



**Herts
Domestic
Abuse
Helpline**

08 088 088 088

Domestic abuse can affect
anyone. It's time to end
the silence.



**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
2020-21**

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ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21 – Chair's Summary



Who would have known that, a year on from writing my last report, we would still be affected by the impact of COVID. Everyone has had to adapt and learn to do things in different ways and the Helpline is no different.

Fortunately, because our Helpline trustees, staff and call takers all work from home, we were able to keep operating. Although we would all rather meet face to face, we have been able to move our training online, both for existing volunteers and potential new volunteers at least as an interim measure while we wait to see what the future holds.

The cloud-based telephone system, installed in January 2020, has continued to be extremely beneficial, providing us with real time data on numbers of calls, peak times etc, which helps us plan to match demand. The new system ensures that callers' details remain confidential and anonymous as always.

Partly in response to lockdown, at Easter time 2020 we introduced a confidential email service to enable those who could not phone us or perhaps prefer to write their concerns down to have a way of getting in touch. This new service has proved popular. At the same time, we introduced a double rota on our Helpline to enable us to answer the additional calls we were receiving owing to lockdown.

COVID caused our joint drop-in service at JKC Lawyers in Watford to be suspended in March 2020 and unfortunately it has been unable to reopen in the same manner since. However, JKC continue to offer their free legal helpline and can still see people by appointment at their offices.

COVID, and specifically lockdown, saw our calls and emails escalate last year to 2,270 representing an 11% increase on 2019-2020. That number is 21% up on our 2018-19 total illustrating the continued growing demand for our service.

A key part of what we do is to let people know our service is there to help. Last year in particular we undertook an extensive marketing campaign across the whole county in a range of different media to try to ensure that anyone affected by domestic abuse saw our number and could reach out for help. We also stepped up posts on our social media platforms. I believe this greater visibility accounts, at least to some extent, for the increased numbers of calls and emails.

Like many charities, COVID impacted our finances though I am pleased to say we were the beneficiaries of several COVID-specific grants, which were most welcome given that we were unable to hold many of our planned fundraising events.

I am pleased to report that in November 2020 we were awarded a Heroes of Hertfordshire Award by the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire and the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire in recognition of our service to the people of Hertfordshire.

Moving on to changes within our organisation, we welcomed three new Trustees last year who bring a wealth of experience to the Board - Bev Gray, Marion Visagie and

Chrystalla Karvella. Penny Williams, who was a Trustee for more than 10 years, stood down but was appointed our Vice President.

In December we were delighted when Sarah Beazley agreed to join us as a Patron. Sarah was extremely supportive of the Helpline during her year of office as High Sheriff of Hertfordshire and we know that her knowledge of the county will enable us to better reach out to people of many faiths and ethnicities.

Neelam Banghard, our Helpline Manager, left us in February 2021 to pursue a career in counselling. We would like to thank her for all she has done for the Helpline in her time with us. We appointed a new Helpline Manager, Hayley Star in February 2021 to join Sam Phipps, who joined as our Helpline Assistant in May 2020. The Trustees and volunteers are looking forward to working with our new team to continue to drive the Helpline forward.

In January we were appointed the charity of the year for the Platinum Points Business Networking Group. They will be fundraising for us as well as providing pro bono advice. We are looking forward to working with them throughout the year.

Looking forward, we are still the nominated lead charity for the St Albans Half Marathon on 13th June, following the cancellation of last year's event. We will also be a lead charity for this year's St Albans Fireworks.

It would be wrong not to mention the Domestic Abuse Act which received Royal Assent on 29th April 2021. We will be looking at this closely to ensure that any information and signposts we give to callers are current.

Finally, in this past very challenging year my thanks must go to our staff and volunteer call takers who have worked so hard in difficult circumstances to continue to provide such a vital service. I must also thank the Trustees for their continued time and commitment to the Helpline.

Christine Roach
Chair
For the Board of Trustees

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About us

The Helpline is a confidential, free, support and signposting service for anyone affected by domestic abuse. It first became a registered charity in January 2011 but has been operational since 2002. On 14 August 2019 it became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and received a new charity number – 1184899.

In September 2019, the Helpline leased its first premises at The Lodge, Herts Police Headquarters but planned building works at Police Headquarters have meant that we have had to vacate our office for the time being. Currently everyone works from home

As well as supporting around 2,300 callers a year plus many more through our website, the Helpline works in partnership with countywide statutory, voluntary and

community organisations which, together, all aim to improve the lives of anyone affected by domestic abuse as well as those seeking help to change their behaviour.

Herts Sunflower



The Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline is an independent charity but, along with other services, works under the countywide domestic abuse umbrella of the Sunflower Partnership. For more information visit **www.hertssunflower.org/**

The picture nationally

Domestic abuse is everyone's business. Nationally it affects 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men and at least 750,000 children annually. Two women and one man are killed every week. On average the police receive an emergency call relating to domestic abuse every 30 seconds.

The picture in Hertfordshire

In the year ended 31st March 2021 there were 21,714 reported cases of domestic abuse in Hertfordshire (up 4.0% from 20,875 in the previous year) of which there were 12,647 (2019/20 – 12,306) recorded criminal offences, an increase of 2.8% on the previous year (341 more cases). Against this, there was a 9.7% criminal justice outcome rate, up by 0.5% on the previous year.

Domestic Abuse constituted about 17.8% of all Herts Constabulary recorded crimes, proportionally up on 15% last year and needs to be viewed in a wider context. In the past year COVID 19 restrictions and two national lockdowns are thought to have led to an increase in reporting of domestic abuse, conversely the same restrictions have seen a decrease in 'All Crime' down by 13.9% or 11,562 fewer offences to 71,557 from 83,119 in 2019/20, in particular Theft offences were down by 27%, Burglary offences were down by 33% and Vehicle offences were down by 20.4%.

Source: Herts Constabulary

Helpline operation

The Trustees follow the good practice set out in the Charity Governance Code. The Constitution and operational policies are reviewed regularly. The Trustees have examined the risks to which the charity is exposed and have taken actions to mitigate them.

How call data is assessed

Callers' details are not recorded. On occasions, callers volunteer some information and we do record this, though not personal contact details. For example, they may disclose that they are disabled, BAME or LGBTQ, elderly, whether drugs and alcohol or mental health issues are a concern, whether they are experiencing coercive and controlling behaviour or they may be seeking legal or financial advice. This

information may help the county to commission future domestic abuse and other services.

Helpline Manager's Report

Call Numbers 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021

The total number of calls and emails was 2,270 compared to 2,043 for the previous year. This equates to a 11.11% increase.

The majority of calls (67%) continue to be from female victim-survivors with 5% being from male victims-survivors. 26% of calls were from professionals seeking advice for their clients. The most commonly disclosed types of abuse were emotional and or psychological followed by coercive control and physical abuse. IDVA and the Police were the top safety signposts followed by SADA (Stevenage against Domestic Abuse), refuge and solicitors.

Volunteers

The Helpline Trustees would like to thank all the highly-trained volunteers who dedicated their time to the Helpline this year. Without their support the service would not be able to operate. The work they do is exceptional and challenging and we are incredibly grateful. Despite the pandemic, we achieved a 92% Helpline coverage this year, with our volunteers contributing some 3,806 volunteering hours to Hertfordshire.

The difference we make

The above statistics are interesting, but it's also really important to recognise the difference we making to people's lives. Here is some of the feedback our call takers received in 2020-21.

Thank you for all the help, it took me a lot to pick up the phone and ring.

He said how good it was to speak to someone who listened to him without judging him and kept thanking me.

She said making the call was much more helpful than she was expecting.

The caller thanked me and would be grateful for an email with the information requested for perpetrator programmes/services.

She said the numbers were very helpful and had given her a lot of options.

You are the first person to give me any hope.

Today's caller thought his wife and daughter should ring us as the information shared had been most helpful.

And from an emailer - Very surprised to get an answer from us today - very good service.

Influencing national policy

Our Vice President, Penny Williams, attends the All Party Parliamentary Group on Domestic Violence. Below are the topics considered in 2020-21.

Apsana Begum MP became the new chair of the APPG in October 2020, taking over from Jess Phillips.

Children and Young People

The new Domestic Abuse Act recognises children as victims, however the APPG was concerned about the lack of dedicated funding for specialist services for children and young people, and therefore the impact of undiagnosed post-traumatic stress on survivors and their children.

Women

There are additional barriers that specialist services supporting minority women and children face, including discrimination and greater funding challenges impacting access to support. Minority women and children experiencing abuse often have different corresponding support needs.

Disabled women have a higher incidence of DA, are more likely to be in poverty, less likely to lead independent lives (living in parental homes or residential, care).

The lack of good demographic data collection around DA, especially around BAME, LGBTQ and disability. This impacts on being able to make strategic decisions.

The APPG made recommendations to both the House of Lords and House of Commons in respect of the above but sadly these issues did not become part of the Act.

The Domestic Abuse Act 29th April 2021

After a long wait the Domestic Abuse Act has finally received Royal Assent. Below is a Government summary of the changes.

The Domestic Abuse Act will:

- create a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, coercive or controlling, and economic abuse. As part of this definition, children will be explicitly recognised as victims if they see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of abuse;
- create a new offence of non-fatal strangulation;
- extend the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse;
- extend the 'revenge porn' offence to cover the threat to disclose intimate images with the intention to cause distress;
- clarify the law to further deter claims of "rough sex gone wrong" in cases involving death or serious injury;
- create a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts (for example, to enable them to give evidence via a video link);

- establish in law the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, to stand up for victims and survivors, raise public awareness, monitor the response of local authorities, the justice system and other statutory agencies and hold them to account in tackling domestic abuse;
- place a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation;
- provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance;
- place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme ("Clare's law") on a statutory footing;
- ensure that when local authorities rehouse victims of domestic abuse, they do not lose a secure lifetime or assured tenancy;
- provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance;
- stop vexatious family proceedings that can further traumatise victims by clarifying the circumstances in which a court may make a barring order under section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989;
- prohibit GPs and other health professionals from charging a victim of domestic abuse for a letter to support an application for legal aid

How will the Act strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators?

The Domestic Abuse Act will:

- prohibit perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in family and civil courts in England and Wales;
- bring the case of R vs Brown into legislation, invalidating any courtroom defence of consent where a victim suffers serious harm or is killed;
- enable domestic abuse offenders to be subject to polygraph testing as a condition of their licence following their release from custody;
- extend the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the criminal courts in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to further violent and sexual offences;
- provide for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order, which will prevent perpetrators from contacting their victims, as well as force them to take positive steps to change their behaviour, e.g. seeking mental health support;
- Introduce a statutory duty on the Secretary of State to publish a domestic abuse perpetrator strategy (to be published as part of a holistic domestic abuse strategy).

Promotional Activities, Social Media and Marketing

The pandemic and social isolation put a stop to face to face promotional activities and events this year, but we hope to resume these shortly.

In the year under review, we received 11,346 unique visitors to our website of which 8,443 (74.4%) were from the UK and more than 3,000 were from Hertfordshire.

On all social media channels, we are continuing to grow our followers and exceed the industry engagement rate average.

Facebook – 1,157 followers up 11.35% on the previous year

Twitter-1,398 followers up 14.87% on the previous year

Instagram – 686 followers up 82.45% on the previous year
 LinkedIn – 103 followers up 151% on the previous year

Grant Funding in 2020-21

Our thanks to the 33 Hertfordshire County Councillors who awarded us Locality Budget grants to help with the impact of COVID this year. The exceptional level of funding enabled us to promote our service across the whole county to enable more victims-survivors to reach out for help. Domestic abuse occurs in all districts of Hertfordshire and affects not only victims but also perpetrators, friends and family, children and work colleagues. It not only affects the health and wellbeing of victims but also impacts on the productivity of the county.

Herts County Councillor Locality Budget Grants:

Broxbourne	Dave Hewitt, Paul Mason	£1,000
Dacorum	Colette Wyatt-Lowe, Ron Tindall	£1,500
East Herts	David Andrews, John Wyllie	£1,500
Hertsmere	Seamus Quilty, Morris Bright, Caroline Clapper, Jane West, Susan Brown, John Graham	£3,050
North Herts	Derrick Ashley, Terry Hone, Fiona Hill, Simon Bloxham	£1,700
St Albans	Chris White, Sandy Walkington, Dreda Gordon, John Hale, Anthony Rowlands, Sue Featherstone	£2,750
Three Rivers	Sara Bedford, Frances Button	£1,500
Watford	Nigel Bell, Stephen Giles-Medhurst	£1,000
Welwyn Hatfield	Paul Zukowskyj, Richard Smith, Lynn Chesterman, Nigel Quinton, Susie Gordon, Margaret Eames-Petersen, Stephen Boulton	£4,080
	Total	£18,080

Our Treasurer's report includes details of other grants and income, including two substantial grants from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Herts Community Foundation.

Trustees & staff at 31 March 2021

President

Duncan Sales



Duncan is a retired Detective Inspector Herts Constabulary and founder of the Helpline in 2002.

Vice President

Penny Williams, JP, DL



Penny stood down as Trustee in December 2020 after many years' service and became our Vice President at that point. Penny was a JP for 27 years serving mainly in the family courts in the latter years.

Trustees

Chair

Christine Roach



Chris has been a Trustee since 2012, first as Secretary, then as Chair since 2015. She has worked in the public and private sector including roles in community safety, community engagement, grants management and also worked for the NHS.

Treasurer

Denise Powell, JP



Denise is Presiding Justice on the Hertfordshire Family Bench. Denise spent 38 years working for IBM. She is also a Helpline Volunteer call taker.

Trustee and Commercial Lead

Kay Carnell



Kay enjoyed a long career with BP, spanning 35 years. She has extensive business experience, particularly in sales, marketing and business development, and has operated in many countries worldwide.

Trustee
Sherry Thakur



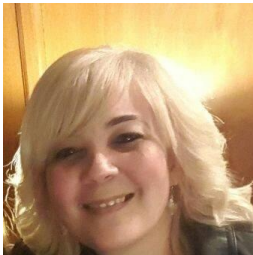
Sherry is Solicitor and Partner at JKC Lawyers in Watford. Much of her work involves domestic abuse issues. Sherry also provides JKC's 24 hour legal helpline.

Trustee
Bev Gray



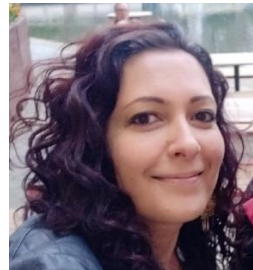
Bev is a Hospitals Inspector at the Care Quality Commission. This includes speaking with staff and patients who may have been impacted by domestic abuse, including any programmes to create awareness.

Trustee
Marion Visagie



Marion is a dentist from South Africa and a survivor of domestic abuse. Marion has a Level 3 qualification in Safeguarding Adults and Children and has substantial experience of the subject.

Trustee
Chrystalla
Karvella



Chrystalla is Partnership Manager, London and S.E. for Homeless Link. She has a background in mental health, community safety and domestic abuse work.

Associate Trustees

Michael Ball



Mick retired as Det.Chief Superintendent from Herts Constabulary in 2018 after 34 years of service. Amongst his duties he was Chair of the County Domestic Abuse Partnership Board. Mick now has a civilian role with the Police as Lead for Strategic Planning and Analysis.

Patsy Daeche



Patsy is Office Manager for a fellow charity HARCSAC (Herts Area Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre). She leads for the Helpline on developing our Friends Network.

Operations Team

Helpline
Manager

Hayley Star



Hayley joined as the new manager in February 2021. Hayley has undertaken Sunflower J9 training and is a Police Standards champion as well as having attended the Triple R course and Freedom programme.

Helpline
Assistant

Sam Phipps



Sam joined the Helpline in May 2020 after 25 years working as a PA in corporate environments.

The Board and Management Committee met 7 times during 2019-20. The Ninth Annual General Meeting was held on 14th August 2020. Owing to Covid restrictions all meetings, except the one in February 2020, were held via Zoom.

Patrons:

Our patrons are:

Lady Dione Verulam
The Viscountess Trenchard
Sarah Beazley

Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline contact details:

Telephone: 08 088 088 088 (for Helpline callers only)
Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 9pm,
Weekends and Bank Holidays 9am to 4pm
Confidential email: Kim@mailpurple.org

Admin email: admin@hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org
Admin tel: 07587 237167

Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hertsdomesticabusehelpline/#>
Twitter: @HDA_Helpline
Instagram: @hdahelp
LinkedIn: Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline

Registered Office: The Lodge
Stanborough Road
Welwyn Garden City
Herts AL8 6XF

Charity Number: 1184899



The Helpline is a member of the Helplines Partnership

Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline

Report on Accounts for 2020-21

Overall Position

This report covers the full year 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

In the year ended 31st March 2021, the Helpline recorded a loss of £17,952 compared to a profit of £11,597 for the 2019-20 year. This loss had the effect of decreasing the available funds at the end of the year to £79,880 from the starting point of £97,472. All funds are held in a current account with CAF Bank.

Income

Income for 2020-21 was £53,043 compared to £96,595 in 2019-20. This large decrease can be attributed to fact that the contract with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) for the provision of a Champions Network Manager and associated services had finished and there was no further funding from the Council.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we increased our services and our promotion activities this year. In support of this we have been in receipt of two sizeable grants, from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (£5,389) and from Herts Community Foundation (£4,173). We also received £1,414 from North Herts District Council to support our increased advertising costs. We are extremely grateful to Hertfordshire County Councillors who contributed a remarkable £18,080 of their Locality Budget grants to our Covid-19 awareness campaign ensuring that those in need of support know of our existence and how to find us.

We have received a number of significant unrestricted donations, including £1,500 from Coffee & TV, £1,000 from St Albans Abbey and £1,000 from an anonymous donor.

This year we were one of the beneficiaries of the Watford Mayor's Christmas Card appeal which brought us £4,450.

We were selected as the Charity of the Year for the Platinum Point networking group, and in the 2020-21 year they ran an initial event, bringing in £370, with further events planned for the 2021-22 financial year.

We also received numerous smaller donations through bucket collections, online donations and fundraising activities undertaken on our behalf. We are immensely grateful to all those individuals and organisations that have supported us through the year.

All required financial reporting against grants received was completed during the year. There is a small amount from the Locality Budget payments that were made late in the financial year, and therefore were not fully spent. These are reflected in the accounts as restricted reserves and will continue to be tracked into the 2021-22 financial year. In addition, the OPCC and HCF grants stretch beyond the end of financial year, so those remainders are also reflected in restricted reserves. Total restricted reserves are £5,318 meaning that we move into the 2021-22 financial year with unrestricted reserves of £74,562.

Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year to 31st March 2021 was £70,635, compared with £85,002 in the previous year. Our expenditure on promotion was very significantly higher than in previous years (necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic and largely covered by grants and donations raised for that express purpose) which explains why the expenditure total does not fully reflect the end of the Champions Network contract and associated removal of the salary of the Champions Network Manager. There were no other exceptional items of expenditure or saving. We continue to look for ways to reduce operating costs, but in general these are unavoidable.

Processes and controls

During 2020-21, we have continued to benefit from the use of online systems for banking, billing and fundraising. CAF Donate continues to be a helpful platform for us to receive donations, but we have seen a general increase in online donations across a number of platforms, including Paypal, JustGiving and Virgin Money Giving as well as Donr (a donate by text service). We continue to look for ways of making it easy for donors to donate to us.

I can report that in line with our Review Policy, the Finance Policy was reviewed and updated during the financial year.

Outlook for 2021-22

This has been an unusual year because of the Covid-19 pandemic, which necessitated us spending significantly more on promotion and additional services than might otherwise be the case. The fact that much of this was offset by a major increase in Locality Budget grants and special funding has meant that the buffer developed during the Champions Network contact has not been too badly affected and means that the reserves shown in the accounts remain looking comfortable. However, it is impossible to move away from the fact that for 2021-22 we currently have no committed funding. Whilst we remain enormously grateful to our supporters for their donations, to our fundraisers for their activities and to our grant-givers, the absence of formal funding means that action is still needed to identify sustainable sources of funding to ensure that the Helpline activity can continue. Unless significant sources of income are identified to cover our day-to-day activities there is a real risk that by the end of the next financial year we will need to be starting to consider the financial viability of maintaining the line. The search for such funding is a key activity in the Trustees' plans, and we travel hopefully that some unrestricted funding will be identified.

Denise Powell
Trustee Treasurer
May 2021

Profit and Loss Account for the Year From April 1st 2020 to March 31st 2021						
			2020-21		2019-20	
INCOME						
Free Donations			4,172		10,750	
Gift Aid Donations			125		255	
HCC Locality			18,080		5,135	
HCC Grants			0		52,581	
Other income			772		0	
Fund raising Online			10,441		1,948	
Fund raising Theatre			0		1,749	
Other fund raising			19,453		24,541	
				53,043		96,959
EXPENSES						
Subscriptions			811		1,065	
Telephone			4,049		1,667	
Volunteers Expenses			469		1,849	
Insurance			780		513	
PO BOX Costs			0		396	
Training			2,862		1,503	
Administration Salary			22,695		17,704	
Administration Expenses			3,114		1,545	
Payroll Service			445		445	
Theatre			0		125	
Advertising materials			30,175		5,485	
IT			3,147		7,016	
Language Line			0		94	
Other			0		113	
CN Salary			1,455		41,955	
CN Expenses			0		2,192	
Insurance NM			0		775	
Vodafone			633		560	
				70,635		85,002
Profit and Loss for Year				-17,592		11,957

FUNDS										
Balance of Reserves at 31st March 2020									97,472	
Profit and Loss for Year									-17,592	
										79,880
REPRESENTED BY										
Fixed Assets										
Computers & Printers										
Depreciation										
									0	
Current Assets										
Cash at Bank									79,880	
Cash at Building Society										
Sundry Debtors & Prepayments										0
Sundry Creditors & Provisions										0
										79,880
<i>Of which restricted reserves</i>										5,318
<i>Unrestricted Helpline reserves</i>										74,562
										79,880
I hereby certify that the above accounts are in accordance with the books and records as presented to me										
Auditor										
Duncan McLeod										
Treasurer										
Denise Powell										

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1	Accounting Policies - The Financial Statements have been prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis
2	The Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline signed a contract with Hertfordshire County Council on 26 March 2018 for the provision of services in relation to the Sunflower Hub Champions Network, including the core Helpline service. The total value of this contract is £156,693. On conclusion of this contract on 31 March 2020 the balance of funds of £45,001 was released into unrestricted funds for the 2020/21 financial year.