future challenges.

Unplanned Pregnancy/Pregnancy Crisis

In 2021, 5 staff members provided 56 unplanned pregnancy support sessions to 55 individual clients – 11 of whom were couples (65 clients in total). This is fewer sessions than the total 70 in 2020 but we saw a 12 per cent increase in the number of people requesting our service, with a 9 per cent increase in the numbers of clients that went on to have at least one session. Of the 77 overall enquiries, 9 per cent cancelled their booked appointments because they no longer needed it and 20 per cent did not respond to our follow-up after their initial enquiry. Often, this can be due to the vulnerability of the issue and isn't unusual but we continue to assess the data to ensure we make our services as accessible as possible. All of these sessions last for longer than one clinical hour – on average they are 1.25 - 1.5 hours long.

Evaluations show that our clients find the unplanned sessions very helpful: 100 per cent of clients feel welcomed, at ease and not judged by their counsellor, giving the top mark of 6/6 for these questions in our evaluation framework. In our 6-week follow-up session with clients - offered as a check-in at the initial meeting – all gave positive feedback with regards to how useful they found our service and more than half (55 per cent) made their decision about their pregnancy in the six weeks following the session.

Our clients said:

'I'd like to say how helpful that was. I found the format very helpful, I was guided through very nicely, I didn't feel pushed or forced, you listened. This was something I really needed right now.'

'I really thought it was so useful, I wish I'd done it weeks ago. This is a pragmatic approach to articulating feelings and brought to light what I'm feeling. The losses of having a termination felt really strong for me. I hope this will be useful for my partner too.'

From a follow up session - 'I felt quite trapped until I'd explored all the options, having the space made me feel less cornered. We ended up losing one of our babies as we were having twins, but your service gave us a good platform to explore our worries and you helped us to feel more settled from the beginning. Thank you'

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Pregnancy Loss and Pregnancy Counselling

This low-cost service has developed in the past year with the advent of the pregnancy counselling service. All counselling work has continued online throughout the year with very few clients requesting in-person work which would have been disrupted by lockdowns. Across the year, we saw 49 clients for a total of 453 sessions. The majority of these were pregnancy loss clients – mostly those struggling following an abortion, but some following a miscarriage. Eight clients came for pregnancy counselling this year as the service became fully operational with a new member of staff setting it up in the final quarter of the year. The pregnancy counselling service has not yet had enough clients complete their counselling to consider evaluations, so the below relates to the pregnancy loss service.

Over the course of the year, we continue to offer one-off sessions for those who are interested in counselling and who attend an assessment but do not go on to access on-going counselling. For some, one session is enough. However, we are aware that for many, this is a sensitive subject and one which they need to feel ready to work on. Some clients return a year or two later. As a result, we saw 7 clients for an initial appointment which did not lead to them continuing with counselling this year. We also received enquiries from a further 22 clients who did not proceed to having an initial appointment.

Our counselling service is well supported by a valued team of trainee counselling and psychotherapy students on placement with us, as well as newly qualified counsellors working towards professional accreditation who also volunteer with us. Our team is currently made up of four staff members and seven volunteers, and hasn't seen much turnover in the last year.

Evaluations

Counselling is having a significantly positive impact:: using NHS approved psychometrics – GAD7 and PHQ9 scales for Anxiety and Depression respectively – we saw that before counselling 42 per cent had moderate to severe anxiety and 52 per cent were experiencing moderate to severe depression. However, after counselling, these figures fell with 10 per cent experiencing moderate to severe anxiety and 10 per cent experiencing moderate to severe depression.

We also evaluate our clients' experience of the counselling we offer, which is through a loosely structured 'programme' helping them to process different emotions related to grief and loss. Clients said they appreciated having a safe space to talk about their experience where they felt listened to with compassion, empathy and professional non-judgement by their counsellors. This facilitated a process whereby they felt they could come to terms with the most pressing aspects of their experiences, gain more understanding and self-acceptance for themselves in turn leading to a greater sense of clarity about the impact of their experience. Clients particularly expressed that the counselling gave them a greater ability to: better identify and understand their emotions, be honest about their emotions around their loss and accept the reality of the loss and what it has meant for their life. As one client put it: 'being able to untangle the different emotions I was experiencing; to name them and understand them.'

The benefits they experienced included a more integrated sense of themselves, an increased feeling of resilience and the sense that they could move forward with hope. Finding a place in their life for their abortion experience meant they could experience peace instead of pain.

Our evaluation framework measures on a scale of 1-6 (6 being 'strongly agree', 1 being 'strongly disagree') how clients feel about statements covering the above-mentioned issues. We saw this year that before counselling, 73 per cent of clients scored between 1-3 while 27 per cent scored between 4-6. After counselling, 4 per cent scored between 1-3 while 96 per cent scored between 4-6 on that scale.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Some qualitative feedback from clients on what they found helpful:

"Identifying unfamiliar emotions and being able to name them; this helped me to understand why I was feeling the way I was and finding things difficult. I have been guided to be more compassionate towards myself which will be something I hope to always take with me to difficult situations I will encounter in the future."

"I have found the structure so helpful in making sense of such unfamiliar emotions; have valued so much this space for working things through and understanding how I feel. My counsellor has always been so warm and kind and I have felt able to be open and honest in working through what I found to be such a painful time".

"I cannot express how helpful this has been to enable me to heal; the many stages made sure I didn't bury anything, and it felt so healthy to explore how I was feeling from all aspects. I am so thankful for the kindness, empathy and flexibility of this service"

"I found it useful to have a consistent, non-judgmental safe space to discuss my situation. I really enjoyed speaking to someone who didn't feel like a robot. My counsellor made me feel very heard and seen. I appreciated her observations, reflections and insights."

"I really appreciated having a safe, non-judgemental space to speak about the loss, to verbalise my feelings, my reasons, to be heard and listened to. Having this space to talk about it means I can also speak about it elsewhere."

"It's been a really positive experience overall, especially being able to talk in general about life as well as my loss. The flexibility of the programme was really good, and the exercises were useful. I really wanted to attend every session every week"

Choice for Change Prison Counselling

Choice for Change (C4C) is a counselling project for female offenders facing pregnancy loss and child bereavement/child separation issues. The project is hosted by the Mental Health Teams at HMPs Bronzefield and Downview and holds a Service Level Agreement with CNWL NHS Foundation Trust to provide its services. In its fifth year at these prisons, C4C has seen some significant changes with the retirement of its founder and team lead and a new appointment to the service. One counsellor also left in October leading to the post being shared between two counsellors, one current staff counsellor at HMP Bronzefield and one new staff counsellor at HMP Downview. Over the year, three volunteer counsellors left and three new volunteer counsellors joined the team, which has now reached a total of 9.

The covid pandemic has continued to impact on work in prisons with small lockdowns due to outbreaks, but overall we have been able to enjoy returning to face-to-face sessions and daytime working hours (in contrast to holding sessions over the phone out of hours last year). Our Post-Release counselling service (PRC), which we started during the lockdown when we couldn't work in the prisons and women we had been working with were being released without having completed counselling, continues on a small scale with one volunteer managing the client load.

Overall, we worked with 44 women delivering 503 sessions at HMP Bronzefield and with 34 women delivering 409 sessions at HMP Downview during 2021. The team has also worked with 10 women remotely, delivering 60 sessions overall, to post-release clients.

As already mentioned, Choices received funding from CNWL to pay a member of staff to participate in a perinatal counselling support pilot project. The contract for this service ran from April 2021 – March 2022 and has been extended to continue until March 2023. Choices' counsellor worked with 4 women referred from the perinatal service and delivered 55 sessions overall, as well as referring at least one client on to the general C4C service.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Clients in the prison setting are universally traumatised and responding to a variety of challenges, even though our work with them is targeted to issues surrounding pregnancy crisis, loss, and child separation. Demographic statistics taken from the women we worked during 2021 demonstrate the following:

Main Referring issue:

- 89% Child Separation
- 17% Child Bereavement
- 28% Miscarriage
- 24% Abortion

Adverse Experiences:

- 49% Childhood Sexual Abuse
- 60% Adult Sexual Abuse
- 50% Childhood Domestic Abuse
- 49% Adult Domestic Abuse

The data shows that many women documented more than one adverse experience. Only 8 per cent of the women we work with did not experience any of these issues. 70 per cent of C4C clients are under the age of 35.

Evaluations

We use GAD7 and PHQ9 psychometric scales to score and monitor anxiety and depression levels in clients from the beginning to the end of a counselling intervention. Results are positive: psychometric scores before counselling show that 93 per cent had moderate to severe anxiety and 76 per cent were experiencing moderate to severe depression. However, after counselling, 31 per cent were experiencing moderate to severe anxiety and 15 per cent were experiencing moderate to severe depression.

As mentioned above, at the beginning and end of therapy, we monitor our client's experience of therapy to understand and assess the impact of our work. We ask questions focusing on issues such as working with emotions, self-esteem, self-confidence and an ability to move on and these are measured from 1-6, indicating growth as their scores increased. Sometimes clients would tick all 6s at the beginning of counselling for a variety of reasons, such as personal defences and therefore it can be difficult to gain an accurate outcome but overall, there is a definite pattern of growth. Before counselling 55 per cent scored between 1-3 while 45 per cent scored between 4-6. After counselling, 100 per cent scored between 4-6.

On some occasions these high scores may reflect the clients desire to please their counsellor, which also demonstrates a positive counselling experience. Overall the results are encouraging as they demonstrate growth.

Clients tell us how valuable the service is to them. There is a real sense becoming unstuck and being able to take responsibility for their actions, finding forgiveness, letting go and an ability to move on with their lives.

Some feedback on the difference the counselling made:

'It has been great learning about how to cope with my emotions because I know I have struggled with that.'

'Learning to actually grieve and accept the losses and traumas I've been through.'

'Acceptance and letting go, talking about separation, no longer stuck in a rut, feel I can move on.'

'Being able to understand my past and the things I have been through but most of all now I can move on without all the anger and pain.'

'Speaking about things I have never told anyone in my life. Bring up something in me, that stays with me – I found the diamond in me.'

'Forgiveness - the pain being healed in my heart.'

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Practical Parenting Support

This project exists to support those who are parenting in adverse circumstances, such as on low income, in insecure housing, or single parenting. There is also a significant overlap with our counselling work, whereby a number of clients who have become pregnant unexpectedly and choose to continue with their pregnancy may go on to have counselling during their pregnancy and also receive support in the form of befriending or by using the Boutique – a baby and child clothes and equipment service.

With funding from the Rank Foundation, we were able to appoint a member of staff for two days a week for the first three months of the year to run the Boutique as our Parenting Support Manager was unable to travel to the office safely during the lockdown. Then, through the year, the Boutique continued as a socially distanced service – providing pre-prepared 'packs' of clothes and equipment for families. As a result, we have trained and worked with 9 volunteers through the year who have helped to keep this much-needed service running.

We gave out a total of 167 Boutique packs to parents in need of clothing and equipment. One of our clients said the following about the Boutique support:

'Thank you so much for all the clothes/ shoes/ toys and beauty stuff for me too! I really appreciate it and so will my daughter. It was lovely to meet you and your team'

During 2021, we supported 9 clients through our befriending project, with the help of seven volunteer befrienders, working alongside our Parenting Support Manager who also undertakes a number of holding and support sessions with befriendees. Sessions might include essential advocacy, liaison and signposting to and with other services as needed as well as practical and emotional support. Sessions this year were all online/on the phone again.

Our clients said the following about their befriending experience:

'It's made me comfortable to talk about my situation and not feel shame.'

'My befriender has been really reassuring and like family. I look forward to talking to her and sharing about her week. She is encouraging and doesn't judge me. She is a mum and shared tips with her about how to do things.'

'Befriending (and Choices) has given me the ability to believe I can take care of my kids. I now have the courage and feel confident and strong that I can do it [parent].'

As we did last year, we adapted some of our monitoring and evaluative measures within befriending to incorporate some GAS (Goal Attainment Scaling) goals. We work collaboratively with the client to set goals for their befriending and at the end, we measure the extent to which they feel that they attained these goals. All clients who have participated have attained their goals.

We also ran the Circle of SecurityTM parenting courses again this year, both in person and online, in partnership with the charity Growing Hope (which supports families with children with additional needs). In total, we ran one course in person in the final quarter of the year, and two online earlier in the year. In total, we had 21 clients register to attend the courses and the feedback has shown how important this has been for clients in a difficult year.

Parents said the following about the difference the course made:

'I feel much better equipped to parent and to recognise and respond to my child's needs.'
'It has reminded me of some underlying principles that will hopefully accompany me throughout my parenting journey.'
'It has helped me to take my daughter's lead and to look for what she needs.'

Using our own evaluation framework, which scores multiple choice questions out of a total of 6 – where 1 is strongly disagree and 6 is strongly agree –, we found: across all three courses, all participants scored on average 5.8 or above on how well the course was facilitated and feeling understood and supported by the facilitator. Participants also moved from an average of 4.15 to 5.9 on the question of how confident they felt to face future challenges as a result of being on the course. There was also real

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

movement on being able to step back and think before reacting to a child's emotions as participants moved from 4 to 5 out of 6 as an average score.

Relationships Education

As part of the picture to help avoid the dilemma of unplanned pregnancy, we offer training on a limited basis to other organisations to run an arts-based relationships course that promotes self-respect and positive values around making healthy relationship decisions. The 'I Am Project' is a nine-week course which, using the creative arts, explores healthy relationships with an emphasis on developing self-esteem. We no longer run this course ourselves and only offer training to other organizations in how to use the material (which belongs to Choices) once a year, or according to demand. In 2021, we ran one online training for two organisations that work with young and vulnerable people and one that supports relationships of all kinds. All fed back that they felt satisfied by their training and confident the course would open up constructive conversations about relationships.

Summary of operations

The main operational drive through 2021 has been to ensure the pillars are in place for Choices to continue along its strategic aim of growth in terms of both numbers of clients and geographical spread. This has meant continued work on building our database capability to ensure data from all projects (including from prison, which poses more complications than others) can be safely help and processed, enabling us to report on the impact of our work.

Grant fundraising was successful last year, raising a total of £112,260, and our community fundraising – particularly our online Christmas appeal – was surprisingly successful, raising nearly £10,000 more than anticipated. However, we do not rest on these successes as we're aware that fundraising continues to be challenging in this climate, so are continuing to aim to build deeper relationships with churches, greater profile on social media and raising awareness of our name and brand with a wider audience. In this way, we have prioritised offering speaking engagements at churches and elsewhere.

One of the big developments of the year was the preparation to move the Boutique service to a new community venue run by a partner church KXC (in nearby Kings Cross) - a move planned for early 2022. With the move, the service can begin to operate more as it did before – when women (and their families) come in to meet with a Choices staff member or volunteer to have a 1-1 session; identify the items they need and share other needs which can lead to better signposting and holistic support. Our befriending service has suffered over the past year from the Boutique service operating in a socially distanced way as we couldn't as easily engage with our clients. We have also had some interest in expanding the Boutique via new 'plants' of Boutique services in churches we have a relationship with – this might be a long-term plan but is one we have in mind as we develop this new opportunity with KXC.

The loss of our Parenting Support Manager in August led to the development of two new roles, separating out the Boutique Manager role from a newly-created Therapeutic Parenting Support Manager role who oversees the pregnancy counselling, befriending and parenting courses. Both of these roles (which are part-time) work closely together but take into account the possibilities of growth in both areas with future funding.

Safeguarding – particularly while working online – has been a major focus this year and we ran two training evenings for all staff and volunteers on child and adult at risk safeguarding, and on responding to violence against women and girls.

Finally, we have been renegotiating the lease Choices holds on its current building and have negotiated the right to sub-let on license to another charity with the expectation being that both charities share rental and maintenance costs but continue to offer home-working to staff, thereby saving money and creating an environment in which expertise, experience and best practice can be shared across the sector.

Future Plans

- Continue to incrementally grow each of our services to meet the needs of women and their families across north London
 - Develop the new Boutique in partnership with KXC – recruiting volunteers from among that community; explore options for new Boutique plants in other churches
 - Grow the pregnancy counselling and befriending services

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

- Market the unplanned/crisis pregnancy service among referral agencies
- Continue to build partnerships with statutory bodies (referrers) and organisations to sustain the planned growth in services (more clients and potential funding)
- Build Choices' online presence through strategic use of social media and newsletters – in order to reach more clients as well as more potential funders and volunteers
- Continue to use, develop and test our evaluation framework reflecting Choices' Theory of Change
- Continue to strengthen the governance of the board of Trustees and promote inclusion
- Explore options for Choices to charge for some services to create a sustainable revenue stream
- Finalise lease negotiations and license for sub-letting office space to another charity as an income stream and opportunity to share best practice

Finance

Total incoming resources amounted to £215,856 for the year to 31 December 2021 (2020: £188,621). Total resources expended over the same period was £193,589 (2020: £163,698). The net position for the year amounted to a surplus of £22,267 (2020: £24,923). Net resources at the end of the year were £143,007 of which £424 is restricted. Further details are found later in this report, including details of the grants we gratefully received in the year.

Choices is reliant on gifts from grant-making trusts and foundations, as well as individual and major donors. We would like to thank the following donors for their support in 2021:

Anchor Foundation, All Souls Church, Ako Foundation, Borrows Charitable Trust, Charities Aid Foundation, Fitton Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Henry Smith Foundation, Islington Borough Council, Joan Ainslie Charitable Trust, KXC (Kings Cross Church), The Leathersellers Company, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Marsh Charitable Trust, Morris Charitable Trust, National Lottery Community Fund, Pilgrim Trust, Rank Foundation, Souter Charitable Trust, Voluntary Sector Mental Health Fund, St Mary's Hornsey Rise.

The charity holds its reserves in a current bank account and in a CAF deposit account which generates interest on monies invested. It is the policy of the trustees to maintain at least three months' expenditure in reserve. The financial management of the charity is supervised and monitored by the Finance Subcommittee of the Board and the trustees.

The people who make it happen

Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. The Trustees, who are also Directors of the charitable company, meet every three months to review progress and performance, monitor the financial position, monitor risk and make strategic decisions. The Trustees/Directors who served during the year and up to the date of this report are listed on page 2. New trustees are appointed by existing trustees of whom there should be a minimum of three. Trustees are selected for their individual skills, knowledge and vision. New trustees are appropriately trained and inducted.

Team

Choices is run by the Executive Director and a five-person Management Team consisting of the project team leads. The Management Team and Executive Director are accountable to the Board. All staff are part-time (FTE was 3.5 members of staff in 2021).

Volunteers

Choices continues to benefit from talented and committed volunteering. We have welcomed and trained four new trainee counsellors in the pregnancy loss/post-abortion counselling low-cost service. Three new counselling volunteers were trained to work in the prison counselling projects. We have also had support from a number of volunteers (not all of whom were able to commit to a year) to help with Choices' other projects, including one-to-one befriending of vulnerable mothers and help in the 'Boutique' baby clothes and equipment service. Our overall volunteer base, including trustees, is around 30+. Choices' goal is that volunteers should derive as much benefit from their work with the organisation as we derive from them. All of our counselling volunteers use Choices as a placement opportunity as part of their training as a counsellor at a reputable institution accredited with the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP), of which Choices is an organisational member.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Governance

- The Trustees maintain a Risk Management policy, which is reviewed at least annually – more frequently during the past year with respect to responding to covid regulations and risk. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces.
- Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects.
- Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.
- The Trustees oversee Choices' compliance with GDPR legislation at every meeting, and adherence to the Charity Commission's Governance Code on an ongoing basis.
- A smaller finance sub-committee, which includes the Treasurer, Bookkeeper and Executive Director, meets before each meeting of the Trustees and examines financial progress on a monthly basis.
- The Trustees have been particularly concerned with exploring inclusion and broad representation at all levels of the organisation – from the Board, through staff and volunteers, with a view to new appointments to the Board and continuing to explore ways of including user voice in programme development.
- No trustees claimed expenses this year.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

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 charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and with the applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in 2012. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities in determining how amounts are presented within items in the statement of financial activities and balance sheet, the Trustees must have regard to the substance of the reported transaction or arrangement, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles or practice.

Small company provisions and independent examination

For the year ending 31 December 2021, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476. The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011) and that an independent examination is needed. The trustees have appointed Christopher Clarke ACA as Independent Examiner for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by;



Sophie Guthrie-Kummer
Executive Director and Company Secretary

27 April 2022

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 December 2019, which are set out on pages 12 to 20.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Christopher Clarke, ACA

28 March 2022

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Statement of financial activities

(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Notes	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Funds 2021 £	Funds 2020 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2a	142,308	44,560	186,869	183,242
Other fundraising activities	2b	6,036	-	6,036	-
Income from investments	2c	1	-	1	7
Income from charitable activities	2d	6,450	15,000	21,450	5,372
Other income	2e	-	-	-	-
Total income and endowments		154,795	59,560	214,356	188,621
Expenditure on:					
	3				
Expenditure on Raising Funds		10,432	-	10,432	11,024
Expenditure on Charitable activities		110,116	73,042	183,157	152,674
Total expenditure		120,547	73,042	193,589	163,699
Net income/(expenditure)		34,248	(13,481)	20,767	24,922
Opening balances brought forward		106,836	13,905	120,741	95,819
Total funds carried forward		141,083	424	141,507	120,741

All activities are continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses for the year and therefore no statement of total recognised gains and losses has been prepared.

The notes on following pages form part of these accounts.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Balance Sheet

for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Notes	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Funds 2021 £	Funds 2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	4	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Rent deposit		4,000	-	4,000	4,000
Accrued income and prepayments		3,443	-	3,443	10,042
Debtors	5	3,809	-	3,809	4,305
Cash at bank and in hand		136,596	9,602	146,198	106,138
		147,849	9,602	157,451	124,485
Liabilities					
Creditors-amounts falling due in 1 year	6	(6,766)	(9,178)	(15,943)	(3,744)
Net current assets		141,083	424	141,507	120,741
Total net assets		141,083	424	141,507	120,741
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted				141,083	106,836
Restricted	7			424	13,905
				141,507	120,741

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 December 2021 and the members/guarantors have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees/directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 27 April 2022 and signed on their behalf by:


Hannah Carter (May 24, 2022 17:34 GMT+1)

Hannah Carter
Chair of Trustees

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2021

1. Accounting Principles

The principal accounting principles are summarised below and have been applied consistently throughout the year.

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008), the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (effective 1 January 2015), with Accounting Standards and with the Charities Act 2006.

Basis of preparation of accounts

These accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular limited purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Incoming resources

Incoming resources are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and where it is confident that it will be received.

Performance related income is only included in the SoFA once the related services have been provided.

Deferred income

Grants and donations received in advance and specified by the donor as relating to specific future periods or subject to conditions which are still to be met, are deferred to the period to which they relate.

Tax reclaims on donations

Gift aid tax reclaims on donations are included in the SoFA in the same period as the donations to which they relate.

Volunteer services

The value of volunteer services received is not quantified in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

Investment income

Income from investments is included in the accounts in the period it is receivable.

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Operating leases

Operating lease rentals are expensed on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2021

2. Income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020 £
a Donations and legacies				
Donations	79,151	1,000	80,151	65,599
Grants from trusts	53,700	43,560	97,260	107,474
Gift Aid	9,457	-	9,457	10,170
	<u>142,308</u>	<u>44,560</u>	<u>186,868</u>	<u>183,242</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

Anchor Foundation		4500	4,500	
Ako Foundation	2,500		2,500	
400 Caledonian Road			-	50
Borrows Charitable Trust	1,000		1,000	-
City of London		10000	10,000	
Charities Aid Foundation		11675	11,675	6,725
Fitton Trust	200		200	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	7,500		7,500	
Henry Smith Foundation	30,000		30,000	15,000
Islington Borough Council Coronavirus			-	10,000
Joan Ainslie Charitable Trust			-	5,000
Leathersellers	7,500		7,500	7,500
Lloyds			-	5,008
London Community Response Fund			-	12,546
Mayor's Community Fund		900	900	
Macquarie Group Foundation			-	-
Marsh Charitable Trust	500		500	450
Morris Charitable Trust	2,500		2,500	
Mrs Smith and Mount Trust			-	5,000
National Lottery Community Fund		485	485	9,945
Norman Evershed Trust			-	250
Pilgrim Trust		5,000	5,000	10,000
Postcode Community Trust			-	20,000
Rank Foundation		10,000	10,000	-
Voluntary Sector Mental Health Fund		1000	1,000	
Souter Charitable Trust	2,000		2,000	-
	<u>53,700</u>	<u>43,560</u>	<u>97,260</u>	<u>107,474</u>

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

b Other fundraising activities

Fundraising event donations	-	-	-	-
Donation for office space	6,036	-	6,036	-

c Income from investments

CAF bank deposit interest	1	-	1	7
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d Income from charitable activities

Education practitioner training	225	-	225	200
Community counselling	6,225	-	6,225	5,172
Prison counselling income	-	15,000	15,000	-
	<u>6,450</u>	<u>15,000</u>	<u>21,450</u>	<u>5,372</u>

Total incoming resources

	<u>154,795</u>	<u>59,560</u>	<u>214,355</u>	<u>188,621</u>
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Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

3. Expenditure

a. by project

	Community Counselling	Education	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Total Charitable Expenditure 2021	Total Raising Funds Expenditure 2021
Incurred directly on activities						
Staff costs	15,059	-	20,491	42,306	77,856	
Premises costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Supervision costs	3,192	-	-	3,568	6,760	
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	23	23	
Publicity	-	-	-	23	23	
Staff development	-	-	-	-	-	
Freelancer costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Resources/training costs	-	-	1,247	486	1,732	
Volunteer expenses	111	-	14	992	1,118	
	18,363	-	21,752	47,398	87,512	-
Support costs						
Staff costs	14,586	14,586	14,586	14,586	58,343	
Office expenses	598	598	598	598	2,392	
Premises costs	5,796	5,796	5,796	5,796	23,185	
Charitable donation - Centres Network	131	131	131	131	525	
Event costs	-	-	-	-	-	9,568
Fees and subscriptions	619	619	619	619	2,474	864
Freelancer costs	188	188	188	188	750	
Insurance	100	100	100	100	399	
Bank charges	27	27	27	27	107	
Bookkeeping costs	1,164	1,164	1,164	1,164	4,657	
Publicity	23	23	23	23	92	
Staff development	314	314	314	314	1,258	
Telephone and communication	366	366	366	366	1,463	
	23,911	23,911	23,911	23,911	95,645	10,432
Total expenditure	42,274	23,911	45,663	71,309	183,157	10,432

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Expenditure by project: previous year comparatives

	Community Counselling	Education	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Total Charitable Expenditure 2020	Total Raising Funds Expenditure 2020
Incurred directly on activities						
Staff costs	12,938	7,594	18,590	25,133	64,255	
Premises costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Supervision costs	2,592	-	-	3,260	5,852	
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	168	168	
Publicity	-	-	-	-	-	
Staff development	-	-	-	-	-	
Freelancer costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Resources/training costs	158	177	421	271	1,028	
Volunteer expenses	103	73	77	108	360	
	15,791	7,844	19,088	28,939	71,662	-
Support costs						
Staff costs	10,931	10,931	10,931	10,931	43,726	
Office expenses	1,819	1,819	1,819	1,819	7,276	
Premises costs	6,662	3,331	6,662	3,331	19,987	
Office maintenance	482	482	482	482	1,926	
Charitable donation - Centres Network	-	-	-	-	-	
Event costs	-	-	-	-	-	1,617
Fees and subscriptions	100	100	100	100	400	9,408
Insurance	156	156	156	156	623	
Bank charges	39	39	39	39	157	
Bookkeeping costs	1,005	1,005	1,005	1,005	4,018	
Publicity	250	250	250	250	1,000	
Staff development	49	49	49	49	195	
Telephone and communication	426	426	426	426	1,704	
	21,919	18,588	21,919	18,588	81,012	11,024
Total expenditure	37,709	26,431	41,007	47,527	152,674	11,024

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

b. by fund

Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total expenditure 2021	Total expenditure 2020
	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	86,250	49,876	136,125	107,981
Premises costs	17,498	5,687	23,185	19,987
Supervision costs	6,010	750	6,760	5,852
Publicity	92	23	115	1,000
Staff development/training	258	1,000	1,258	195
Resources/training costs	404	1,329	1,732	1,028
Travel costs	-	-	-	-
Volunteer expenses	1,104	14	1,118	360
Office expenses	2,392	74	2,466	7,276
Office maintenance	-	-	-	1,926
Charitable donation - Centres Network	525	-	525	-
Event costs	-	-	-	-
Fees and subscriptions	2,474	-	2,474	400
Full Cost Recovery (support costs)	- 13,944	13,944	-	-
Freelancer costs	750	-	750	-
Insurance	399	-	399	623
Bank charges	107	-	107	157
Bookkeeping costs	4,657	-	4,657	4,018
Telephone and communication	1,142	344	1,486	1,871
	110,116	73,042	183,157	152,674

Expenditure on raising funds

Event costs	424	-	424	1,617
Fees and subscriptions	9,144	-	9,144	9,050
Bank charges	864	-	864	357
	10,432	-	10,432	11,024
Total expenditure	120,547	73,042	193,589	163,699

c. Employees

	2021	2020
Gross salaries and wages	127,376	102,581
Employer's National Insurance	5,080	3,530
Employer's pension contributions	2,439	1,869

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

There are no employees who received emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2020:nil).
Key management personnel comprise Sophie Guthrie-Kummer, Executive Director.

4. Tangible fixed assets

None to report

5. Debtors

	2021	2020
Gift aid recoverable	3,398	3,805
Counselling income	412	500
Accrued income and prepayments	7,443	10,042
	11,253	14,347

6. Creditors

	2021	2020
Amounts due within one year	985	1,885
Tax and pension contributions payable	2,656	1,859
Deferred income and accruals	12,303	
	15,943	3,744

7. Movement of Restricted Funds

	Building Works	Parenting Support	Prison counselling	Core costs restricted funds	Total restricted funds
opening balance		8,523	-	5,383	13,905
incoming resources	900	6,485	20,500	31,675	59,560
resources expended	900	14,583	20,500	37,058	73,042
closing balance	-	424	-	-	424

8. Related Party Transactions

John Wyatt, trustee, is married to Celia Wyatt, who was employed as Prison Counselling Manager of Choices Islington until April 2021 and received a salary of £7,994. Celia continued as a volunteer until the end of 2021 and received payments totalling £386.42 in relation to travel expenses incurred in this voluntary role.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Accounts



Every pregnancy has a story. Whatever your story, you have choices.

Choices Islington

Annual Report and Financial Statements
31 December 2020

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Introducing Choices Islington

Our vision

For no-one in London to face a pregnancy crisis alone.

Our mission

To provide the gold standard of support for anyone facing a pregnancy crisis.

Our ethos

As a Christian organisation, we believe that all people deserve to be treated with care, compassion and respect, regardless of their faith, race, income, sexual orientation or employment status. We are not a campaigning organisation, and we do not have a political agenda.

We recognise that abortion is a controversial issue that divides people in a polarising debate. We choose instead to unite people by meeting our clients at their point of need, and never passing judgment. Our goal is to provide accurate information, counselling and practical support so those in crisis can reach a healthy, well informed decision that is their own. We will safeguard our clients to ensure this decision is not influenced by coercion, manipulation, or misleading information.

All Choices staff and volunteers are appropriately trained and supervised to reflect our ethos. We're committed to practice within all national legal frameworks and professional guidelines, including anti-discrimination and child protection legislation. As a faith-based organisation, Choices reserves the right to apply occupational requirements to key counselling and leadership roles, to preserve the Christian ethos of our organisation in line with the Equality Act 2010.

How we accomplish our mission

We offer clients facing the dilemma of a pregnancy crisis a compassionate, caring, non-directive one-to-one session with a trained counsellor who will help them to consider their situation, to understand their thoughts and feelings in a safe and non-judgemental environment, and access accurate information, so that they can be empowered to make informed and internally resolved choices in the present.

We provide time-limited counselling (up to six months) for those who are struggling following a decision to terminate a pregnancy or following a pregnancy loss. This service is low-cost, and all counsellors are qualified or completing their training (registered with an accredited provider). Choices is a member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). Counselling is offered in the community and to female offenders in two women's prisons (as a free service). Female offenders are also offered counselling for issues surrounding child separation and child loss – abiding themes for women in prison.

We support mothers practically by offering:

- One-to-one befriending with a trained befriending volunteer for pregnant and new mums
- A free loan of baby clothes and equipment in the Choices Boutique
- Parenting courses and signposting to community support

The focus of these services is on building our clients' resilience to handle adversity and face the future with hope following a pregnancy crisis – be that an abortion, child loss or separation, or when parenting in difficult circumstances.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

As part of the picture to help avoid the dilemma of unplanned pregnancy: we train other organisations to run an arts-based relationships course that promotes self-respect and positive values around making healthy relationship decisions.

Legal and administrative information

Company/Charity name	Choices Islington (formerly Choices Confidential Pregnancy Advice)	
Registered charity number	1124209	
Registered company number	6517231	
Registered office	390, Caledonian Road Islington London N1 1DN	
Email	info@choicesislington.org	
Telephone	020 7700 4475	
Website	www.choicesislington.org	
Trustees/Directors	Hannah Carter (Chair) Charlotte Quarmby (Treasurer) John Wyatt Ann Wiltshire	Tamsin Merchant Sarah Rose Feeney Ian Gambier Elizabeth Dulley
Company Secretary	Sophie Guthrie-Kummer	
Bankers	Charities Aid Foundation Bank National Westminster Bank plc	
Independent examiner	Christopher Clarke	

Our charitable aims

1. To reduce distress for individuals and couples facing an unplanned pregnancy and facilitate informed decision-making in a non-directive and compassionate manner.
2. To enable women and men troubled by abortion or other pregnancy loss concerns to address and start to resolve these issues through counselling.
3. To enable female offenders troubled by abortion, pregnancy or other child loss/separation concerns to address and start to resolve these issues through counselling.
4. To support vulnerable mothers, including through provision of practical and emotional help with parenting.
5. To empower young and disadvantaged people, including offenders, to make healthy lifestyle choices in relationships and regarding sexual health and thereby reduce unplanned pregnancy (and sexually transmitted infection rates) and build self-esteem.

Public benefit

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

Choices' Theory of Change

The main goal of Choices is to improve the resilience of our clients to: cope with a pregnancy crisis, make their choices healthily, and to have confidence to face the future with hope.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

We do this by equipping them practically and with skills to understand their thoughts and feelings, and to act congruently with their values.

We define a pregnancy crisis as including but not limited to: unplanned pregnancy, pregnancy loss, child separation, parenting under difficult circumstances.

Outputs and Outcomes

To reach our goal, and Choices' charitable aims, we have three main outputs. We define these outputs as the programmes we run to meet our clients' needs.

These are:

- Community and prison counselling services:
 - o one-off decision-making for those facing an unplanned pregnancy or other pregnancy crisis (eg diagnosis of foetal abnormality) both in prison and in the community.
 - o ongoing counselling with a trained counsellor for those struggling to come to terms with pregnancy loss in prison and in the community.
 - o ongoing counselling for women struggling with child loss or separation in the prison setting.
- Practical parenting support:
 - o Befriending with a trained befriender for pregnant or new mums in the perinatal period
 - o Group courses for parents (Circle of Security Parenting TM) focused on building secure attachment relationships.
 - o 'Boutique' – baby clothes and equipment loan service
- Signposting
 - o Supporting all clients to access other relevant services, helping them to feel more confident to do so.

The Outcomes we aim to see all lead towards the main goal: to help our clients to build resilience and to face the future with hope.

Key outcomes that we want to see in our clients as they reach that goal and through the programmes we offer are:

- clients are better able to freely express and explore their emotions
- clients are better able to safely and creatively explore all of their options
- clients feel more connected to a positive person
- parents learn parenting skills and have more financial/practical support

Leading to:

- clients have increased self-acceptance.
- clients have increased confidence in themselves.
- clients feel less traumatized by their experiences of pregnancy crisis.

Review of achievements in 2020

2020 was clearly a challenging year for everyone - and particularly challenging for the women and families we work with. Single parents have struggled through the pressures of lockdown, with many in insecure accommodation with a young baby or multiple children, waiting for delayed financial support. Unexpectedly pregnant women came to us unsure what to do, facing anxiety about the future, and often about current and new relationships which were feeling the strain under lockdown.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

From March 2020, Choices was quick to move all the services that we could online: we notified statutory services (GPs, health visitors and family services etc) that we continued to offer unplanned and pregnancy crisis support on a one-off free basis to all who needed it via online platforms and phone; our ongoing counselling service for those experiencing trauma, anxiety and depression following a pregnancy loss moved online and our befriending service for pregnant and new mums was also a lifeline on the phone or online for vulnerable mums in the perinatal period. Over the past year we have also developed a pregnancy counselling service for those who are experiencing mild to moderate anxiety and depression as well as other at-risk factors during pregnancy.

The Choice 4 Change prison counselling project saw a mixed year with the prisons on high lockdown for much of the year and prisoners in their cells 23 hours out of 24. Nonetheless, we started a post release counselling programme for those women released from prison before their counselling with Choices was complete, or in some cases before it started. This service has real potential to expand, dependent on our resources available to respond to need.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, 2020 was a year of growth and development of Choices as the need for our services is evident.

In summary: over the course of 2020, Choices worked with 128 counselling clients in prison and in the community and held 70 one-off sessions with women – and often their partner - facing a pregnancy crisis. We delivered 174 'Boutique' packs to parents in need of clothes and equipment as well as basics such as nappies and baby food; we ran three online parenting courses with groups of parents, and befriended at least 10 mums or mums-to-be across the year. Finally, we resourced and trained two partner organisations, working with vulnerable women and mums and with young people in secondary school, to run 'I Am Project' courses.

A summary of the work of each project follows:

Community Counselling

Our counselling service enables clients to address their painful issues of loss and find healthy ways of processing their experiences, with the goal of increasing their resilience and ability to face future challenges.

Unplanned Pregnancy/Pregnancy Crisis

We saw 46 clients for unplanned pregnancy/pregnancy crisis sessions and at least 5 came with a partner – 50 clients in total. The general trend we have observed over the past year has been that one session hasn't been quite enough for a number of clients and while some have two, a few have three or four sessions. We ran 70 sessions in total - most of them lasting more than 1 clinical hour. Across the year, 18 clients made contact but did not attend for a session, for a number of different reasons (eg not feeling the need any more).

100% of clients said they felt welcome and at ease and did not feel judged by their counsellor in their sessions, giving the top mark (6/6) for this question.

Some feedback:

"Thank you very much - it's been a real pleasure talking to you and it's been so important. I just needed someone to talk to about this and I'm so glad my GP referred me." (James Wigg Practice in Kentish Town, NW5)

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

"We felt this was the worst day of our lives and all of that has quickly melted away, you were very non-judgmental and helped us talk and think it through. It helped us so much that you are here."

"I forgot that I'd emailed in for support and think I would have gone ahead with an abortion without thinking about it, but now I see that that would have been a mistake and I am glad I know what I think and feel. I'm very grateful for this conversation."

Pregnancy Loss and Pregnancy Counselling

This low-cost service has been gathering strength over the past year and moved online during the first lockdown of the pandemic. Despite some challenges for some clients who felt unable to access counselling online due to the sensitive nature of the work, the move to online counselling has been successful. This is something we aim to continue with in the future through a hybrid approach combining in person and online support depending on what is most accessible for our clients. Across the year, we saw 21 clients for a total of 383 sessions. The majority of these were pregnancy loss (post abortion) clients. However, two clients came for pregnancy counselling – a new service we have started to develop, offering support for those who are pregnant but anxious or dealing with previous trauma which is being triggered by the pregnancy.

Over the courses of the year, we continue to offer one-off sessions for those who are interested in counselling and who attend an assessment but do not go on to access on-going counselling. For some, one session is enough. However, we are aware that for many, this is a sensitive subject and one which they need to feel ready to work on. Some clients return a year or two later. As a result, we saw 11 clients for an initial appointment which did not lead to them continuing with counselling this year. We also received enquiries from a further 20 clients who did not proceed to having an initial appointment. Again, the sensitive nature of the counselling often means that clients can take some time before they are ready to proceed.

Evaluations

Counselling is having a significantly positive impact: using NHS approved psychometrics – GAD7 and PHQ9 scales for Anxiety and Depression respectively – we saw that from the start of counselling to the end, our clients' anxiety reduced by 51% (an average of 4.93 points per person) and depression reduced by 47.6% (an average of 4.875 points per person). Clients said they appreciated the space to talk about their experience and felt supported in their grief by their counsellors. They were able face their fears, better understand their emotions, and to have a sense of acceptance, compassion, and forgiveness towards themselves. The benefits they experienced included an increased sense of resilience and hope for the future.

Some feedback:

"The counsellor has been absolutely amazing in helping me navigate a tumultuous time. Helping me to understand my own emotions and clarify reasons for my responses. A gentle and down to earth approach allowed me to open more and rebuild my confidence."

"Having the emotional tools to face challenges gave me the understanding of my feelings and realisation that I could search for and regain my happiness. Stepping away from relying on others' opinions and validations."

"This has been an incredible experience. I'm surprised how far I've come on this journey; I will be eternally grateful to my counsellor and the service that has been provided. Thank you."

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

"I feel so happy I found this charity. I can't describe how grateful I am for the service provided. I can say: it saved my life. It was everything to me."

"I am so grateful for the counselling sessions and especially my counsellor who has been fantastic she has supported me and individualised the sessions to benefit me."

Choice for Change Prison Counselling

Choice for Change (C4C) is a counselling project for female offenders facing pregnancy loss and child bereavement/child separation issues. The project is hosted by the Mental Health Teams at HMPs Bronzefield and Downview and holds a Service Level Agreement with CNWL NHS Foundation Trust to provide its services. 2020 is C4C's fourth year at HMPs Downview and Bronzefield and was a challenging one as Covid restrictions prevented all therapies from taking place between March and August. From late summer, curtailed services recommenced and returned in full strength by December. As a result we saw far fewer clients this year, but we did take the opportunity to introduce a new innovation: post release remote counselling (PRRC), which enabled us to continue support the women we had been seeing before lockdown who were now released. Towards the end of the year, we were offered funding to participate in a pilot project providing perinatal support to women across these two prisons including recruiting for a new counselling post in HMP Send.

In summary, the work was almost halved in quantity due to the pandemic but the women we were able to work with made their usual substantial gains as seen in the outcomes measures below. We had the following referral numbers: 91 at Bronzefield, 40 at Downview and 30 post release. In total we worked with 107 women – 47 at Bronzefield, 30 at Downview and 11 post-release; totalling more than 430 sessions.

Evaluations

As with our community counselling service, we use GAD7 and PHQ9 psychometric scales to score and monitor anxiety and depression levels in clients from the beginning to the end of a counselling intervention. Results are positive: Before counselling, 71 per cent had severe anxiety, dropping to only 17 per cent after, while 62 per cent had moderately severe and severe depression before counselling - a figure which dropped to only 21 per cent after.

Client feedback showed how helpful the service was and many indicated that they would have liked to have more sessions. The importance of having somewhere safe to share feelings, to process losses and to be heard was referenced by many, as was the experience of a kind and compassionate counsellor who enabled them to deal with feelings of shame and accept responsibility.

Some feedback:

"I have learnt to forgive myself. Where I have gone wrong and the impact of past trauma on me leading to me being where I am now resulting in my baby being adopted. I have learnt about the grief I feel and acknowledging my feelings and how best to deal with the pain."

"I surprised myself at the way I've dealt with my ex - no bitterness/vengeful thoughts but been honest about the hurt. Would normally expect an explosion but learnt that the anger only hurts me and the kids."

"(C4C) exceeded my expectations. My counsellor was amazing. I don't know where I would be without her. I can't thank her enough."

"My whole thinking pattern has changed. I feel like a new person. I will live an abuse-free life when released and focus my pain into strength to help others who have gone through similar things. That's my goal, but first to make sure my family feel love and reassured i will do everything to prevent history repeating itself."

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Practical Parenting Support

This project exists to provide support both practically and emotionally to those who are parenting in adverse circumstances, such as on low income, in insecure housing, or single parenting. There is also a significant overlap with our counselling work, whereby a number of clients who have become pregnant unexpectedly and choose to continue with their pregnancy also receive support in the form of befriending or by using the Boutique baby clothes and equipment service. Notably, this year, while most services moved online (eg befriending via the phone), the Boutique continued in person for those who desperately needed practical support. Our community group had to close and we have taken the decision not to re-open as we are focusing our efforts where we can make the most impact.

We gave out a total of 174 Boutique packs – a higher number than last year. 134 of these packs had essential baby clothes and equipment and 40 focused on essential food items such as formula as well as nappies, many of which were generously donated through partner churches, including KXC (Kings Cross Church) at St Luke's Kentish Town. We adapted the Boutique so that clients could collect pre-made packs at the door of Choices' office, and when this wasn't possible, our volunteers delivered packs to families. We were very grateful to have six volunteers over the course of the year who spent many hours making packs for families. In addition, a further five or six volunteers from partner churches delivered Boutique packs to clients across London.

One of our clients said the following about the Boutique support:

"I'm very grateful for the support in providing for my son! Such a wonderful organisation."

During 2020, we supported 11 clients through our befriending project, with the help of six volunteer befrienders, working alongside our Parenting Support Manager who also undertakes a number of holding and support sessions with befriendees. We sometimes provide essential advocacy, liaison and signposting to and with other services as needed. Sessions this year were all online/on the phone following the initial lockdown in March. This service has been much sought after this year at a time when many parents are isolated. In June, we ran additional training online for new befrienders, which has helped us expand our befriending team so that we can support more families.

One of our clients said the following about her befriending experience:

"It has been really good to have someone to talk to about what is happening with me. I find it draining talking to my family and friends. With my befriender, I know that I have certain amount of time to offload things without being judged or asked questions."

This year, we adapted some of our monitoring and evaluative measures within befriending to incorporate some GAS (Goal Attainment Scaling) goals. We work collaboratively with the client to set goals for their befriending and at the end, we measure the extent to which they feel that they attained these goals. Thus far, all clients that have participated have attained their goals.

This year, we continued running our Circle of Security courses both in person and online. In total, we have run one course in person at the beginning of the year, and two online during lockdown. In total, we had 19 clients attend the courses and the feedback has shown how important this has been for clients in a difficult year.

One parent said:

"In a year in which I haven't been offered much support from other professionals, this course has provided much needed support and connection."

Across all three courses, 84% of clients noted that they felt confident or very confident in their ability to cope with parenting challenges. Another parent said, *"the course has made me more aware of my child's emotional needs."* During our three courses in 2020, 100% of participants felt that the course was facilitated well by rating it 6/6. Despite the change brought about by moving online, we are pleased that the feedback about the quality of the course has

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

been so positive. We intend to continue with online courses in the future as a number of parents with younger children, or who face difficulties travelling, found it more accessible.

Relationships Education

Using our expertise in mental health and wellbeing, we offer training to youth and community organizations interested in running our relationships education course. The 'I Am Project' is a nine-week course which, using the creative arts, explores healthy relationships with an emphasis on developing self-esteem. In 2020, we worked with youth charity XLP to deliver the course in a local secondary school and the course continues to be delivered by unplanned pregnancy centre Crossway with a group of women in HMP Bronzefield, one of the prisons we work in.

Late in 2020, we ran an online training with charity Restore Hope, training their community workers to run the course in their own setting with vulnerable mums. They all expressed high levels of satisfaction with the training and course materials, although the limitations of being trained on zoom did mean they felt less confident to start running the course themselves.

Feedback from this practitioner training course:

"Really useful and insightful. It has got me, and the rest of the team, very excited to run the course at Restore Hope hopefully soon!"

"The course material looks very interesting, and the activities will appeal to the participants whom we have in mind to invite."

Summary of operations

The main work of 2020 was to respond as quickly and flexibly as we could to the unfolding crisis posed by the spread of Covid-19. With a focus on supporting staff and projects to work remotely so that we could reach those in need as effectively as possible, we successfully applied for a number of emergency response grants from Lloyds Bank Foundation, CAF Emergency Fund, London Response Fund and the Rank Foundation, among others. With these funds we were able to pay for core costs including salaries and rent as well as essential PPE and new mobile phone handsets/contracts and a zoom subscription.

To ensure compliance with GDPR while remote working, we also transferred all our online operations to the Microsoft Office Teams platform, where staff and volunteers can securely access client and other data. We updated our processes and Salesforce database to more flexibly respond to the needs online working posed and built on the work of the previous year to develop robust monitoring and evaluation systems. The Choices website was also given a refresh to ensure our services are as well represented as possible, and we have started developing a new online presence on Facebook and Instagram. In September, a new Fundraising and Operations Manager started work, overseeing much of the IT and online operations as well as building on our priority area of improving the sustainability of our fundraising. Our Christmas Appeal, which was run online for the third year running, raised around £17,000, going far beyond our £10,000 target.

Successful fundraising (specifically grant fundraising), paired with lower outgoings due to home-working, and making some use of the Government's furlough scheme for prison counselling employees, have resulted in Choices finishing the year in a strong position. In addition, at the end of 2020, the Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS trust agreed to fund Choices to recruit a counsellor to extend the C4C prison counselling project into HMP Send focusing specifically on supporting women in the perinatal period. This £20,000 boost in our income is an exciting development, but for now is just for a one-year pilot project over the course of 2021.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Just before the initial lockdown in March 2020, the Trustees of Choices had agreed the strategic direction for the subsequent three years was to focus on growth. Further strategy work (identifying what 'growth' looks like for the charity) had to go on hold as an immediate crisis response took precedence. Thanks to a strong year of grant fundraising (including a three year grant from the Henry Smith Charity) and successful online community fundraising, we ended the year in a stronger position to plan again and to expand our services to meet the very evident needs not just in Islington but across north London and beyond. The aim is to secure funding from referrers, including statutory bodies, to fund more staff hours and to develop a bigger and more diverse team of volunteer counsellors and befrienders to be able to extend our services. A big question for the future is what physical space we need as more of our services go online indefinitely and hybrid home and office working becomes the norm.

Future Plans

- Continue to incrementally grow each of our services to meet the needs of women and their families across north London
 - Develop a new pregnancy counselling service (apply for funds to recruit a counsellor/manager)
 - Further develop the post release prison counselling service (apply for funds to recruit a counsellor/manager)
- Continue to build partnerships with statutory bodies (referrers) and organisations to sustain the planned growth in services (more clients and potential funding)
- Build Choices' online presence through strategic use of social media and newsletters – in order to reach more clients as well as more potential funders and volunteers
- Continue to use, developing and test our new evaluation framework reflecting Choices' Theory of Change
- Continue to strengthen the governance of the board of Trustees
- Trustees' HR Subcommittee to ensure Choices is supporting its staff, including ensuring a fair payscale
- Explore Choices' need for a physical office space and premises for different services

Finance

Total incoming resources amounted to £188,621 for the year to 31 December 2020 (2019: £161,798). Total resources expended over the same period was £163,698 compared to £173,664 in 2019. The net position for the year amounted to a surplus of £24,923 compared with a deficit of £11,866 for the year to 31 December 2019). Net resources at the end of the year were £120,741 of which £106,836 is unrestricted and £13,905 is restricted. Further details are found later in this report, including details of the grants we gratefully received in the year.

Choices is reliant on gifts from grant-making trusts and foundations, as well as individual and major donors. We would like to thank the following donors for their support in 2020:

All Souls Church, Arundell Trust, 400 Caledonian Road, Borrows Charitable Trust, Charities Aid Foundation, Ernest Ingram Charitable Trust, Fitton Trust, Henry Smith Foundation, Islington Borough Council, Joan Ainslie Charitable Trust, KXC (Kings Cross Church), The Leathersellers Company, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Macquarie Group Foundation, The Mercers Trust, Mrs Smith and Mount Trust, National Lottery Community Fund, Norman Evershed Trust, Pat Newman Memorial trust, Pilgrim Trust, Postcode Community Trust, Shanly Foundation, Stella Symons Charitable Trust, St Mary's Hornsey Rise, Woodward Trust.

The charity holds its reserves in a current bank account and in a CAF deposit account which generates interest on monies invested. It is the policy of the trustees to maintain three months' expenditure in reserve. The financial management of the charity is supervised and monitored by the Finance Subcommittee of the Board and the trustees.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

The people who make it happen

Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. The Trustees, who are also Directors of the charitable company, meet every three months to review progress and performance, monitor the financial position, monitor risk and make strategic decisions. The Trustees/Directors who served during the year and up to the date of this report are listed on page 2. New trustees are appointed by existing trustees of whom there should be a minimum of three. Trustees are selected for their individual skills, knowledge and vision. New trustees are appropriately trained and inducted. One area for further development that arose during the year was the lack of ethnic and socio-economic diversity represented on our current board. As one Trustee has stepped down following maternity leave, a post has come up in 2021 which gives the Trustees scope to explore how to address this.

Team

Choices is run by the Executive Director and a four-person Management Team consisting of the project team leads. The Management Team and Executive Director are accountable to the Board. All staff are part-time.

Volunteers

Choices continues to benefit from talented and committed volunteering. A new member of staff (trained counsellor Operations and Fundraising Manager) was trained in running unplanned pregnancy sessions towards the end of the year, and four trainee counsellors were trained in pregnancy loss/post-abortion counselling and commenced work with clients in the low-cost service. Two new counselling volunteers were trained to work in the prison counselling projects. New volunteers were also recruited to help with Choices' other projects, including one-to-one befriending of vulnerable mothers and help in the 'Boutique' baby clothes and equipment bank. Our overall volunteer base, including trustees, is around 30+. Choices' goal is that volunteers should derive as much benefit from their work with the organisation as we derive from them. All of our counselling volunteers use Choices as a placement opportunity.

Governance

- The Trustees maintain a Risk Management policy, which is reviewed at least annually. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces – particularly the case during the course of this year.
- Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects.
- Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.
- The Trustees oversee Choices' compliance with GDPR legislation at every meeting, and adherence to the Charity Commission's Governance Code on an ongoing basis.
- A smaller finance sub-committee, which includes the Treasurer, Bookkeeper and Executive Director, meets before each meeting of the Trustees and examines financial progress on a monthly basis.

Expenses: no trustees claimed expenses this year.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

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 charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

- state whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and with the applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in 2012. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities in determining how amounts are presented within items in the statement of financial activities and balance sheet, the Trustees must have regard to the substance of the reported transaction or arrangement, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles or practice.

Small company provisions and independent examination

For the year ending 31 December 2020, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476. The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011) and that an independent examination is needed. The trustees have appointed Christopher Clarke ACA as Independent Examiner for the year ended 31 December 2020

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by;



Sophie Guthrie-Kummer

Executive Director and Company Secretary

11 May, 2021

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 December 2019, which are set out on pages 12 to 20.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Christopher Clarke, ACA

20 May, 2021

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Statement of financial activities

(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

for the year ended 31 December 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2019 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2a	105,973	77,270	183,242	156,236
Other fundraising activities	2b	-	-	-	4,160
Income from investments	2c	7	-	7	12
Income from charitable activities	2d	5,372	-	5,372	1,390
Total income and endowments		111,351	77,270	188,621	161,798
Expenditure on:	3				
Expenditure on Raising Funds		11,024	-	11,024	12,729
Expenditure on Charitable activities		77,853	74,822	152,674	160,935
Total expenditure		88,877	74,822	163,699	173,664
Net income/(expenditure)		22,474	2,448	24,922	(11,866)
Opening balances brought forward		84,362	11,457	95,819	107,685
Total funds carried forward		106,836	13,905	120,741	95,819

All activities are continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses for the year and therefore no statement of total recognised gains and losses has been prepared.

The notes on following pages form part of these accounts.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Balance Sheet

for the year ended 31 December 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2019 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	4	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Rent deposit		4,000	-	4,000	4,000
Accrued income and prepayments		3,317	6,725	10,042	3,017
Debtors	5	4,305	-	4,305	5,894
Cash at bank and in hand		98,947	7,190	106,138	92,347
		110,569	13,915	124,485	105,259
Liabilities					
Creditors-amounts falling due in 1 year	6	(3,734)	(10)	(3,744)	(9,440)
Net current assets		106,835	13,905	120,741	95,819
Total net assets		106,836	13,905	120,741	95,819
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted				106,836	66,866
Restricted	7			13,905	40,819
				120,741	107,685

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 December 2020 and the members/guarantors have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2020 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees/directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 11 May 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



Hannah Carter
Chair of Trustees

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2020

1. Accounting Principles

The principal accounting principles are summarised below and have been applied consistently throughout the year.

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008), the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (effective 1 January 2015), with Accounting Standards and with the Charities Act 2006.

Basis of preparation of accounts

These accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular limited purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Incoming resources

Incoming resources are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and where it is confident that it will be received.

Performance related income is only included in the SoFA once the related services have been provided.

Deferred income

Grants and donations received in advance and specified by the donor as relating to specific future periods or subject to conditions which are still to be met, are deferred to the period to which they relate.

Tax reclaims on donations

Gift aid tax reclaims on donations are included in the SoFA in the same period as the donations to which they relate.

Volunteer services

The value of volunteer services received is not quantified in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

Investment income

Income from investments is included in the accounts in the period it is receivable.

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Operating leases

Operating lease rentals are expensed on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2020

2. Income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019 £
a Donations and legacies				
Donations	57,705	7,893	65,599	63,248
Grants from trusts	38,200	69,274	107,474	86,270
Gift Aid	10,067	103	10,170	6,718
	<u>105,973</u>	<u>77,270</u>	<u>183,242</u>	<u>156,236</u>
Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:				
Anonymous			-	1,100
Arundell Trust			-	500
400 Caledonian Road		50	50	450
Borrows Charitable Trust			-	1,000
Charities Aid Foundation		6,725	6,725	-
Ernest Ingram Charitable Trust			-	500
Fitton Trust			-	200
Henry Smith Foundation	15,000		15,000	30,000
Islington Borough Council Coronavirus	10,000		10,000	
Joan Ainslie Charitable Trust	5,000		5,000	5,000
Leathersellers	7,500		7,500	7,500
Lloyds		5,008	5,008	13,108
London Community Response Fund		12,546	12,546	
Macquarie Group Foundation			-	2,262
Marsh Christian Trust	450		450	400
Mercers			-	-
Mrs Smith and Mount Trust		5,000	5,000	20,000
National Lottery Community Fund		9,945	9,945	
Norman Evershed Trust	250		250	-
Pat Newman Memorial Trust			-	2,000
Pilgrim Trust		10,000	10,000	
Postcode Community Trust		20,000	20,000	-
Shanly Foundation			-	1,000
Stella Symons Charitable Trust			-	250
Woodward Trust			-	1,000
	<u>38,200</u>	<u>69,274</u>	<u>107,474</u>	<u>86,270</u>

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

b Other fundraising activities

Fundraising event donations	-	-	-	4,160
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c Income from investments

CAF bank deposit interest	7	-	7	12
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d Income from charitable activities

Education practitioner training	200	-	200	125
Community counselling	5,172	-	5,172	1,265
Prison counselling income	-	-	-	-
	<u>5,372</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,372</u>	<u>1,390</u>
Total incoming resources	<u>111,351</u>	<u>77,270</u>	<u>188,621</u>	<u>161,798</u>

3. Expenditure

a By project

	Community Counselling	Education	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Total Charitable Expenditure 2020	Total Raising Funds Expenditure 2020
Incurred directly on activities						
Staff costs	12,938	7,594	18,590	25,133	64,255	
Premises costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Supervision costs	2,592	-	-	3,260	5,852	
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	168	168	
Publicity	-	-	-	-	-	
Staff development	-	-	-	-	-	
Freelancer costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Resources/training costs	158	177	421	271	1,028	
Volunteer expenses	103	73	77	108	360	
	<u>15,791</u>	<u>7,844</u>	<u>19,088</u>	<u>28,939</u>	<u>71,662</u>	-
Support costs						
Staff costs	10,931	10,931	10,931	10,931	43,726	
Office expenses	572	572	572	572	2,287	

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Premises costs	6,662	3,331	6,662	3,331	19,987	
Office maintenance	482	482	482	482	1,926	
Charitable donation - Centres Network	-	-	-	-	-	
Event costs	-	-	-	-	-	1,617
Fees and subscriptions	100	100	100	100	400	9,408
Freelancer costs	1,247	1,247	1,247	1,247	4,989	
Insurance	156	156	156	156	623	
Bank charges	39	39	39	39	157	
Bookkeeping costs	1,005	1,005	1,005	1,005	4,018	
Publicity	250	250	250	250	1,000	
Staff development	49	49	49	49	195	
Telephone and communication	426	426	426	426	1,704	
	21,919	18,588	21,919	18,588	81,012	11,024
Total expenditure	37,709	26,431	41,007	47,527	152,674	11,024

Expenditure by project: previous year comparatives

	Community Counselling	Education	Parenting Support	Prison Counselling	Total Charitable Expenditure 2019	Total Raising Funds Expenditure 2019
Incurred directly on activities						
Staff costs	15,733	8,031	18,361	27,692	69,817	-
Premises costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supervision costs	1,770	-	-	2,480	4,250	-
Telephone and communication	-	-	-	-	-	-
Publicity	339	50	81	201	671	-
Staff development	27	-	99	-	126	-
Freelancer costs	-	4,680	-	-	4,680	-
Resources/training costs	102	107	1,111	234	1,554	-
Volunteer expenses	237	12	191	541	981	-
	18,208	12,880	19,843	31,148	82,079	-

Support costs

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Staff costs	10,140	10,140	10,140	10,140	40,560	-
Office expenses	421	421	421	421	1,684	-
Premises costs	7,377	3,127	7,377	3,127	21,008	-
Office maintenance	513	513	513	513	2,052	-
Charitable donation - Centres Network	500	500	500	500	2,000	-
Event costs	-	-	-	-	-	3,520
Fees and subscriptions	104	104	104	104	416	9,004
Insurance	145	145	145	145	580	-
Bank charges	32	32	32	32	128	205
Bookkeeping costs	836	836	836	836	3,344	-
Publicity	112	112	112	112	448	-
Staff development	1,311	1,311	1,311	1,311	5,244	-
Telephone and communications	348	348	348	348	1,392	-
	21,839	17,589	21,839	17,589	78,856	12,729
Total expenditure	40,047	30,469	41,682	48,737	160,935	12,729

b By fund

Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total expenditure 2020	Total expenditure 2019
	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	47,910	60,070	107,981	110,377
Premises costs	15,119	4,868	19,987	21,008
Supervision costs	2,972	2,880	5,852	4,250
Publicity	1,000	-	1,000	1,119
Staff development	195	-	195	5,370
Resources/training costs	285	743	1,028	1,554
Travel costs	-	-	-	-
Volunteer expenses	228	132	360	981
Office expenses	1,603	684	2,287	1,684
Office maintenance	1,926	-	1,926	2,052
Charitable donations	-	-	-	2,000
Event costs	-	-	-	-
Fees and subscriptions	400	-	400	416
Full Cost Recovery (support costs)	-	-	-	-
Freelancer costs	146	4,843	4,989	4,680

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

Insurance	623	-	623	580
Bank charges	157	-	157	128
Bookkeeping costs	4,018	-	4,018	3,344
Telephone and communication	1,270	601	1,871	1,392
	77,853	74,822	152,674	160,935

Expenditure on raising funds

Event costs	1,617	-	1,617	3,520
Fees and subscriptions	9,050	-	9,050	9,004
Bank charges	357	-	357	205
	11,024	-	11,024	12,729

Total expenditure	88,877	74,822	163,699	173,664
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c Employees

	2020	2019
Gross salaries and wages	102,581	104,881
Employer's National Insurance	3,530	4,120
Employer's pension contributions	1,869	1,376

There are no employees who received emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2019:nil).

Key management personnel:

Sophie Guthrie-Kummer,
Executive Director

4. Tangible fixed assets

None to report

5. Debtors

	2020	2019
Gift aid recoverable	3,805	2,722
Counselling income	500	
Accrued income and prepayments	10,042	3,172
	14,347	5,894

6. Creditors

Report of the trustees

(incorporating the directors' report) for the year ended 31 December 2020

	2020	2019
Amounts due within one year	1,885	4,316
Inland Revenue and Tax	1,859	-
Deferred income and accruals	-	5,124
	3,744	9,440

7. Movement of Restricted Funds

	Theory of Change	Education	Parenting Support	Prison counselling	Core costs restricted funds	Total restricted funds
opening balance	8,415	450	2,593	-	-	11,457
incoming resources	-	12,596	17,996	25,000	21,678	77,270
resources expended	8,415	13,046	12,065	25,000	16,295	74,822
closing balance	-	-	8,523	-	5,383	13,905

8. Related Party Transactions

John Wyatt, trustee, is married to Celia Wyatt, who is employed as Prison Counselling Manager of Choices Islington and received a salary of £15,954 in 2020.

9. Trustee Expenses

No expenses were paid to trustees during 2020 (2019: £46.15).