

**Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023**

Registered company number: 01338724

Registered charity number: 276883



Philosophy Statement

Domestic Abuse is Unacceptable

People who have experienced domestic abuse have been hurt and traumatised.

Children and Young People who have experienced or witnessed domestic abuse have been hurt and traumatised.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse does not discriminate by gender, age, ability, financial status, sexuality, race or religion. Those affected by domestic abuse can find themselves existing in a world where they are isolated often frightened or hurt, their confidence and self-esteem have been undermined, where they lack control over who they see, where they go, what they do and their own money.

We recognise that every person has their own story and their own individual needs. When people are ready to reach out for help, we will work with them in partnership in a holistic, non-judgemental, caring and friendly way. We will take the time to listen as people tell us their stories. We will let them see that they have been not only listened to but heard.

We understand that to work with a person who has experienced domestic abuse we will need to provide a range of services to meet the needs of the whole person. Particularly support with their mental health and to rebuild their self-esteem. Where the person has needs that are complex, we will work in partnership with other organisations to provide individual person-centred packages of care and support.

We will work with a person, at their own pace. We recognise that not everyone is at the point where they are ready to leave an abusive relationship when they first make contact with us. We understand and support people who are terrified to stay, yet terrified to leave.

We understand that children and young people who have been victims of or who have witnessed domestic violence have been significantly damaged by their experiences. We will listen to children and young people, as we do to adults with empathy and sensitivity. We will make an individual package of care for each child which recognises their individual needs.

Where the risk of harm to a child or adult is high, we will work in partnership with the statutory agencies to keep children and vulnerable adults safe.

We provide a safe space for women and their children, who need to flee domestic violence, to live while we support them to rebuild their lives. We recognise the need to hold these women and children in a nurturing and friendly environment provided by a skilled staff team. We aim to support these women and children to recognise their strengths and to slowly enable them to re-build their self-esteem and confidence.

We understand some people do not need a place in a refuge when they leave an abusive relationship. They need support to enable them to stay safe, to understand what has happened to them and support to help them to begin to come to terms with these experiences. We also understand that they need a wide range of practical, housing and legal advice. Our aim is to work with the person to make a support plan and provide services which are right for them.

We support children and young people who have been abused or who have witnessed abuse to understand and talk about these experiences, to rebuild nurturing relationships with their parents or carers, to experience all kinds of play and to feel safe and secure. We understand how traumatic childhood events can have a lifelong impact on a person's feelings of self-worth and mental health.

We believe that individuals coming together with a shared understanding of what domestic abuse is, can work together to keep people safe and to advocate for the individual and for changes in society.

Charity information (as at date of approval of the Trustees annual report)

Status	Charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales Registered company number 01338724	
Trustees and Directors	Nicola Iannelli-Popham Maureen Byrne Elizabeth Larcombe Fiona Harbron Jackie Burnett Christina Dye Donna Higgins Pat Leach Hannah Stammers Charlene Boyaram Sue Ecclestone Siobhan O'Neill Ruby Sayed	Chair person Vice-Chair person Treasurer Company Secretary <i>(Appointed 10 July 2023)</i> <i>(Appointed 10 July 2023)</i> <i>(Appointed 10 July 2023)</i> <i>(Resigned 22 September 2022)</i>
Governing document	Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 14 November 1977 (amended in 2020)	
Registered office address	Eldo House Kempson Way Suffolk Business Park Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP32 7AR	
Independent auditors	Knights Lowe Limited Eldo House Kempson Way Suffolk Business Park Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP32 7AR	
Bankers	HSBC Plc 54 Abbeygate Street Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 1LJ	

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The Trustees who are also Directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)."

Aims, objectives and public benefit

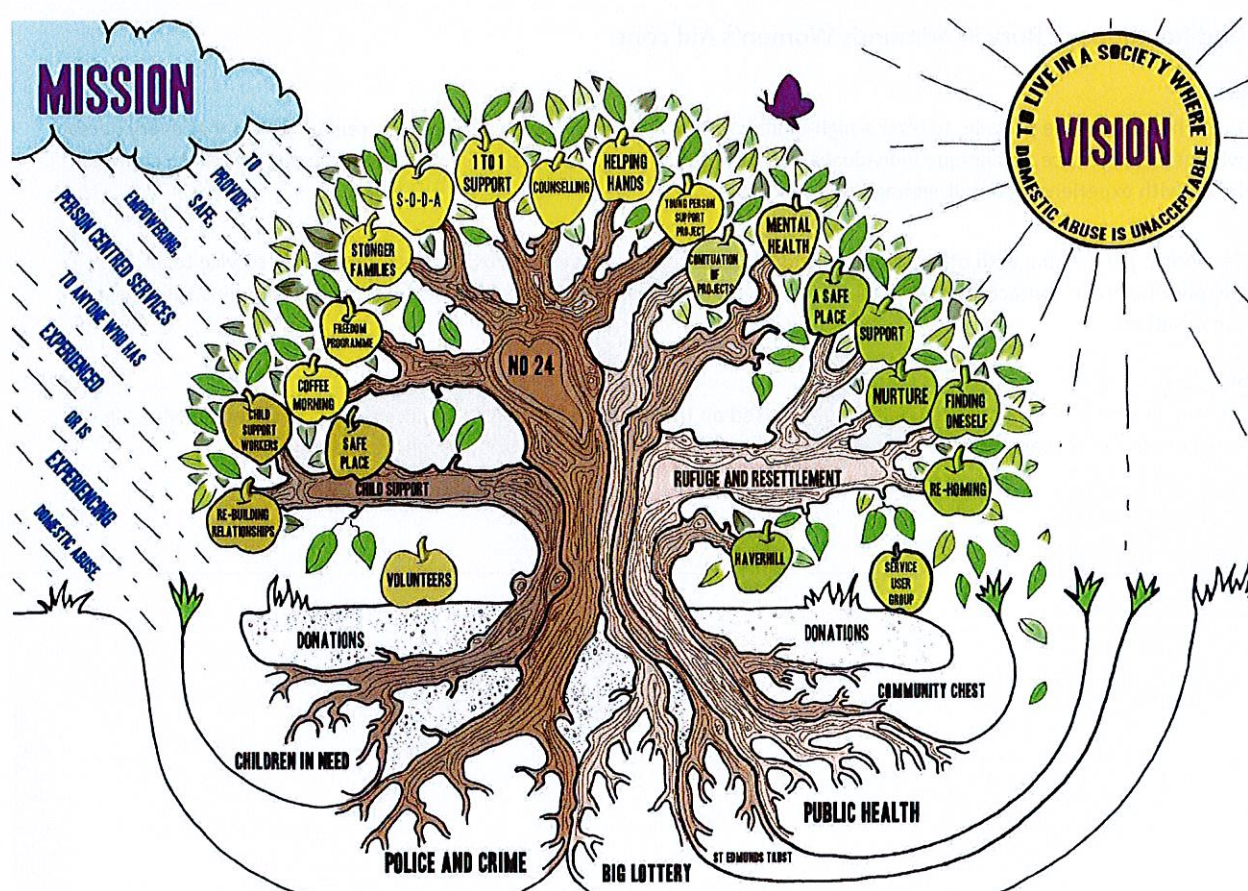
Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charities aims and objectives.

Aims and functions of Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid

Bury St Edmund's Women's Aid Centre Ltd is both a Registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. There are currently twelve Trustees of the Charity, who are also Directors of the Company. The Trustees, who are all volunteers with differing areas of experience and expertise, form a Management Committee that oversees the operation of the organisation.

Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre is a caring organisation that offers advice and support to anyone who is experiencing domestic abuse.



We Offer

- We operate in the community from our Outreach Centre in Bury St Edmunds and at Haverhill. We offer both group and individual support, together with crèche facilities so that children can be cared for while adults are having one to one support, counselling or attend groups. We also work one to one and with groups of children who have experienced or witnessed domestic abuse. Our work with young people can take place at the Outreach Centre or in the community. Our Outreach Centre also operates a drop-in service and is a hub for our helpline service.
- We also offer Refuge accommodation to women and their children who are at a high risk of suffering harm as a result of domestic abuse. The Refuge is designed to offer a supportive friendly environment, which will allow women and their children a safe space in which they can take time to begin the process of coming to terms with their experiences. We have space for up to 8 women and up to 15 children at any one time. A newly developed garden as a space to just be and experience the healing properties being in contact with what nature can provide.
- Family work with women to accept and move on from some of the children's more challenging behaviour. Intensive work with children to support them to rebuild nurturing relationships with their mothers. Support for younger children to 'catch up' with developmental milestones they may have missed. Support for young people who are feeling 'lost' having left behind their schools, friends, home and sometimes beloved pets.
- For all the people who use our service there are skilled workers who will listen and understand what people have experienced. Practical advice and support also signposting to financial, housing and legal services. We provide access to groups to enable people to be in a supportive environment as they explore their experiences. We provide access to counselling. A worker who will support the individual to make and work through a plan to keep themselves and any children they may have safe. We offer children and young people a safe space in which, as part of a group or one to one, they can talk about how they feel and their experiences.

Aims and functions of Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid cont.

We Seek

- In all the services we provide, to offer a high-quality service to everyone we work with. To remain aware that every person, who uses our service, is a unique individual and that it is our role to support and enable that person to begin to come to terms with experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse.
- To work in partnership with other statutory and voluntary organisations to provide the best possible service to all the people who are in contact or receiving a service from us. Also, we seek to build closer working relationships with these organisations.

We Aim

- To remain a flexible, responsive organisation focused on the needs of the people, children and young people who use our service. We aim to learn from past experience and to provide services in smart and innovative ways.

Jeannie Bloomfield, Patron



I start my report as usual in awe of our amazing staff and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to make sure our vulnerable families are looked after.

The work at No. 24 never ceases to amaze me. It is such a hive of activity by so many people getting on with their important roles so everything runs smoothly.

We held a vintage tea party in my garden last year which was well supported and a considerable amount was raised for our Women's Aid and we hope to do the same again this year.

I have written several fundraising letters asking for help towards equipment and other items and funding is needed now more than ever as we are moving to new premises for our Outreach headquarters in the near future.

I have enjoyed giving talks to various organisations to inform them of what we do at Women's Aid and people have been so kind and supportive with donations and offers of help.

If you know of any organisation who would like me to give a talk to please do let me know.

I have visited our refuge on several occasions and to say I was impressed is an understatement. What an amazing place it is for clients and their children to come and know they will be safe and secure.

I was invited to attend an informal tea party at our Outreach Centre to celebrate International Women's Day which was well supported and bustling with ideas from our team for the future.

I was offered some rucksacks full of goodies for our children. "How many?" I was asked. I was just about to say is twenty too many when I was offered a hundred! Needless to say, I accepted and we have had lots of happy young recipients.

We have now expanded into Haverhill with a flourishing coffee morning where clients can drop in for an informal chat with our staff and volunteers.

I have attended our Freedom programme and I am impressed by how we get the word across to point our vulnerable ladies in the right direction for the future.

I would like to finish by saying how proud I am to play a small part by being involved with such a fabulous, caring group of people dedicated to giving vulnerable women the knowledge, hope and courage to move on to a safe and secure future.

Jeannie Bloomfield
Our Patron

Chairperson's report *



Dear Friends and Colleagues

Another year has passed with many challenges for our charity, particularly funding to ensure continuity of service for our clients and their children. Competing with other organisations for funding has been time consuming, however, I am pleased to report that we have continued to provide a first-class support service for our families that have joined us at the refuge.

Not only do we provide a safe environment at the refuge we have our Outreach provision which has evolved.

We have made significant additions in providing counselling, targeted courses, specialists services and a help line for the various groups. This encourages the outreach users to work with external agencies and professionals.

It is useful to remind ourselves that our Refuge has been at the forefront of shaping and coordinating services and support for our residents who have experienced domestic abuse. Our provision has been in the community for nearly 50 years.

We must all continue to challenge the root causes of violence and address women's experience of systems of oppression. The potentials are endless, but only possible by the continued determination and support from our Trustees, staff, senior managers and collaborative organisations. It is true to say domestic abuse services are most effective when led by local and specialists' organisations that meet the need of our communities.

We are committed and continue in our staff training to develop strong confident staff. Our Business Plan will enable us to develop strategic pathways to reach those individuals isolated in our rural areas.

I am pleased to report we have a number of applicants to be considered as Trustees. These colleagues will be interviewed by board members and provided with information and details of the work they will be undertaking if they agree to join us.

As a result of funding from the Haverhill Town Council we have been able to provide coffee mornings, in the town, which includes the provision of courses to work alongside people who have experienced abuse who welcome our advice and support.

I am able to report that we have trained staff who work with schools and colleges to raise awareness of domestic abuse. To live in a society where domestic abuse is unacceptable.

Our Refuge includes clients from various cultures and backgrounds and we provide appropriate facilities for them to be able to practise their individual faiths.

Maureen Byrne
Vice-Chairperson

** At our AGM in July 2023 Maureen stood down as Chair of Trustees and she was nominated and voted as Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.*

Principal Operations Manager's Report

This has been a complicated and, at times, difficult year for Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid with the arrival of a number of new staff members and the departure of others. We had no Principal Operations Manager in post from February 2023 until we welcomed Katherine Ahluwalia in June 2023. Our Support Supervisor also left in February but was replaced fairly quickly in March 2023 with the promotion of our Administrator, Zoe Gordon, to the position which she has enthusiastically and most efficiently taken over and made her own.

The rest of this report is based on a collation of the previous Principal Operations Manager (POM)'s reports to the Board of Trustees.

Staffing:

There has been a considerable amount of staff sickness and absence over the year which has caused ongoing staffing problems, and has meant that members of staff have needed to work extra hours to cover for colleagues.

A full-time Outreach Worker was taken on in May 2022, on a fixed term contract, to work between Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill. Bea worked particularly well with the Bury St Edmunds coffee morning group, establishing an excellent and participative relationship with the attendant clients. She left us in May 2023 at the end of her fixed term.

A new, full-time play-worker, Alison, started work in October 2022 and has become a highly valued member of the team.

It became necessary to advertise for a housekeeper in November 2022 and this position has now been successfully filled in January 2023 by Amanda, a very willing and effective member of the team.

A new Resettlement worker began in January 2023 based in the Refuge and to work alongside the Refuge Support workers. Unfortunately, Gemma did not complete her probation period and left the post in April.

Despite all these changes, our staff have continued to provide all the various support programmes with diligence and enthusiasm, providing a very good standard of service to both the Refuge residents, our clients and their children.

Refuge:

The Refuge has maintained a high level of occupancy throughout the year and, although in May 2022, there were some vacancies, by November 2022, there were 8 adults and 8 children resident in the Refuge. This level of occupancy has more or less continued.

The Teen hut was completed early in 2022 and was regularly used by two of the older children for doing homework and some quiet time.

Fundraising, bids and help from volunteers:

On 1 May 2022, a music, tv and film quiz was held and again, the following day, in Colchester raising £500.

In September 2022, Public Health began a tender process for Accommodation, Support and Outreach, covering six different areas of Domestic Abuse: refuge, specialist safe accommodation, dispersed accommodation, sanctuary schemes, second stage accommodation and other forms of emergency accommodation. The POM at the time approached a housing association to discuss the possibility of a joint bid with regard to dispersed accommodation but, ultimately, this did not go ahead. By November, 2022, aided by our Finance Manager, Derek, the Suffolk Public Health tender was submitted and was successfully awarded in January 2023. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer the dispersed accommodation yet but it is still possible to take up the Public Health funding for this should we find the suitable premises.

Preparation for the National Lottery Community Fund bid also began in September 2022 and, working in conjunction with our area National Lottery funding manager, it was progressed and improved steadily. The bid was submitted in July 2023.

An award of £2,000 was made by Suffolk Community Foundation in the same month to provide raised beds in the Refuge Garden to grow fruit and vegetables. Various amounts were raised over the run up to and during the Christmas period with a teddy tombola at the Bury St Edmunds Christmas Lights switch on (£356) and by the Aquarius Singers (£1,108). Office furniture was also purchased through locality budget funding from the Bury St Edmunds Town Council, while another donation of £750 from Santander was matched by Town Council locality budget to fund VOICE training for staff. A further generous donation was provided in the form of tool and cleaning kits to be given to women leaving the Refuge for resettlement.

Activities for clients:

We have continued to provide the SODA programme for Refuge residents, which became mandatory for them in December 2022, as well as the Freedom Programme for people with learning difficulties. The VOICE programme has also been provided in both Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill and the coffee mornings have continued in both locations throughout the year.

Properties:

At the start of 2023, it was decided that, in the best interests of the business and the way forward, we should terminate the lease on No. 24 St Andrew's Street North due to its excessive costs, constant need for expensive repairs and overall size. The move to more suitable outreach accommodation was completed by 30 June 2023 and dilapidation works in compliance with the lease have also been completed.

Support Supervisor Report

This year has been both challenging and rewarding for Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid. We have continued to make a lasting impact on the lives of those affected by domestic abuse.

Ongoing Coffee Morning and VOICE Programme in Haverhill

Our commitment to providing a safe space for clients to share their stories and access help and support in Haverhill has remained steadfast. The weekly Coffee Morning sessions have served as a vital support network, allowing clients to connect with others who have experienced similar challenges. Additionally, the VOICE (Victims Of Intimate Coercive Experience) program has empowered clients with valuable skills and resources to rebuild their lives and regain control. We are incredibly proud of the positive impact these new initiatives have had on the community. This successful pilot programme has made us more determined to investigate taking our service onto more rural communities.

Refuge

The demand for our refuge services has remained high throughout the year, reflecting the urgent need for safety for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. Our small but dedicated team has worked tirelessly to ensure that every client has received the support and care they deserve. While the consistently full refuge highlights the extent of the issue, it also emphasizes the critical role our charity plays in providing immediate assistance and protection to those in need.

Resettlement

As we continue to expand our services and accommodate the growing number of clients, we have observed a shift in the resettlement process. To enable our clients to experience a more culturally diverse community, we have focused our efforts on securing safe accommodation for those that decide to live further away from Bury St Edmunds. While this change presents new challenges, we remain dedicated to supporting clients during this transitional period, ensuring they have the necessary resources and support networks to start anew in their new home.

New Staff and New Ideas

In the last year we welcomed a new playworker, a new housekeeper and a new resettlement worker. All have brought fresh perspectives and new ideas to further enhance our programs and services. We look forward to welcoming more new staff in the year to come.

Zoe Gordon

Support Supervisor

Finance report

The last few years have been challenging and that to 31 March 2023 was no exception. Whilst the effect of the Covid 19 crisis has receded and refuge occupancy recovered and actually exceeded that budgeted, inflationary pressures have become evermore apparent across our cost base. Covid recovery funding has largely ended; some of our core funding has reduced to below pre-covid levels and we were unsuccessful in renewing our grant with BBC Children in Need which helps fund child support costs. On a more positive note, the charity has started to secure medium term core funding both for the refuge and outreach services. We successfully tendered to Suffolk County Council Public Health Directorate for refuge support services contract which commenced in April 2023 for a minimum term of 3 years. In addition core funding for outreach services from Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner has been granted until March 2025. The Charity has also greatly benefitted from unrestricted grant funding from Lloyds Bank Foundation - applied to outreach services - as well as support from Suffolk Community Foundation, West Suffolk Council and Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill Town Councils, and the generosity of many members of the public and some local companies.

Due to that support, careful cost management against a challenging economic and operational backdrop, and very prompt payment of significant grant income close to the year end, the result for the year shows a deficit of £7,800.

In addition, and again due to some wonderful support and the hard work of our staff, we have managed to fund and establish outreach services in Haverhill; a welcome step-up of our outreach provision.

We thank all who have supported the Refuge in helping us meet our financial commitments. This year has been no exception with generous cash donations, Christmas gifts, toys, toiletries, clothes and Easter eggs. We have been overwhelmed by peoples generosity.

Income and expenditure for the 12 months to 31st March 2023 amounted to:

Income	£458,986 (2022: £404,266)
Expenditure	£466,786 (2022: £398,449)

In the main Refuge accommodation is funded from Housing Benefit which for 2022/23 amounted to £141,188 on an occupancy rate for the year of 89.7%, comfortably above that budgeted. In addition, Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre continues to receive financial support from Suffolk County Council Public Health Directorate for our Refuge services by way of a support grant of £89,504 inclusive of a cost of living uplift payment of £5,695.

Our outreach services and project work are mostly funded by grants and donations. Grant income amounted to £186,346 and comprised:

Grants	£
Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioner - Resource centre outreach funding	50,000
Lloyds Bank foundation - Unrestricted funding utilised for outreach	52,250
Funding for Children's work and Young persons Support Project	
BBC Children in Need - Children's support workers staff costs	40,225
Suffolk County Council - Children's support funding	12,980
Funding for Haverhill Outreach Project:	
West Suffolk Council - Community Chest Grant	16,225
Haverhill Town Council (Including gift in kind)	3,969
Funding for other projects:	
Bury St Edmunds Town Council	Office furniture
Bury St Edmunds Town Council	Training
West Suffolk Council -UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Cost of living
Suffolk Community Foundation through the following fund:	
Denbury Charitable Foundation	Garden projects
	2,000
	£ 186,346

Donations received throughout the year amounted to £27,595 including Gift Aid. These are broken down as follows;

	£
Restricted Donations	4,922
Unrestricted Donations	21,610
Gift Aid	1,063
	£ 27,595

Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre Limited

Registered company number: 01338724

Trustees Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Gifts in kind

During the year the Charity received generous gifts in kind which have been valued and included in the financial statements as part of grant income as follows:

		£
Lloyds Bank Foundation	Six laptop computers	1,644
Haverhill Town Council	Leiston Centre rooms provided without charge for outreach work in Haverhill	
		<u>3,322</u>

The Charity is very fortunate to receive many gifts in kind each year mostly for our service users and most of modest monetary value. Individual gifts valued at under £200 are not included in these financial statements.

Intangible income - Voluntary staff

The charity remains dependent on services provided by volunteers. Without these volunteers, wage costs would be much higher and we are very thankful for the time volunteers give to the Charity.

The value provided by volunteers is not costed for the purposes of these financial statements.

Reserves Policy

The Charity's reserve policy is to hold unrestricted net current asset reserves equivalent to four to six months of projected operating costs to cover any temporary shortfall in cash flow that may occur due to the timing of receipts.

Unrestricted net current assets at the end of the financial year were £197,796 (2022: £187,857).

As of 31 March 2023, reserves cover was 5 months. This is slightly down from that of March 2022 (5.3 months) but well within the policy range and substantially better than was forecast earlier in the year due to the prompt payment of grants amounting to £33,000 which were expected to be received in the ensuing year.

Auditor

Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid's accounts are audited by Knights Lowe of Bury St Edmunds and it is proposed that the Charity continues to use their services as auditor.

Future Plans

In January 2023 the decision was made to move our outreach services to more appropriate and cost effective premises in the centre of Bury St Edmunds. That transition is in progress and will be completed in the first half of 2023/24.

The organisation aims to ensure that current services are fully funded, and we are able to increase our capacity to deliver those services. The current economic outlook will continue to present funding challenges as will the expected increase in demand for our services in the coming months and years. We continue to look for opportunities to increase our work with teenagers and young adults and, subject to available resources, extend the geographical reach of our outreach services.

As always, I thank my colleagues and our trustees who have supported me in my role this year.

Derek Gadd
Finance Manager

Activities and services

Refuge Support Service

Our role as Refuge Support Workers is to provide consistent emotional support, on a one-to-one basis to the women who have fled to the Refuge and during their temporary stay with us.

A weekly house meeting is run every Wednesday morning enabling our residents to highlight any concerns or issues they may have during their stay, arrange support appointments with us and discuss any activities that may be coming up. Our weekly one to one support sessions are provided to all residents on an individual basis, providing them with protective time to provide support with topics such as; benefits, finances, legal issues, GP registrations, health and wellbeing, work and learning opportunities.

We provide support to the residents with exploring the local area and surroundings; we do this by providing maps of local parks, amenities, bus stops, transporting and supporting them to important appointments. We also provide support to the residents by making links within the wider community, for example accessing ESOL (English speaking for other Languages) courses at the college.

Lauren and Victoria
Domestic Abuse Support Workers

Resettlement Service

We have found in the last year or so that the resettlement process has become more complex. Many of our refuge residents arrive with outstanding immigration issues that need to be resolved before they can even register for housing. It has also become more common for women to arrive with no identification, either because it's been removed or destroyed by the perpetrator. This poses many problems and is a huge obstacle to opening a bank account and claiming benefits.

Another layer to the process is debt that has been incurred, often without the resident's knowledge or permission. Our Resettlement Worker liaises with many different organisations and agencies to work through this problem. With a more multicultural group of residents we are finding fewer families choose to stay in our area. We now often find we are looking further afield for residents' new homes to enable them to access all their cultural needs.

Despite the longer distances involved we still visit our newly rehoused residents on a regular basis, before eventually handing them over to services more local to them. Telephone support is ongoing and families are always keen to keep us updated on their progress!

Zoe Gordon
Support Supervisor

Outreach Service

Another amazing year has passed and what great things we have achieved this year. The Outreach team has grown and we have embraced many new challenges over the last year. The new triage system has really worked meaning we are now able to respond to those in crisis faster using a traffic light system.

We have welcomed Louise and Bea into the team who have worked hard in Outreach and their specialist areas (young people and mental health) to give a great service and they have brought some amazing new ideas with them.

The outreach team have been actively listening to our clients, we are all working towards being able to offer some group talks to clients to enable them to understand more about domestic abuse. There are many areas that we have identified that we need a more bespoke approach to, these include domestic abuse within the home from either the parent to the child or the child to the parent and how to raise boys in a time when social media influencers are promoting misogyny.

We are looking forward to moving to new offices in the future and the opportunity that will bring.

Activities and services

Freedom Programme

Freedom has been running twice a week to catch up after the pandemic. We have taken with us some of the learnings and now run hybrid Freedom groups enabling women to attend both in person and online. I would like to take this moment to get excited at how good I have become at hosting these sessions and finding angles to hide my double chin.

I am really excited to announce that we will be starting the VOICE programme in Bury St Edmunds, it has been run successfully by Louise in Haverhill so we are going to bring it here. It is a new updated program that covers the same subjects but in a new dynamic way that works better; it gives a greater understanding whilst working on improving your wellbeing.

Tracy

Outreach Support Worker

Mental Health Outreach Support

When creating a support plan with any client, their mental health and neurodiversity are essential elements to be considered in order to fulfil the underpinning service philosophy of Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid, namely using a comprehensive and inclusive person-centre approach.

The daily reality of working with clients who have experienced domestic abuse and, thus, high levels of prolonged trauma, is that their mental health needs will likely be complex. All the clients we see will have some form of mental illness. The majority of our clients have moderate to severe symptomatic presentations of; anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, self-harm, obsessive-compulsive disorder, borderline personality disorder, bipolar disorder, complex post-traumatic stress disorder, body dysmorphic disorder, eating disorders, premenstrual dysphoric disorder, psychosis and schizophrenia.

In addition, in line with recent emerging academic research which suggests a correlation exists between neurodiversity and a higher likelihood of experiencing domestic abuse, our client base – including both adults and children – reflects a high neurodiversity rate. A number of our clients, whether in refuge, in public groups or under our outreach programmes, have Autism, ADHD and Functional Neurological Disorder.

Over the course of this past year, I have worked with nearly 70 clients under outreach and spilling over from Coffee Morning. I have logged that roughly three quarters of all my clients have been seeking information on mental health and neurodiversity. I have also noted that over half of all my outreach clients this past year have openly discussed suicidal ideation, suicidal attempts and self-injurious behaviour.

Due to their domestic abuse, our clients will generally have been discouraged from accessing medical help for both physical and mental illnesses. In addition, they will frequently have been labelled as 'mental' by their perpetrators and will therefore be reticent to disclose any illnesses or seek assistance. As such, it is one of our priorities to create a welcoming and open environment to reinforce positive mental health habits and to dispel harmful stereotypes and myths which block our clients from accessing the mental health support they need and deserve.

Thus, to best support our clients whilst being mindful of the mental health and neurodiversity overlap with people who have disproportionately experienced domestic abuse, we engage in an empathetic, informed and inclusive approach whereby we actively encourage them to identify and share any accommodations regarding how best we can support them. The type of support we offer ranges from tailored one-to-one sessions to signposting, referring and accompanying our clients to appropriate mental health services, crisis services or emergency services. Whether in one-to-one appointments, Coffee Mornings or group settings, we seek to encourage reflection on self-care, emotional regulation, grounding techniques and understanding the fight-flight-freeze-fawn response.

Over the course of this year we have also forged collaborations with external organisations to further improve the mental health and emotional wellbeing service provision we are able to offer. This has included starting a project with Suffolk Mind to introduce a modified version of their Emotional Needs Audit into all levels of our service, from refuge residents to group attendees and outreach clients. We have also worked with Suffolk Healthwatch to ensure our clients are aware of where they can turn to should they encounter difficulties within the healthcare service. In addition, we have piloted the Essex Healthwatch trauma cards with our clients who have provided positive feedback regarding the initiative.

Looking forward, we are aiming to continue furthering staff knowledge of mental health and neurodevelopmental conditions and expanding the inclusive nature of the service we provide at all levels.

Activities and services

Outreach – Bury St Edmunds Coffee Morning

The overarching aim of Bury St Edmunds Coffee Morning is to provide a safe environment for our clients to discuss a wide array of topics whilst still maintaining a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. The clients have provided positive feedback regarding the need to have a consistent fixture in their weekly calendar where they know they can eat cake, have a coffee, ask questions, make new friends and ask for advice. This has been reflected in the positive response to keeping Coffee Morning running throughout the Christmas period and school holidays.

The flagship Bury St Edmunds Coffee Morning has seen a steady increase in participation following the pandemic. The clients who attend are introduced to Coffee Morning through a variety of channels. We refer internally to outreach clients, other group participants and refuge residents whom we feel would benefit from engaging in a more collaborative approach in understating the domestic abuse they have experienced and in combating the isolation that all too often has been an integral component of their domestic abuse. Coffee Morning allows our clients to expand their support network and to learn new concepts in an informal manner. In addition, we have received a steady number of referrals from external organisations and third-party professionals. Sessions can see attendee numbers ranging from 5 to 22 depending on school holidays. On average, there are roughly 50 clients who regularly attend Coffee Morning over the course of a month. Childcare, offered during term time, has continued to play an important role in rendering Coffee Morning accessible to a broader range of clients. During the holidays, family-friendly sessions have been run with success.

Topics of conversation during each Coffee Morning vary week on week and develop organically from clients' questions and interests. We have discussed: the red flags of toxic relationships and the green flags of healthy relationships; the impact of harmful gender stereotypes and how to foster a positive body image; the different types of domestic abuse and the cycles of abuse; the key terminology surrounding domestic abuse to empower clients in being able to describe their experiences and advocate for themselves; emotional agility, emotional dysregulation and self-soothing techniques; the fight-flight-freeze-fawn trauma response; the importance of proactive self-care; books, documentaries and other resources covering domestic abuse and emotional wellbeing.

Outreach Support Worker

Young Person's Support

This year we have taken many more referrals from schools and colleges across West Suffolk, Mildenhall and Haverhill which have resulted in us offering more one to one support within schools, as well as small group programmes around healthy and unhealthy relationships.

I have presented with the Multi-Agency Road Show (MARS) headed up by the Early Help Team as part of the Local Authority. We have been into several High Schools in Bury St Edmunds, Abbey Sixth and West Suffolk College to talk to students about healthy relationships, boundaries and consent. I teamed up with Terence Higgins Trust to deliver some workshops around healthy sexual relationships and as a result have built up a good partnership and an opportunity for further joint working.



Activities and services

Here are the numbers we have reached over five months of running the Road Shows.

- > Participants – 644;
- > Male – 311, Female – 333, Ethnic Minorities – 45, Disability (EHCP) – 5

We attended the Freshers' Fairs at Abbey Sixth and West Suffolk College, where we promoted Domestic Abuse awareness and calling out sexist behaviour.



I have continued in developing the young person's Padlet, The Junction, information is given out by a QR code to students.

The one-to-one work I do with students is developed around the areas they need support in. I aim to improve their self-awareness, self-esteem, their ability to communicate their needs and feelings with trusted adults. How to deal with strong feelings, how to communicate boundaries, healthy relationships/unhealthy relationships and red flags.



Louise
Young Person's Domestic Abuse Support

Activities and services

Children's Service

How quickly another year has passed, and it is time for an annual update of what we have achieved in the last year.

During the six-week summer holidays we planned for all the families, a trip to the beach, family cook days with Outdoor Explore, ten pin bowling, cinema, and the splash park too. Also, this year we have hired a swimming pool for the families.

We welcomed Alison in October; Alison became our full time Play worker. Alison ran all the group childcare and facilitated the Helping Hands programme.

For children and young people, moving into Refuge can be a struggle. For the young children play is important, and for older children one-to-one and group sessions are offered. Our aim is to make the children's stay as enjoyable as possible, to build strong connections with the children to restore the children's confidence, self-esteem and development through play of any age. Working with vulnerable families, multi-agency working is key, we have strong links with Schools, Nurseries and Social Care and other outside agencies to ensure that children have their needs met and that the women are supported in parenting. We also link in with wider services, a Health Visitor and School Nurse and monthly meetings with the schools.

We ran our usual sessions of after school club, well-being Wednesdays, talking and drawing, 1:1 sessions and Freedom, SODA and Coffee morning Childcare with added childcare in Haverhill on a Tuesday and Friday Morning.

The Stronger Families Programme for the ages 9-11 years, ran also Helping Hand Group too. On the back of running these groups 1:1 Drawing and Talking group was taken into school to support some of the children who needed extra support after the group sessions.

Jabba The Hut- The older children's room in the garden, is fully operational and the children are loving the extra space to do homework and play on the Xbox.

At Christmas we had a Therapy horse come to No 24 with Father Christmas and we opened 24 to past resident and children.

We have a volunteer (Jean) who helps in the garden, we now have now raised beds with lots of vegetables already growing.



Activities and services

Our new project is to have a forest schools garden, we are working on plans as we speak! At the moment it's a large overgrown area so watch this space, we have some exciting ideas



Also, we would like to thank some local companies for their support and donations they are, Abbey Hind Labels, Veronalder Ltd and White-Water Display. They are always on the end of the phone if need be.

Sarah and Alison Child Support Workers

Highlights

- * Beach Day! All residents and staff travelled together for our annual beach day. We swam, we ate chips, and we got sun burnt!
- * Christmas Lights at Ickworth were as beautiful as they were last year, it's a real treat to see the children's faces!
- We were visited by Father Christmas and his Christmas pony at the Outreach Centre – hot chocolate and mince pies
- * were handed out along with presents for our Outreach families.
- * Various summer trips included Tostock Farm to see the alpacas, the cinema and bowling.

Activities and services

Feedback from clients - Thank You letters

★ Thank you all for
★ all the help and support
★ you gave me, you let me
★ feel I'm a human have
★ right and learn a lot
★ from all of you
...it means a lot
Zoe, Victoria, Sarah, Tracy
alison and all the
Staff left.
Wish you all the best
I'll miss you all
lots of love and
blessings

To hayley sue zoe lauren
sarah
Louise kay victoria
Tracey
Thankyou you all so much
for all the help and support
you have given me blake
saphira peyton while we
have been here
We will all really miss u
Love

"When I came I didn't know anything, staff helped with everything, I was even scared to go out. You have helped with everything, everything! I'm scared to leave but I'm happy too. Thank you to everyone who has helped me, I am truly grateful! You have been my family. They helped with my drinking and self confidence Very grateful to have a safe place to stay. Very kind and helpful staff who have given me lots of support in all areas. Helped me with housing, counselling and freedom programme. Thank you. The staff truly are a credit to women aid, they have been very supportive, understanding. They all have gone above and beyond their job to support myself and children, I did not know about women aid until I was put in to contact through next chapter. I cannot thank the staff enough for all their help. Very safe space and lovely people. It was the best experience in my life. the staff were amazing, they make sure we get to our appointment on time. honesty my best experience ever thank you."

P.S. Thank you for all
of the lovely little
bits we had over the
weeks, from letters
to travel board
games and scraps.
We looked forward to
having a browse each
week
Good luck with your
move 😊

Dear Sarah and Alison
Thank you for helping
us to learn about
our feelings. Thank
you for the fun
activities we did we
especially enjoyed the
gingerbread decorating
week and the smatis.
you gave us.
Thank you for letting
us be ourselves

Merry Christmas
+
happy New Year
Love all the refuge
family ***

Activities and services

Acknowledgements

A huge Thank You to all of our supporters, big and small, local and further afield, who have donated money, time and many lovely items!

Our Volunteers
Aquarius Singers
Bridge Church
Bury Lions
Bury Rotary
Gatehouse
Gee Gee's Ranch
Green Light Trust
HC3
Ickworth House
Kids Out
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Love Grace www.lovegrace.co.uk
Marks and Spencer
Mothers Union

Realise Futures
Rickshaw Riders
Round Table
Stuart & Christine Samuels (Father & Mrs Christmas)
Tesco
The Buckingham Emergency Food Appeal (BEFA)
Theatre Royal
Toolbox
Tostock Animal Park
Unite the Union
Vineyard Church
Waitrose
Women's Institute
Wooster's Bakery

We particularly wish to thank our major funders:



We would also like to thank our donors who choose to remain anonymous. Without the continued support of our donors, we would not be able to offer the high level of services and support to the people that need them.

If you would like to donate in any way, please visit our website

www.burystedmundswomensaid.org.uk

or call us on 0330 551 9495 or 01284 753085

Activities and services

Volunteers needed

If you'd like to volunteer with our organisation please have a look at our Padlet:

<https://padlet.com/BSEWomensAid/Volunteers>

Website

Stay up to date with our news and events at:

www.burystedmundswomensaid.org.uk

[Twitter:](#)



[Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/BSEwomensaid](https://www.facebook.com/BSEwomensaid)

Speaking engagements

Interested in hearing more about our work? We are happy to provide a speaker for your organisation or group, please call us on 0330 551 9495 or 01284 753085 or email at admin@burystedmundswomensaid.org.uk

Current services

We provide many services which are accessed by women (and some men) from the local community and from outside Suffolk:

23-bed Refuge
Telephone Advice Helpline
Outreach Service
Freedom Programme
VOICE
Survivors of Domestic Abuse (SODA)
Resettlement Support

Male Victim Support
Child Centred Groups
Counselling Service
Coffee Morning (Bury St Edmunds and
Haverhill)
Young Persons Support Service

Activities and services

Future plans

Our new contract with Suffolk County Council Public Health Directorate for refuge support services commenced in April 2023 and that will provide oversight support and funding for that element of our work for the next three years. Part of that contract provides similar support for dispersed accommodation and we are looking to work with a housing association or similar accommodation provider to offer safe residences with support to clients for whom refuge living is not appropriate.

Late June we moved our outreach centre to The Malthouse, Bury St Edmunds which has provided more appropriate accommodation and the opportunity to work more closely with Access Community Trust with whom we share the premises. Access specialise in mental health support and there is a significant scope for collaboration.

Using The Malthouse as our base, and subject to securing funding, we are planning to extend our outreach work outside Bury St Edmunds, building on the work we begun in 2022 in Haverhill. Working with local sector partners, we are starting to plan outreach programmes in other towns and rural districts in West Suffolk.

We continue to recruit more volunteers. We recognise the value that volunteers bring to an organisation and also the life changing effect volunteering can provide for individuals.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The company is registered with the Charity Commission (no. 276883) and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 14 November 1977 (amended in 2020).

It is limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The liability of the Members on a winding up is limited to £1.

The Company's Council of Management (Trustees) appoints staff who look after the day to day running of the organisation.

Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees

It is policy that all Members of the Council of Management shall be both Trustees of the Charity and Directors of the Company.

Trustees retire in rotation and may offer themselves for re-election by the charity's members at the Annual General Meeting. The Council may appoint a member to serve on the Council of Trustees to fill a casual vacancy or to add to their number. The minimum and maximum number of Trustees is determined by the members at General Meeting and is currently 7 and 12 respectively.

There are currently 12 Trustees.

Trustees who served during the year and since are shown on the charity's information page (page ii).

Induction and training of new Trustees

Potential new Trustees are invited to attend monthly Trustee meetings before they are appointed in order to familiarise them with the overall operation and oversight of the charity. Induction includes at least one visit to the Refuge and such support as is required depending on experience.

Remuneration policy

The Trustees review scale point progression and hence remuneration of all staff on at least an annual basis. Scale structure and pay rates are aligned with those published by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

Risk management

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre Limited

Registered company number: 01338724

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Statement of trustees responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre Limited for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

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

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

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

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

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

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 09 October 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
Mrs Nicola Iannelli-Popham - Chair of Trustees

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre Limited (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland'; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAS (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAS (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements ; or
- the charitable company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the companies operating sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation, data protection, anti-bribery, employment, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud;

- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias;
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions; and
- investigated the company's apportionment of housing income, grants, and other main sources of income.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators [Charity Commission] and the company's legal advisors.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under Section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Knights Lowe

Knights Lowe Limited

Eligible to act as an auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Eldo House
Kempson Way
Suffolk Business Park
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP32 7AR

Date: 16 October 2023

Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)
for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023			2022		
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
		£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS							
Donations and legacies		22,227	5,368	27,595	21,611	24,659	46,270
Fund raising events		1,823	-	1,823	1,196	-	1,196
Charitable activities	3						
Operation of the Refuge		151,768	-	151,768	120,021	-	120,021
Support services		141,754	134,096	275,850	81,368	155,362	236,730
Investment income							
Bank deposit interest		1,950	-	1,950	49	-	49
Total income		319,522	139,464	458,986	224,245	180,021	404,266
EXPENDITURE							
Charitable activities	4						
Provision of short-term accommodation		128,281	23,727	152,008	105,537	26,030	131,567
Support services for residents		198,436	116,342	314,778	143,460	123,422	266,882
Total expenditure		326,717	140,069	466,786	248,997	149,452	398,449
NET (EXPENDITURE) / INCOME	6	(7,195)	(605)	(7,800)	(24,752)	30,569	5,817
Transfer between funds	16	21,177	(21,177)	-	9,467	(9,467)	-
Net movement in funds		13,982	(21,782)	(7,800)	(15,285)	21,102	5,817
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS							
Total funds brought forward		254,552	68,452	323,004	269,837	47,350	317,187
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		268,534	46,670	315,204	254,552	68,452	323,004

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre Limited

Registered company number: 01338724

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023

		2023			2022		
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	Notes	£	£	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS							
Intangible assets	12	1,740	-	1,740	2,240	-	2,240
Tangible assets	13	68,998	-	68,998	64,455	-	64,455
		70,738	-	70,738	66,695	-	66,695
CURRENT ASSETS							
Stocks	14	-	1,300	1,300	-	1,570	1,570
Debtors	14	9,571	21,277	30,848	6,022	30,980	37,002
Cash at bank and in hand		201,482	27,806	229,288	190,547	45,237	235,784
		211,053	50,383	261,436	196,569	77,787	274,356
CREDITORS							
Amounts falling due within one year	15	(13,257)	(3,713)	(16,970)	(8,712)	(9,335)	(18,047)
NET CURRENT ASSETS							
		197,796	46,670	244,466	187,857	68,452	256,309
NET ASSETS							
		268,534	46,670	315,204	254,552	68,452	323,004
TOTAL FUNDS							
	16	268,534	46,670	315,204	254,552	68,452	323,004

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The members have not deposited notice, pursuant to Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 requiring an audit of these financial statements.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:


ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and,

preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been audited under the requirements of Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to charitable small companies.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 09 October 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:



.....
Mrs Nicola Iannelli-Popham - Chair of Trustees

1 LEGAL FORM

The Charity is a private charitable company limited by guarantee and incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is shown in the Trustees Report (Directors Report). Due to the nature of the Charity's operations, exemption has been taken on disclosing the principle operating address.

2 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The financial statements are reported in GBP Sterling.

Significant judgements and estimates

In the application of the Company's accounting policies, which are described below, the Directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimated and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revision to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Critical judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in applying the Company's accounting policies

The following are critical judgements including those involving estimations, that the Directors have made in the process of applying the Company's accounting policies and that have the most significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Depreciation of tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are recognised at cost and depreciated on the basis appropriate to charge to the income statement the economic consumption of those assets during the accounting period. The charge is calculated as described below and is based on the Directors knowledge of the reduction in the residual value of each class of asset. The rates of depreciation are kept under review such that assets are written down to their residual value at the end of their economic lives.

Financial reporting standard 102 - reduced disclosure exemptions

The charity has taken advantage of the following disclosure exemption in preparing these financial statements, as permitted by FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland':

- the requirements of Section 7 Statement of Cash Flows.

Incoming resources

Donations and gifts

All monetary donations and gifts are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable, provided that there are no donor-imposed restrictions as to the timing of the related expenditure, in which case recognition is deferred until the pre-condition has been met.

Gifts in kind

Non-monetary gifts with an estimated value of over £200 and donated to the Charity for use by our beneficiaries or for administering and promoting our work are valued and included in the Statement of Financial Activities at the in use value to the charity. Such gifts are recorded as restricted donations and capitalised or included as a revenue expense as appropriate.

Intangible income

Intangible income is valued and included in income to the extent that it represents goods or services that would otherwise be purchased. An equivalent amount is charged as expenditure. Voluntary help is not included as income.

Grants receivable

Revenue grants are credited as incoming resources when they are receivable provided conditions for receipt have been complied with, unless relating to a specified future period, in which case income is deferred accordingly.

Grants for the purchase of fixed assets are credited to restricted incoming resources when receivable. When projects are completed fixed assets are transferred to the general fund and depreciation is charged as stated below.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred and allocated between:

- expenditure incurred on charitable activities being mainly the costs associated with running the refuge and Resources Centre including direct and support costs;
- governance costs in overseeing the charity and safeguarding its assets and primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and comprise the audit fee;
- support costs being indirect expenditure which is allocated to central functions on a basis consistent with the use of those resources.

The apportionment of charitable expenditure between the main activities of provision of short-term accommodation and client and residents support services, is made according to the underlying use of the resources and shown in detail under note 4 to the financial statements.

Tangible and intangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Security and outdoor equipment	- 10% on cost
Office equipment	- 25% on cost
Motor vehicles	- 33% on reducing balance
Household equipment	- 33% on cost

Assets costing more than £200 are capitalised.

Intangible fixed assets are amortised over the estimated useful life of those assets being five years or 20% on cost.

Stocks

Goods held to assist the resettlement of residents moving on from refuge accommodation, and provided as part of charitable activities free of charge, are measured at net realisable value based on the service potential provided by items of stock. In practice this means stock is held at cost less any impairment necessary to write down to net realisable value provided to beneficiaries.

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 restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Pension costs are analysed across activities and funds, both restricted and unrestricted, pro rata to that of the underlying staff costs in accordance with the purpose of, and restrictions on each activity and fund.

Financial assets and liabilities

All financial assets and liabilities are basic short term financial instruments and accounted for at cost less provision for non-recovery where applicable. These comprise non-trade debtors and creditors realisable within one year.

Cash at bank and in hand comprises short term bank and cash deposits none of which have restricted access terms.

Going concern

The Trustees have prepared the financial statements on the basis that the Charity will continue to operate in accordance with its Objects for a period of not less than 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements.

As disclosed in note 11, uncertainty exists regarding Resources Centre funding - our core grant for outreach services has been reduced significantly, albeit our grantor has given an undertaking to provide such funding until 31 March 2025.

Continuity of service provision depends on the availability of sufficient funding, and this has yet to be fully established for the ensuing year. Reserves are sufficient to finance the potential shortfall for over 12 months beyond the balance sheet date and, given the continuing need for the Charity's services, the Trustees are of the opinion that the Charity will secure funding and remain a going concern for at least the next 12 months.

3 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		2023	2022
		£	£
Accommodation charges:			
- Housing benefit	Operation of the Centre	141,188	109,483
- Residents rent and household income	Operation of the Centre	10,121	10,092
Sundry income	Operation of the Centre	459	446
		151,768	120,021
Public Health & Protection grant	Support services	89,504	81,368
Other grants	Support services	186,346	155,362
		275,850	236,730
		427,618	356,751

Grants received, included above, are as follows:

		2023	2022
		£	£
Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioner - Resource centre outreach funding		50,000	72,500
Lloyds Bank foundation - Unrestricted funding utilised for outreach		52,250	-
<u>Funding for Children's work and Young persons Support Project</u>			
BBC Children in Need - Children's support workers staff costs		40,225	29,140
Suffolk County Council - Children's support funding		12,980	-
West Suffolk Council - Community Chest Grant		-	12,000
<u>Funding for Haverhill Outreach Project:</u>			
West Suffolk Council - Community Chest Grant		16,225	-
Haverhill Town Council		3,969	-
<u>Funding for other projects:</u>			
Bury St Edmunds Town Council	Office furniture	1,817	-
Bury St Edmunds Town Council	Training	2,130	-
West Suffolk Council -UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Cost of living	4,750	-
Suffolk Community Foundation through the following fund:			
Denbury Charitable Foundation	Garden projects	2,000	-
<u>Funding for other projects - 2022:</u>			
St Edmunds Trust - Mental Health Support	Refuge & outreach	-	22,315
Anglia Care Trust - Hidden Groups grants	Outreach	-	4,000
Bury St Edmunds Town Council	New vehicle	-	9,000
Bury St Edmunds Rotary Club	New vehicle	-	1,000
Suffolk Community Foundation through the following funds:			
Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioner Critical Support			
Recovery grant	Outreach	-	5,407
		186,346	155,362

4 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES EXPENDITURE

The charity undertakes direct charitable activities only and does not make grants.

	Provision of short-term accommodation	Support services	Total
	£	£	£
Rent and rates	22,287	32,829	55,116
Utilities	12,527	3,761	16,288
Household expenses, furnishings and equipment	11,480	2,440	13,920
Motor expenses	4,609	2,304	6,913
Clients, support, recreation and hospitality	7,156	7,156	14,312
Depreciation / amortisation (excluding office equipment)	9,530	4,765	14,295
Support costs (see note 5)	84,419	261,523	345,942
Total 2023	152,008	314,778	466,786
Total 2022	131,567	266,882	398,449

Apportionment of costs to support services

Rent, rates, utilities, household expenses and furnishings and equipment are apportioned on an actual basis. Those relating to the Resources Centre are wholly for support services.

Other costs are apportioned on the best estimate of the use of the underlying resources as follows:

Motor expenses and depreciation/amortisation (excluding office equipment)	33%
Clients and residents support, recreation and hospitality	50%
All indirect support costs shown in note 5 (excluding audit fee)	75%
Audit and legal fees	100%

5 SUPPORT COSTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Staff costs	290,507	236,327
Administrative costs	18,372	18,418
Insurances	4,833	4,550
Telephone	4,058	6,884
Staff recruitment, welfare and training costs	12,652	6,964
Subscriptions and affiliation fees	902	683
Office equipment depreciation	5,533	4,986
Fund raising, publicity and promotion	459	771
Bank and finance charges	360	297
Auditors remuneration	3,762	3,015
Legal fees	4,504	5,900
	345,942	288,795

6 NET INCOME

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2023	2022
	£	£
Amount expended on stock	270	1,200
Auditors' remuneration	3,762	3,015
Other non-audit services	-	-
Depreciation - owned assets	19,326	16,284
Operating leases - land and buildings	50,054	46,175
Operating lease - other	2,387	2,387
Deficit on disposal of fixed assets	2	7
Amortisation of website	500	260

7 STAFF COSTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries	267,150	219,647
Social security costs	18,560	12,703
Pension contributions	4,797	3,977
	290,507	236,327

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

The aggregate remuneration of key management personnel was £34,486 (2022: £23,383).

The charity employed on average 11 staff, being 10 on a full-time equivalent basis (FTE) to run the Refuge and provide support services (2022: 11 and 9 FTE). A small proportion of time is related to governance matters.

8 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Trustees' transactions

No administrative and support expenses were reimbursed to Trustees during the year (2022: 1 trustee; £115).

During the year 1 Trustee donated £2,325 inclusive of Gift Aid to the Charity (2022: 1 trustee gave £6,250 including Gift Aid).

9 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2023 (2022: nil).

10 LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating lease commitments at the balance sheet date fall due as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Land and buildings		
Within one year	30,539	46,231
Between one and five years	2,860	33,131
	33,399	79,362
	2023	2022
	£	£
Other leases		
Within one year	2,387	2,387
Between one and five years	1,790	4,178
	4,178	6,565

The lease on the Charity's outreach premises terminated on 17 August 2023 and, under the terms of the lease, the Charity is committed to finance property dilapidations and associated professional fees of the lessor. The total cost for these works and professional fees for both parties amounted to £35,920.

After the balance sheet date, the Charity committed to a short-term tenancy agreement on new outreach premises in Bury St Edmunds. Annual commitments under that agreement are:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Within one year	8,250	-
Between one and five years	13,750	-
	22,000	-

11 FUTURE FUNDING UNCERTAINTIES

The Resources Centre and outreach work is partially financed by an annual grant of £50,000 provided by the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) under an agreement that has been extended to 31 March 2025. That level of funding is well below that required to finance all outreach services, which, subject to appropriate funding being secured, are being expanded to other areas of West Suffolk and are budgeted at approximately £176,000 in the fiscal year 2023/24. In conjunction with a reduction in property costs through the move to more appropriately sized premises, disclosed under note 10, significant supplementary funding is being sought.

Trustees and Charity's Officers continue to actively assess the operational risks to the Charity of the cost of living crisis and, where necessary, any persistent funding shortfall will be mitigated by way of emergency grant funding. In the trustees opinion, the Charity has sufficient reserves to finance operations in the short to medium term whilst such funding arrangements are negotiated, if required.

12 INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Website £
COST	
At 1 April 2022	2,500
Addition	-
Disposal	-
At 31 March 2023	<u>2,500</u>
AMORTISATION	
At 1 April 2022	260
Charge for year	500
Disposal	-
At 31 March 2023	<u>760</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2023	<u><u>1,740</u></u>
At 31 March 2022	<u><u>2,240</u></u>

13 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Security & outdoor equipment £	Office, IT and other equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Household equipment £	Totals £
COST					
At 1 April 2022	99,252	47,800	13,310	42,962	203,324
Additions	1,268	4,295	17,444	864	23,871
Disposals	-	2,759	-	-	2,759
At 31 March 2023	<u>100,520</u>	<u>49,336</u>	<u>30,754</u>	<u>43,826</u>	<u>224,436</u>
DEPRECIATION					
At 1 April 2022	50,821	35,481	12,973	39,594	138,869
Charge for year	7,715	5,533	3,019	3,059	19,326
Disposals	-	2,757	-	-	2,757
At 31 March 2023	<u>58,536</u>	<u>38,257</u>	<u>15,992</u>	<u>42,653</u>	<u>155,438</u>
NET BOOK VALUE					
At 31 March 2023	<u><u>41,984</u></u>	<u><u>11,079</u></u>	<u><u>14,762</u></u>	<u><u>1,173</u></u>	<u><u>68,998</u></u>
At 31 March 2022	<u><u>48,431</u></u>	<u><u>12,319</u></u>	<u><u>337</u></u>	<u><u>3,368</u></u>	<u><u>64,455</u></u>

All tangible fixed assets are used for charitable purposes.

14 STOCK AND DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
STOCK		
Stock for resident resettlement	<u>1,300</u>	<u>1,570</u>
DEBTORS		
Other debtors	1,063	1,801
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>29,785</u>	<u>35,201</u>
	<u>30,848</u>	<u>37,002</u>

Accrued income includes £12,500 (2022: £18,125) grant income from Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023. The comparative also includes a grant of £3,337 from the Ministry of Justice via the PCC.

15 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Payments on account	940	4,184
Accruals and deferred income	<u>16,030</u>	<u>13,863</u>
	<u>16,970</u>	<u>18,047</u>

There is no deferred income in the reporting or comparative years.

16 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 01.04.22	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	At 31.03.23
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	192,485	319,297	255,084	(22,163)	234,535
Resources Centre running costs	26,582	-	6,754	-	19,828
Group outreach and support workers	9,948	-	44,815	35,000	133
Child support programme (child therapy)	6,020	225	-	-	6,245
Young peoples support programmes	8,801	-	12,056	5,500	2,245
Adult counselling	1,263	-	6,600	5,560	223
Refuge refurbishment (external works)	4,453	-	8	-	4,445
Office IT upgrade and equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicle replacement fund	5,000	-	1,400	(2,720)	880
	254,552	319,522	326,717	21,177	268,534
Restricted funds					
Resources Centre running costs including a proportion of staffing costs	9,377	50,000	51,677	-	7,700
Adult support (counselling, group and creative therapies, Theatre as Therapy and a proportion of staffing costs)	9,703	25,707	24,441	-	10,969
Mental Health Support	22,315	-	20,453	-	1,862
Child support programme (child therapy, outings, recreation)	3,238	100	1,887	-	1,451
Child support staff costs	(1,240)	53,205	37,620	-	14,345
Young peoples support programmes	916	-	916	-	-
Refuge refurbishment - internal and external works	6,885	2,000	529	(968)	7,388
Fund raising - Concert activities, Just Giving	474	161	221	-	414
Staff training	-	2,505	-	-	2,505
Vehicle replacement fund	16,784	-	-	(16,784)	-
Office equipment (furniture)	-	3,461	-	(3,425)	36
Legal & professional fees fund	-	2,325	2,325	-	-
	68,452	139,464	140,069	(21,177)	46,670
TOTAL FUNDS	323,004	458,986	466,786	-	315,204

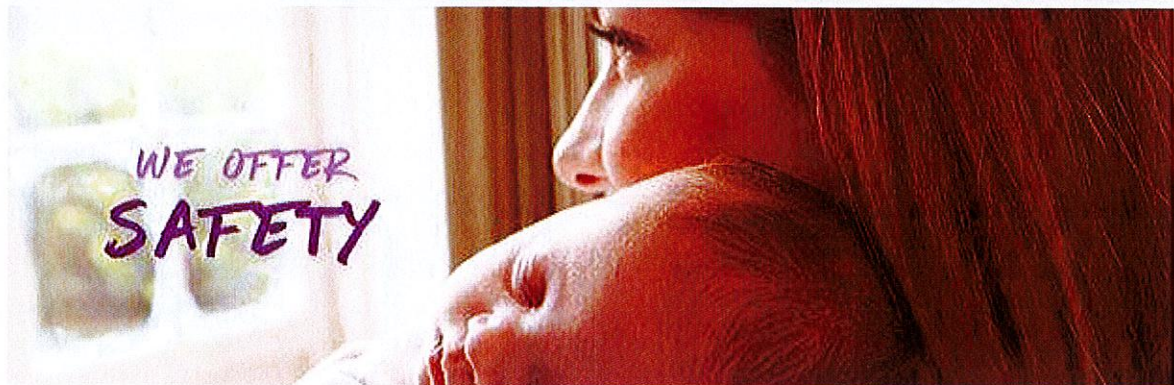
16 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS cont.**Transfers between funds 2023**

Movements between funds comprise:

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds
	General	Designated	
	£	£	£
i) Capital assets financed by restricted giving transferred to general fund upon completion	21,177		(21,177)
ii) Capital assets financed by designated funding transferred to general fund upon completion	660	(660)	
iii) Designation of unrestricted income for particular purposes:			
Group outreach including support staff costs	(35,000)	35,000	
Young peoples support programmes	(5,500)	5,500	
Adult counselling	(3,500)	5,560	
iv) Re-designation of remaining funding after vehicle purchased		(2,060)	
	(22,163)	43,340	(21,177)
General fund		(22,163)	-
Total transfers during the year		21,177	(21,177)



Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre Ltd



Advice Helpline:

0330 551 9495

01284 753085

This provides victims of Domestic Abuse with the opportunity to speak to us anonymously and to seek support and advice.

Advice is also available via an Outreach appointment which is a chance to meet friendly staff at the Refuge and to discuss all possible options to help with your individual needs and circumstances.



Post: PO Box 715, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 9HQ