

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE CHARITY COMMISSION 2024-25

Introduction

1. This is a report from Herts Area Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre (HARCSAC), Charity Registration Number 1194253 prepared by its Trustees for the financial year 2024-25. The annual return for the Charity Commission and the Audited Accounts have been submitted to the Charity Commission.
2. We have been operating since 1986 and are located in Hatfield in Hertfordshire. Initially we were an unincorporated organisation with a Charity Registration Number of 800325. We amended and developed our Constitution for re-registering as a CIO in April 2021. Our postal address is PO Box 256, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL10 0NE. HARCSAC is run and delivered by a group of fifteen women volunteers. These have undergone specialist training in rape and sexual abuse counselling.
3. To enable our organisation to function we employ three part time staff – an Office Manager, an Administrator and a Volunteer and Group Coordinator. Our part-time staff enable the organisation to function effectively by dealing with all the large number of administrative functions but do not have direct contact with the women who come for support.

Aims

4. For the public benefit we aim to promote the recovery of any woman aged over 18 living in Hertfordshire who has experienced rape, sexual assault, or any form of sexual abuse at any time in her life. To do this we provide free and confidential counselling and support.

Objectives

5. Our objectives are:
 - a. To listen to, and believe, the women who contact us.
 - b. To support and assist them in reviewing their options by providing free confidential counselling or support through the appropriate medium.
 - c. To provide them and their family and friends with information.
 - d. To promote education and research into sexual violence.
 - e. To give ongoing training to our women specialist rape support workers.
 - f. To receive training on related issues for our ongoing professional development.
 - g. To provide training for any local group wishing to increase their awareness of the needs of rape/sexual abuse survivors.
 - h. To maintain our National Service Standards with Rape Crisis England and Wales. These represent recognised standards of best practice and quality across the

Rape Crisis network and have been mapped against other quality assurance frameworks.

- i. To obtain funding for all of the above to enable us to employ staff and maintain the service.
- j.

Our Philosophy

- 6. HARCSAC is committed to a client led approach to service delivery and understands that the women who use our services are best placed to identify their own recovery needs. We offer non-judgemental, non-directive information, counselling, and support in order to assist each woman's individual recovery process. All women are supported in their choices with regard to their human rights including sexual health, reproductive rights and the right to safe abortion.
- 7. We will not contact a woman at the request of a third party as we feel strongly that she needs to come to the decision to make the initial contact herself. For any woman to undergo support and to talk about her experiences, often for the first time, is a very big step and one that takes a great deal of courage. In our experience, it is not helpful to a woman if she is pressurised or pushed into counselling by anyone, however well-meaning they may be.

Our Services

- 8. Our services focus on the women who contact us. This is achieved by:
 - a. Ringing our helpline. Calls to our helpline are answered by a volunteer support worker on Thursday evenings between 7.30pm - 9.30pm. At all other times callers can leave a message and a volunteer support worker will return the call as soon as possible. This service operates 365 days per year.
 - b. Women are increasingly likely to make the initial contact by e-mail. We cannot provide a counselling service by email and they are asked by email to make an initial phone call.
 - c. Free and confidential face to face counselling is available by appointment at our Centre in Hatfield. It can also be delivered via a secure online platform. If necessary, this service can be provided at other locations in the county.
 - d. We can offer information on rape and sexual abuse related issues to survivors and to their families and friends, including details of other agencies offering complementary services.
 - e. Presentations to local groups and organisations wishing to increase their awareness of the needs of rape/sexual abuse survivors.
 - f. If we cannot provide support through our organisation we will signpost the women to other services.

Running HARCSAC

9. Trustees ensure that our organisation complies with the public benefit requirement in that it is available initially to anyone who contacts us by telephone/email seeking advice or support. Those who we cannot offer support to (see para 4 above) are directed to other organisations who may be able to provide help and or support. Therefore, any woman aged over 18 who contacts us and wants support has the option to go on our waiting list for support.
10. HARCSAC is overseen by 5 Trustees. They are responsible for setting the objectives of the organisation and ensuring that all the work that is done is in line with the services we undertake. Our constitution requires that the majority of trustees are also members of the organisation but allows us to have two who are not members. We currently have one trustee who is a non-member. The use of non-members is to add to the expertise of the members. For next year we are planning to increase the number of trustees by two which will further broaden the expertise of the trustee group.
11. The Trustees have developed a risk management policy. Its objectives are to identify potential risks that could impact on HARCSAC's goals and operations; assess the likelihood and impact of each identified risk; implement measures to control, mitigate or eliminate risks; ensure continuous monitoring and reviewing of risks to adapt to changes in the internal and external environment; and promote risk awareness throughout HARCSAC. This policy was created in November 2024 and is due for review in 2027.
12. The principles of this policy are proactive, accountable, transparent and adaptable. Trustees have identified all the different types of risk and have adopted a structured risk assessment process.
13. The Trustees carry out a considerable amount of work for the organisation. They prepare most of the papers for Trustee meetings but also involve members in any development of ideas for improved services.
14. The Charity Commission has granted our organisation exemption from naming our Trustees in any public document. This is due to the sensitive nature of the work which we undertake.

Volunteers/Members

15. Volunteers are essential for our organisation. They provide the support service we offer to women. They are also key to the organisation's succession planning. All volunteers are also members. For 2024/25 we had a total of 15 members. Two of this group came off our training course which was run in 2024. It is the role of the members to work with the women who contact us. To do this they have an intensive training course over 11 weeks. This is followed by three months of induction within the group. After this they

can, if they feel able, provide support to women by working with a more experienced volunteer.

16. We run our training course every year. This enables us to maintain and increase the number of volunteers who can support women. During the course all potential volunteers are asked for their opinions on each session. After the last session of the course all of the attendees are invited to discuss the course and whether they would like to become a member.

Finances of HARCSAC

17. By March 2025 our finances were in a healthy position. This was due to effective fund raising and our expenditure being lower than we had budgeted for. Below is a summary of our income and expenditure, followed by an explanation.

	Income			Expenditure
Organisation	Type of funding	Amount	Type	Amount
Ministry of Justice	Grant	45,766	Salaries	£36,798.84
3 Trusts	Annual Grants	£20,750	Counselling Expenses	£4,657.15
Local Charity	Annual Grant	£500	Training	£2,749.04
Charitable giving	Various	£549.72	IT and Computers	£5,700.71
Regular Doners	Monthly	£895	Insurance	£1,647.93
Local authority	Lottery	£162	Telephone	£2,395.43
Aggregate of doners	One Off	£6,369.6	General Admin and Advertising	£2,415.24
HARCSAC	Events	£1,910	Rent	£3,750.00
Bank Interest		£49.71	Volunteer's wellness	£1,438.32
Total		£76,952.03		£61,552.66

Income

18. The majority of HARCSACs funds are provided by the Ministry of Justice. For 2024-25 MoJ provided us with £45,766. This amounted to 60% of our income. Other funding came from three trusts, a local charity and a number of donations some of which are provided every month. We are very grateful to anyone or any organisation for supporting us by providing us with funding.

Expenditure

19. Our total income for 2024/25 was £76,952 and this was slightly higher than our budget for this period £76,095. Our expenditure in this period of £61,553 was considerably lower than we had expected in the budget. Our shortfall against our budget was largely due to: our landlord not asking us for a full years rent; our volunteers not claiming as

much as was expected for travel costs; our not running a marketing campaign and our being able to run our recruitment without advertising.

Reserve Fund

20. In addition to our annual income we have been able to build up a reserve fund. This has been possible as we have been in operation for over 30 years. With sound financial management we have built up this fund so we could continue to meet the support needs of the women who have contacted us. We would continue with support until the needs of all those women have been met. The aim is to get the reserve up to one and a half times our budget. This would enable HARCSAC to continue with the essential support should we no longer have any significant funders. At the end of 2024-25 the reserve was about £85k which is 111% higher than our budget.
21. The reserve is always there to support the annual current fund should it fall below £10,000. If we take funds from the reserve our priority is to return them as soon as we can to try and build up to our reserve objective. This is because support of women who contact us is always our priority.

Performance of HARCSAC in 2024/25

22. Our helpline activity either by telephone or email provided a service to an average of 69 contacts each month. From our helpline service women who want support go on a waiting list. We have continued with the active management of this list – contacting women on the list to establish whether they are still contactable or whether their circumstances have changed - which we started in 2023-24. At the beginning of the year there were 69 women on the list. During the year the list increased to 75 women but by the end of the year it was 68.
23. In 2024-25 our specialist rape support workers provided face to face /video support for a total of 508 hours. 10 women completed their sessions of support, 5 women started sessions of support and 12 worked through the whole of the year.
24. When a woman having support we start off with her setting objectives for herself to establish what she wants to achieve. These are regularly reviewed so we can check progress together. When the woman feels she has achieved what she wanted we have an end of service review to obtain how the woman feels about herself and for her to provide comments on the service she has had.
25. We are very grateful for the feedback we have had. It is predominantly very positive. All the women who provided feedback said they strongly agreed or agreed that the service had helped them feel heard and believed. Eighty three percent strongly agreed or agreed that the support had helped them understand and overcome what had happened to them and how they had been affected. The same percentage felt they

were more empowered. The support that the women had received helped threequarters of them feel more able to stand up for themselves.

26. In addition to this focused feedback we have had a number of women provide us notes of gratitude. Examples are:

- An extract from a poem –
To ALL of the children and women who are abused,
Do not allow yourself to take the blame because you were used,
"Stand up to these egotistical, precocious, bullying men
don't let them get away with it again and again.
Seek help and support like I did, don't live with 'the secret'
Believe me girls don't protect them they are not worth it.
- From a card sent to HARCSAC –
Thank you for your wonderful support, your care and your
dedication. I will be forever humbled that I was given support
from such a compassionate team of people. I feel so comforted to know
that you will continue to do for others what you did for me.
- Although the initial offer was 20 sessions, there new felt any pressure. I felt I
could take my time, relax and really use the service to its full advantage and
that's exactly what I did and I can't thank you enough.

27. In addition to supporting people individually we have continued with sessions for groups of women on our waiting list. We ran two sessions in 2024-25. These sessions are for groups of up to six women to come together to explore some coping strategies which will help them with difficult periods whilst they await face to face support. Those attending these sessions said they were very helpful.

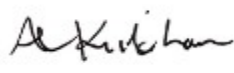
28. We are very pleased that our service has continued to provide essential support to the women who have contacted us. It is good that we have managed to maintain the same number of volunteers.

Declarations

The Trustees declare that they have approved the trustees report above.
Signed on behalf of the charity trustees

Full Name Anne Christine Kirkham. Geraldine Golder

Position Treasurer Deputy Treasurer

Date. 30 January 2025

EXPENDITURE

2023/24

1,700 Advertising	1764.38
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1.916 Computer Hardware	1309.02
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1,566 Computer Software	1730.44
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2,475 IT Support	2661.25
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1,606 Insurance	1647.93
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554 General Expenses	303.76
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979 Postage, Printing and Stationery	650.86
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5,000 Rent	3750.00
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0 Fund Raising	0.00
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33.012 Salaries	36798.84
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3.031 Telephone	2395.43
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6,009	Counselling Expenses	4657.15
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7.890 Training	2749.04
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1,750 Professional Services	0.00
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1,940 Volunteers' Wellness	1134.56
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636 Furniture & Equipment	0.00
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70.064	61.552.66
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AS AT 31.03.2025

27.524 HSBC/CAF	39,323.16
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2,642 Transfer to reserves	0.00
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100.229	100.875.82
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B. Alcock FCA

11th August 2025

HERTS AREA RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE

RESERVE ACCOUNT

12 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH 2025

Deposit	1999	7,000.00	Balance as at 31st March 2024	73,357.72
Deposit	2003	2,000.00		
Deposit	2011	9,000.00		
Deposit	2018	15,000.00		
Deposit	2019	7,000.00		
Deposit	2019/20	400.00		
Deposit	2020/2021	12,500.00		
Deposit	2022/23	12001.00		
Deposit	2023/24	2641.62		
Interest	1999/2024	5,815.10		

73,357.72

73,357.72

73,357.72

I have examined the financial statement in accordance with approved accounting standards and in my opinion this financial statement gives a true and fair view of the charity's affairs at 31st March 2025 and of its surplus for the year then ended.

S. Alcock FCA

B. Alcock F.C.A

11th August 2025

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT12 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH 2025

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
<u>2023/24</u>		<u>2023/24</u>	
5149	<u>DONATIONS</u>	1,700	Advertising
	9,336.60		1764.38
		1,916	Computer Hardware
			1309.02
	<u>GRANTS</u>	1,566	Computer Software
45400	Ministry of Justice		1730.44
	Rape Crisis England & Wales	2,475	IT Support
	Herts Community Foundation		2661.25
2500	POhWER	1,606	Insurance
	Kiln Trust		1647.93
	Herts CC - Locality Budget Scheme	554	General Expenses
	Batchworth Trust		303.76
	ARISE Hatfield	979	Postage, Printing and Stationery
	The Brook Trust Grant		650.86
	Charitable Giving	5,000	Rent
	549.72		3750.00
		0	Fund Raising
			0.00
47900		33,012	Salaries
	67,565.72		36798.84
0	<u>FUND RAISING</u>	3,031	Telephone
	0.00		2395.43
		6,009	Counselling Expenses
			4657.15
77	<u>BANK INTEREST</u>	7,890	Training
	49.79		2749.04
		1,750	Professional Services
			0.00
		1,940	Volunteers' Wellness
			1134.56
		636	Furniture & Equipment
			0.00
53,126			
	76,952.11		
		70,064	
			61,552.66

EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE
AS AT 31.03.2025

		27,524	HSBC/CAF	39,323.16
		2,642	Transfer to reserves	0.00
	<u>CASH AT HSBC/CAF</u>			
47,103	@ 31.03.25	23,923.71		
<u>100,229</u>		<u>100,875.82</u>		<u>100,875.82</u>

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B. Alcock FCA

B. Alcock F.C.A

11th August 2025

HERTS AREA RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE

RESERVE ACCOUNT

12 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH 2025

Deposit	1999	7,000.00	Balance as at 31st March 2024	73,357.72
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Deposit	2019/20	400.00		
Deposit	2020/2021	12,500.00		
Deposit	2022/23	12001.00		
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S. Alcock FCA

B. Alcock F.C.A

11th August 2025