



**Herts
Domestic
Abuse
Helpline**



08 088 088 088

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



**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
2022-23**

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ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23 – Chair's Summary of the year

Last year was a momentous one for the Helpline. Not only did we mark our 20th anniversary, but we also received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in June. The award is the equivalent of an MBE for the voluntary sector and recognises the contribution to the community by our volunteer call takers and Trustees, some of whom have been with the Helpline for many years.

We held a celebration tea party for Trustees, volunteers, staff, patrons and supporters at Rothamsted Manor in November when we were delighted to receive the QAVS award from Robert Voss, Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, the Queen's representative in the county. Sadly, by that time the Queen had passed away so we were one of the last charities to receive a QAVS in Her Majesty's reign.



In the 20 years since the charity was established, we estimate we have helped more than 40,000 people in Hertfordshire. That is something to be very proud of. The charity has gone from strength to strength and is looking forward to a continued successful future.

Our call and email numbers have remained about the same as the previous year at 2,400 which means around 200 people are accessing our services each month from across Hertfordshire. Following COVID we had expected numbers to drop back slightly but, sadly, the demand is still there. We believe there is much greater awareness of the different types of domestic abuse these days including controlling and coercive behaviour, stalking, financial and economic abuse and tech abuse.

We continue to spread information and awareness about domestic abuse to encourage people to call or email us for help. We have maintained our profile on social media and

we also held information stands at various events throughout the year. On 25th November, together with our friends from Soroptimist International St Albans and District, who instigated the Oranging of Hertfordshire, we took part in the United Nations-led event *Oranging the World* awareness raising campaign, lighting up County Hall Hertford, the Museum of St Albans and many other buildings in orange. This was part of the national annual 16 days of activism, a campaign to end gender-based violence.

The Helpline receives no core funding so is dependent on grants and fundraising to cover operating costs. We are very grateful to all the individuals and organisations which supported us last year. More details can be found in the Treasurer's report but some of the key events and examples of partnership working are highlighted below.

At the start of the year we partnered with the Abbey Theatre in St Albans selling tickets to their preview evening performance of comedienne Katy Brand's *Three Women*, an event which brought in a substantial income for us.

One of our Trustees worked with a group of year 13 students from John F Kennedy school in Hemel Hempstead on their Dragon's Apprentice challenge, organised by Community Action Dacorum, where they worked with guidance from our Trustee and John O'Sullivan (the 'business dragon') from Ten2Two to raise considerable funding for us and winning the award for best presentation.

We are also grateful to the many Hertfordshire County Councillors who gave us grants from their Locality Budget funds.

We are also reaching new audiences through our work in delivering talks to groups such as Watford Football Club Ladies players and staff and Stevenage Football Club's Foundation; Clarion Housing staff and residents; schools and beauticians. As always, we endeavour to work with other organisations where possible. We organised an information stand for the University of Hertfordshire students at the Freshers Fair in October sharing with our fellow charity Herts Area Rape Crisis and Sexual Assault Centre (HARCSAC). And UH students organised a sponsored skydive which brought in a large donation.

Our volunteer call takers have had several opportunities to get more involved with the Helpline this year, including attending a fundraising dinner dance by MyLocalNews at The Grove Hotel, a tour of the Amazon warehouse in Hemel Hempstead following their donation to us and, very recently, accompanying one of our Trustees to the King's Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace! Our Manager attended and spoke at the St Albans Chamber of Commerce International Women's Day lunch, the raffle for which was for the benefit of the Helpline.

During the year we said goodbye to Trustee Marion Visagie but we welcomed Alice Bromwich and Ian Taylor as new Trustees. You can read about them on the following pages. Kat Luckhurst our Helpline Administrator left us in April 2023 and, at time of writing, Melanie North has just joined us in that role.

It is important to remember that the work we do in signposting callers to sources of help and advice supports every other domestic abuse organisation in Hertfordshire as well as many other organisations such as mental health services and solicitors.

As always, my thanks go to our staff and volunteer call takers who have worked so hard 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

About us

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

Our operations team and volunteer call takers currently work from home.

As well as supporting around 2,400 callers a year plus many more through our website and email service, 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.

The picture nationally

Source: GOV.UK

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, who are now also seen as victims in their own right.	The number of police recorded domestic abuse-related crimes in England and Wales increased by 7.7% compared with the previous year, to 910,980 in the year ending March 2022.
Two women and one man are killed every week.	Last year 2.4 million adults were victims (1.7 million women and 699,000 men)

The picture in Hertfordshire

Source: Hertfordshire Constabulary

In the year ended 31st March 2023, Herts Constabulary recorded 20,748 DA crimes and incidents compared to 21,456 the previous year, which is a 3.3% year on year reduction. However, this reduction reflects that DA crimes and incidents are probably reverting to high pre-COVID levels rather than showing a reduction in the number of cases. 16% of all crime recorded in Hertfordshire is now domestic abuse-related.

Helpline operation

The Trustees follow the Charity's 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 their ethnicity, that they are disabled, LGBTQ or 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 anonymised information may help the county to commission future domestic abuse and other services.

Partnership with JKC Lawyers

In January 2020 we partnered with JKC Lawyers to operate a drop-in service so that those visiting JKC to discuss legal domestic abuse issues would also have the opportunity to ring the Helpline for other sources of domestic abuse support, from a safe, private space at their offices. Sadly, the face-to-face service had to close during COVID lockdown although it continued by telephone. A legacy of COVID is that people now tend to telephone JKC for legal DA advice and follow this up with booked Zoom or Skype calls. Sherry Thakur, Solicitor and Partner who is also one of our Trustees, reports that approximately 15 people a month contact JKC in this way.

Helpline Manager's Report

Call Numbers 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

The total number of calls and emails was 2,349 compared to 2,365 for the previous year.

Over half of our calls (61%) continue to be from female victim-survivors with 8% being from male victim-survivors. We continued to take calls from professionals, family members and the general public. The most commonly disclosed types of abuse were emotional and/or psychological followed by coercive control and physical abuse.

Women's centres including Watford Women's Centre and SADA (Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse) were the top signposts for the year followed by the IDVA service (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) and refuge providers such as Safer Places, Welwyn and Hatfield refuge and SADA refuge.

On observation, we noticed that there was a steady increase in male ex-partners being reported as the perpetrator this year. Records of those disclosing mental health issues and drug and alcohol related problems, as well as barriers for those in the BAME community also featured strongly in reports.

Volunteers

The Helpline Trustees would like to thank all the highly-trained volunteers who dedicated their time to the Helpline this year. We currently have 42 call takers. Without their support the service would not be able to operate. The work they do is exceptional and challenging and we are incredibly grateful. We achieved just under 80% Helpline coverage as well as some extra hours owing to double cover during peak periods. Our call takers contributed 3,794 volunteering hours to Hertfordshire.

The difference we make

The above statistics are interesting, but it's also really important to recognise the difference we are making to people's lives. Here is some of the feedback our call takers received in 2022-23.

The lady thanked me for answering her call and listening to her. She was so grateful to us for providing this service.

She said I was extremely helpful and wanted to thank our charity for the great support and invaluable services we provide.

He was just grateful that he was listened to and that we offered help for men by providing numbers to call so that he could start to plan moving on.

The caller sounded calmer and more motivated towards the end of the call. I was thanked deeply for my support.

The caller said she was extremely grateful for the advice and seemed reassured about how she could assist her client who was a victim of domestic abuse.

Influencing national policy

Our Vice President, Penny Williams, attends the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Domestic Violence. Below are the topics considered at the four meetings in 2022-2023

- The levels of public awareness of and understanding of coercive control.
Lack of police training on this issue.
SEA research showed that 95% of DA survivors' cases also involved economic abuse and 60% are in debt as a result, mirrored in the experiences of LGBTQ+ community as well, with added issues around culture and ethnicity.

- The implementation of the MoJ Harm Panel report.
The need to make family courts safer for survivors and their children exacerbated by the adversarial court system, under-resourcing of the courts and ensuing case backlog. As a result, Office of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner is developing a family court monitoring mechanism.
- Financial barriers to leaving an abusive relationship which have been exacerbated by the Covid19 pandemic and the increases in the cost of living.
- How policing is responding to Violence Against Women.

The Domestic Abuse Act

During the last year updates to the act include:

- The legal age of marriage in England and Wales rose to 18.
- Domestic abusers will face tougher management under new measures to protect women and girls. The law will be changed so that the most dangerous domestic abusers will be watched more closely.
- Best practice was updated for police to manage Claire's Law applications.
- An updated version of the Female Genital Mutilation pack was published, equipping commissioners and partners with data on the scale of the problem in their areas and tools to combat it effectively.
- A new specific offence of Strangulation and Suffocation has been introduced in Section 70 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Promotional Activities, Social Media and Marketing

We continue to build our visibility via our website and social media channels.

During 2022-23 an average of 900 visitors per month were viewing our website with the majority being female users aged between 25-54.

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

Facebook - 1,234 followers
 Twitter - 1,557 followers
 Instagram - 1,637 followers
 LinkedIn - 235 followers



To mark our 20th anniversary we launched a fundraising campaign with our friends and supporters.

“Tea and Cake for HDAH” has already raised almost £500 and with more events planned for the next year, this figure is expected to increase.

Grant Funding in 2022-23





Our thanks to the 22 Hertfordshire County Councillors who awarded us Locality Budget grants. The funding supported 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	Lesley Greensmith	£500
Dacorum	Ron Tindall, Richard Roberts, Adrian England, Nigel Taylor	£1,800
East Herts	Calvin Horner	£500
Hertsmere	Caroline Clapper, John Graham, Laurence Brass, Morris Bright, Seamus Quilty	£3,050
St Albans	Chris White, Sandy Walkington, Paul De Kort, John Hale, Anthony Rowlands, Helen Campbell	£1,850
Three Rivers	Paula Hiscocks	£200
Welwyn Hatfield	Paul Zukowskyj, Stephen Boulton, Tony Kingsbury, Fiona Thomson	£2,000
Total		£9,900



Our Treasurer’s report includes details of other grants and income.

Trustees & staff at 31 March 2023

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 drug and alcohol misuse, community safety, community engagement, grants management and also worked for the NHS.
Treasurer Denise Powell, JP		Denise is a magistrate on the West & Central Hertfordshire Bench, sitting as a Presiding Justice on the Family Bench and as a member of the Adult Criminal Bench. Before her retirement, Denise spent 38 years working for IBM in a variety of technical and managerial roles. 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 Alice Bromwich		Alice is an HR professional, with 15+ years' experience in the private and public sector. In 2019 she founded an HR Consultancy specialising in supporting SMEs and scale ups.
Trustee and Business Engagement Lead Ian Taylor		Ian is a highly experienced Business Advisor and Financial Services professional, with more than thirty years' expertise in senior executive roles with Barclays and BNP Paribas. He is also a Board Member of St Albans City of Expertise CIC, a special business interest group.
Associate Trustee 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.

Operations Team

Helpline Manager Hayley Star		Hayley has been the Helpline Manager since February 2021. Hayley is a Sunflower J9 champion, Police Standards champion, she has attended the Triple R course and completed the Freedom programme. She is also a Mental Health First Aider.
Helpline Administrator Melanie North		Mel joined the Helpline in March 2023. Previously, she worked in Telecommunications, Criminal Record Bureau at Derbyshire Police and in Financial Services.

The Board met 6 times during 2022-23. The last Annual General Meeting of the charity was held in July 2022. We hold meetings face to face at various locations.

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 2022-23

Overall Position:

This report covers the full year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. In the year ended 31st March 2023, the Helpline recorded a loss of £18,936 compared to a profit of £16,425 for the 2021-22 year. This loss had the effect of decreasing the available funds at the end of the year to £77,369 from the starting point of £96,305. All funds are held in a current account with CAF Bank.

Income:

Income for 2022-23 was £34,710 compared to £68,685 in 2021-22. This large decrease can be attributed to significant decreases in fundraising income. This year, Hertfordshire County Councillors kindly awarded us £9,900 from their Locality Budget grants to support our activities, which we intended to use for ensuring that we could continue to promote our services to ensure that those in need could find us. Though the grants this year were much lower than last year, we recognise that last year was exceptional as Councillors wanted to support us as we delivered extra service in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to greatly value Councillors support. We were grateful to receive a significant donation of nearly £3,200 from the University of Hertfordshire students participating in a sponsored sky-dive. We also received a donation of £2,500 from My Local News who held a fund-raising dinner.

A donation of nearly £1,100 was received from the St Albans Chamber of Commerce, raised at their International Women's Day lunch in March. We received donations of £1,000 each from Amazon's Charitable Foundation and two personal donors. We ran a very successful Charity Theatre Night, which raised over £900. All of these donations and activities, along with a number of smaller donations made through our online platforms of through fund-raising events were of great value as they were unrestricted in purpose. We are hugely grateful to all those who donated or contributed.

In terms of restricted grants, we received £2,250 from the COSARAF Foundation, an unrestricted grant except that it was to be used for the benefit of women and girls and which was all spent. We also received £2,500 from Lottery funding to be used for training of volunteers. This grant was given late in the financial year, so some is still to be spent on training new volunteers in the early part of the new financial year. Total restricted reserves are £15,329 meaning that we move into the 2023-24 financial year with unrestricted reserves of £62,040. The purpose of the Locality Budget grants this year was to support our publicity and delivery. We reserved the funds for advertising ourselves through this year, but any overage can be deemed spent on supporting phone line provision, administration and manpower and we will therefore release the remaining Locality Budget funds in the next financial year into our general reserves.

Expenditure:

Total expenditure for the year to 31st March 2023 was £53,646 compared with £52,260 in the previous year. This small increase in expenditure is due to some costs incurred to celebrate our Queens Award for Voluntary Service and a spend on advertising to publicise this success, offset to an extent by reductions in our salary bill owing to a gap between Administrators in post and a reduction in training costs by redesigning the training and it being delivered in-house. There were no exceptional items of expenditure, though we were able achieve a small reduction in mobile phone costs by

changing our supplier. We continue to look for ways to reduce operating costs, but in general these are unavoidable.

Processes and controls

During 2022-23, 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, Amazon Smiles, Easy Fundraising and Give As You Live as Donr (a donate by text service). Sadly, the Amazon Smiles scheme has now ceased, but 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 2023-24:

This has been a successful year for fundraising with some success in grant awards which have covered our discretionary expenditure on advertising. However, even releasing the remaining Locality Budget funds into general reserves will not guarantee that we can run the line for the whole of the 2023-24 financial year. We are acutely aware that relying on grants is both time consuming and precarious, and it is impossible to move away from the fact that we currently have no committed funding. We remain enormously grateful to our regular supporters for their donations, to our fundraisers for their activities and to our grant-givers, but 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. Sources of income continue to be sought to cover our day to day activities to mitigate the risk that before the end of the next financial year we might need to be starting to consider the financial viability of maintaining the line. We are very conscious that costs are continuing to rise which is a cause for concern. 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
April 2023

The Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Help Line									
Profit and Loss Account for the Year From April 1st 2022 to March 31st 2023									
		2022-23		2021-22		2020-21			
INCOME									
Other fund raising		11,985		28,957		19,453			
HCC Locality		9,900		20,460		18,080			
Free Donations		7,654		4,088		4,172			
Fund raising Online		3,714		14,121		10,441			
Fund raising Theatre		913		104		0			
Other income		481		820		772			
Gift Aid Donations		63		0		125			
Training				135					
			34,710		68,685		53,043		
EXPENSES									
Administration Salary		26,711		28,080		22,695			
Advertising materials		13,637		9,943		30,175			
Administration Expenses		4,408		2,878		3,114			
Telephone		3,513		3,485		4,049			
IT		1,497		1,559		3,147			
Training		1,309		3,280		2,862			
Insurance		848		840		780			
Subscriptions		512		723		811			
Payroll Service		445		445		445			
Vodafone		374		573		633			
Other		260		95		0			
Volunteers Expenses		112		259		469			
Language Line		20		0		0			
Theatre				100		0			
CN Salary				0		1,455			
			53,646		52,260		70,635		
Profit and Loss for Year			-18,936			16,425		-17,592	
FUNDS									
Balance of Reserves at 31st March 2022				96,305					
Profit and Loss for Year				-18,936					
					77,369				
REPRESENTED BY									
Fixed Assets									
Computers & Printers									
Cost									
Depreciation				0					
Current Assets									
Cash at Bank				77,369					
Cash at Building Society									
Sundry Debtors & Prepayments				0					
Sundry Creditors & Provisions				0					
					77,369				
<i>Of which restricted reserves</i>					15,329				
Unrestricted Helpline reserves					62,040				
						77,369			
I hereby certify that the above accounts are in accordance with the books and records as presented to me									
Auditor				Date:	19th April 2023				
Duncan McLeod									
Treasurer				Date:	19th April 2023				
Denise Powell									