

REFUGE

England & Wales · Charity number 277424

Details

Other names	CHISWICK FAMILY RESCUE LIMITED
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	01412276
Registered	1979-03-13
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

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Activities

Objects: 1. TO PROVIDE FOR THE RELIEF OF WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN OR OTHER VICTIMS WHO HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO: (I) PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, EMOTIONAL AND/OR MENTAL ABUSE WITHIN AN INTIMATE OR 'FAMILY' RELATIONSHIP ('DOMESTIC VIOLENCE'); OR (II) OTHER GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, WHICH TERM, FOR THE PURPOSES OF THESE ARTICLES, SHALL INCLUDE BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO RAPE, PROSTITUTION, GANG VIOLENCE, SEX-TRAFFICKING OR FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION, IN EITHER OF CASES (I) OR (II) ABOVE, THROUGHOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ABROAD; 2. TO PROVIDE SPECIALIST SUPPORTED HOUSING AND SOCIAL HOUSING AND ANY ASSOCIATED AMENITIES IN ENGLAND, DESIGNED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN WHO ARE THE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND/OR OTHER GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, AND OTHER SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THEIR ONWARD PROGRESSION; AND 3. TO ADVANCE PUBLIC EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND TRAINING ON UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE THROUGHOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ABROAD

Activities: Refuge provides specialist support to women and children escaping domestic violence, modern slavery, human trafficking, forced prostitution, rape, forced marriage and 'honour' based violence. Services include: 24-hr national helpline, women's refuges, outreach and floating support, independent domestic and sexual violence advocates. We raise awareness and influence policy and legislative change.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Accommodation/housing, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Defined Groups

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNITED KINGDOM AND ABROAD
- Throughout England

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£31,975,898	£30,149,880	£9,672,837	472
2024-03-31	£27,813,994	£29,752,240	£7,835,908	441
2023-03-31	£25,388,031	£30,055,933	£9,714,853	415
2022-03-31	£24,299,472	£25,298,237	£14,446,390	356
2021-03-31	£33,983,581	£22,306,658	£15,424,640	329

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Henrietta Barkworth-Nanton	Chair	2020-05-14
Alexandra Sufit		2024-02-23
Amy Lauren Nelsen		2024-02-23
Jeremy James Lewis		2024-02-23
Justin James Derbyshire		2024-02-23
Katharine Patel		2025-02-06
Laurie Victoria Boulton		2026-05-06
Meera Bedi		2024-02-23
Selina Sagayam		2018-12-13

REFUGE

England & Wales - Charity number 277424

Accounts

Towards a future without domestic abuse

Together, we're leading the way
Annual report and financial statements
Year ended 31 March 2025

Charity number: 277424 | Company number: 1412276 | Regulator of Social Housing number: 4730



For women and children.
Against domestic violence.



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Throughout this report all names have been changed to protect survivors’ identities, as indicated by an asterisk*.

Looking back

This year, violence and abuse against women and girls has been highly visible – in headlines, public debate and popular culture. Dramas like Adolescence brought online misogyny into the spotlight, while a series of devastating homicides reminded us of what’s at stake. At the same time, the cost of living and housing crisis left many women trapped with abusers, unable to leave safely. Survivors are navigating not only trauma, but a lack of safe options – particularly those from marginalised communities who often face the greatest barriers to getting help. And this is all while support services across the sector face short-term funding cycles and rising costs. These pressures are shaping the world survivors live in and underlining why our work matters now more than ever.

We’ve seen how those tensions show up in our services. Demand continues, while funding remains stretched. The survivors we support are facing increasingly complex forms of abuse – including sustained control even after leaving, often enabled by technology. This is all made worse by the fact that women don’t always get the help they need until they reach crisis point. As services across housing, health and justice are feeling the squeeze, women are left to navigate trauma alone – and with fewer safe options. The systems they turn to for help are too often slow, fragmented, or harmful in themselves, leaving survivors isolated, retraumatised and with their safety compromised. This is exacerbated even further for disabled survivors, those facing poverty or those with insecure immigration status.

Yet even in the toughest circumstances, our resolve has held firm. Across every part of Refuge, our teams have continued to show up for women and children, responding with strength, compassion and care. Despite all they have to navigate, we’ve seen the many ways survivors move forward with the support of those who stand beside them. Even with the escalating scale of the challenges, our services have remained open, effective and trusted. For us, that’s a source of deep pride, and an undeniable reflection of what we stand for.

Looking ahead

Refuge is entering a new phase. With permanent leadership now in place, including our new Chief Executive, Gemma Sherrington, we’re looking to the future with renewed focus and ambition. In her first weeks, Gemma travelled across the country to experience the breadth of our services, meeting survivors and staff – and witnessing the unique energy, commitment and drive that fuels this organisation. That experience has deepened our understanding of the day-to-day realities that survivors face and strengthened our resolve to push for the change they need.

We are building on firm foundations. In the year ahead, we’ll continue to grow a culture that is inclusive, empowering and survivor centred. We’ll focus our efforts where they’re most needed – from expanding access and deepening support for children, to shoring up our National Domestic Abuse Helpline and scaling up work on tech and economic abuse.

We know there is still significant unmet need for specialist domestic abuse services and that our support can be truly life-changing for those who access it. The time for change is now. And with the backing of our partners, funders and allies, we won’t stop until every woman and child has the safety they deserve.



Message from our Chair and Chief Executive

Resilience in a year of challenge and change

This past year has brought extraordinary challenges. Like many frontline organisations, we've faced rising costs, growing pressure, and a commissioning environment where expectations increase as funding falls. As the Chair and Chief Executive of Refuge, we've had to help navigate some difficult decisions, balancing urgent need with financial sustainability.

Our services are under increasing strain, driven by cost-of-living pressures and the growing complexity of domestic abuse cases. A 2024 report from the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) described the sheer prevalence of violence against women and girls as a 'national emergency' of 'epidemic' proportions. It also recognised the growing threat of technology-facilitated abuse – something we know makes abuse more insidious, more sustained, and harder to escape. On top of all this, the systems around survivors – housing, policing and family courts – often fall short of what survivors need, lacking in coordination, urgency and the trauma-informed care that should be standard.

Despite all this, Refuge has kept going. In the face of huge pressure, our people have shown incredible resilience, purpose and determination. Day in and day out, we both have the privilege of witnessing the dedication that runs through this organisation. It's more than just a passion – it's a fire. Thanks to this, we've been able to continue supporting thousands

of women and children – and the feedback we receive from survivors tells us that our support is helping them take steps towards safety, stability and hope. At a time when so many are feeling trapped or unheard, our services are a lifeline – and we know we've never been more needed.

Powerful work, lasting impact

We're proud that satisfaction in our services among survivors remains high. But we both feel that sometimes, the most powerful moments are the quietest ones – like the mum we met in one of our refuge homes slowly rebuilding her life and retraining as a teaching assistant. That's the impact of our work – creating safety and stability so women can reclaim their confidence, their identity, and their future.

We're also proud of the many things we've achieved as an organisation this year. The *Brick by Brick* campaign, launched in partnership with The Independent and Persimmon Homes, helped us secure two new homes that will be safe havens for families for years to come. The launch of our *No Red Flag is Too Small* campaign on International Women's Day was a ground-breaking event that helped shape the conversation around abusive behaviour.

Our influencing work continued to keep domestic abuse front and centre on the political agenda – something we felt was particularly important in a year that saw a change of government. After July's general election, we responded quickly by publishing a manifesto in the form of a '*Dear Prime Minister*' letter, asking the new Government to do more to eradicate

domestic abuse. This was signed by more than 17,000 people, and we delivered it to 10 Downing Street in October.

Behind the scenes, our expert teams have continued to lead pioneering work on tech and economic abuse, supported new approaches for children in refuges, and played a central role in shaping the Online Safety Act. These efforts are not just about systems change – they're about removing barriers, shifting culture, and improving day-to-day realities for the women and children we support.

To our staff, volunteers, Ambassadors, Champions, partners, grassroots organisations, fundraisers, supporters and allies, and to survivors – thank you. Your commitment helps make this progress possible. You are part of the change, alongside our colleagues across the wider violence against women and girls sector, working together for collective impact. We'd also like to thank our Interim CEO, Abigail Ampofo, for her sterling leadership during this period – guiding Refuge with clarity, compassion and unwavering commitment to survivors.

Looking ahead with purpose and hope

We know it's a challenging time for the women and children we support. Cost of living pressures, housing shortages and systemic inequalities continue to threaten their safety and independence, making it harder than ever to leave. In the face of these realities, we remain steadfast in our mission to keep survivors safe and help them move forwards, free from fear.

Across the organisation, there's a powerful momentum building – a shared determination to reach more survivors, break down more barriers, and build more services that meet the demand. We know we can't do it on our own, so we're proud to work alongside our partners and supporters to build a society where no woman or child has to face abuse alone.

Domestic abuse can and must be challenged. With care, courage and collaboration, we can create a world that no longer tolerates it – and where every survivor has the support they need.

Thank you for standing with us.



"Domestic abuse is not a women's problem, it's a whole society problem. Now, more than ever before, Refuge has an opportunity to be at the vanguard of driving that societal change and getting ever closer to the point where society will not tolerate violence against women and girls."



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, Chair



"The stats around domestic abuse are horrific – but it does not need to be this way. We do not need to accept domestic abuse as a given. I'm really keen to shift the dial on public awareness and attitudes during my tenure."



Gemma Sherrington, Chief Executive

Why we're here



Why we're here

Our vision

Refuge is committed to a world where domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is not tolerated and where women and children can live in safety.

Refuge believes that domestic abuse and violence against women and girls will only end when we create gender equality.



Our mission

We aim to empower women and children to rebuild their lives, free from abuse and fear.

We provide a range of life-saving and life-changing services. We put survivors and their experiences at the heart of our work and help amplify their voices.

Esther's story*

Trigger warning: this survivor testimony contains detailed descriptions of physical and sexual abuse.

"I first realised that I had to leave when I was beaten severely, and my head was split open.

At this point I wasn't involved with any services, although I had regular contact with police due to the domestic abuse. I was also held hostage in our flat for a week. I was beaten, sexually abused, fed drugs and wasn't allowed to wash or use the bathroom.

I escaped to my mum's, and he went to court, then prison. I went back to him shortly after as I believed he would change. Then, in another incident, my throat and back were stamped on, and I was hospitalised.

Eventually, I escaped. As he went in a shop I literally ran for my life. People were stopping me and asking me if I needed help as I was covered in blood. I did not know what I looked like.

A lady from Refuge was allocated to me. She helped me through the court process, came with me while I gave evidence, and helped make a report that enabled me to eventually get safe housing.

The first time I felt free was when I turned up at a refuge. I arrived, walked into the room that I was allocated, and I broke down and said to the worker, 'Is this all for me?'

It was a little self-contained room with everything I needed. I felt such relief that I nearly collapsed.

I appreciate waking up without fear. I thank God every morning for that. I now see my family often – I was estranged and isolated from them for years. I appreciate that I get to make my own decisions and wear what I wish. I appreciate that

I have control of my finances. I appreciate that I get to be ME with no judgement and that I can be loved, as for years I was told no one would love me. I appreciate that I'm sitting here in my little flat, which is my safe place, looking out the window and seeing the sun and trees and that I'll shortly be heading out to go to a job that I love. I appreciate that I was given a chance to have a life that I love.

Refuge supported me through the court case against my ex-partner and gave me the courage to speak up. The support I have had has been amazing. I have gone on to thrive and live an independent, fulfilling life that would not have been possible without their support and guidance. I was given the tools to be able to leave with a confidence I never thought I would have again."

"The first time I felt free was when I turned up at a refuge. I arrived, walked into the room that I was allocated, and I broke down and said to the worker, 'Is this all for me?'"

Esther*



*All names have been changed to protect survivors' identities.

Our impact



2024/2025 at a glance

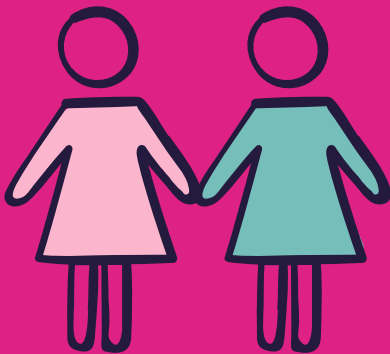
Over the past year, Refuge has supported thousands of women and children through our vital services. Every statistic tells a story – of safety found, strength rediscovered, and lives beginning again. Here are some of them:



Our National Domestic Abuse Helpline was a lifeline. It supported people

43,153 times

via phone, Live Chat and our British Sign Language interpretation and live translation services, helping survivors take their first steps to safety.



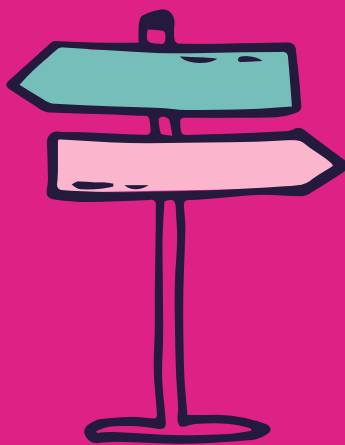
We supported

23,809 people

through our local services, meeting survivors where they were and helping them to move forwards:

1,424

through our refuge accommodation



22,385

through community-based support services.



We provided safe, life-changing accommodation in

319 units within

65 refuges

across **19** local authorities. Each offered shelter, care and a path to freedom.



Behind every case was a complex story of abuse. Many adults accessing our local services faced multiple and overlapping challenges:

74%

subjected to psychological violence

53%

subjected to physical abuse

34%

subjected to economic abuse

30%

subjected to technology-facilitated abuse

22%

subjected to sexual violence

18%

experienced mental health difficulties

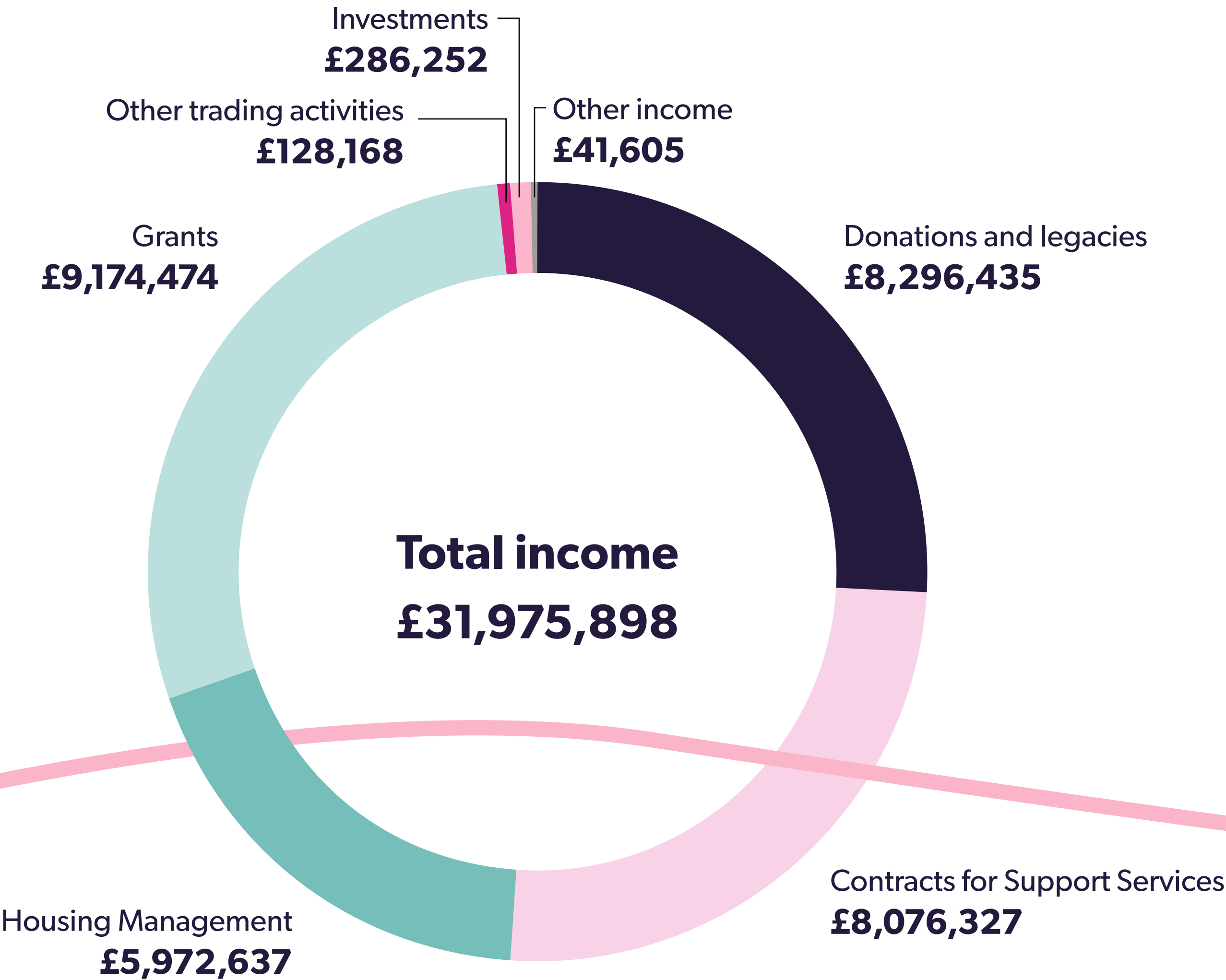
50%

of those supported through our local services (11,996) were dependent children

While we've achieved a lot, there is still unmet demand. We believe that, together, we can be there for every survivor who needs us.

Income and expenditure summary

Between April 2024 and end March 2025 our income was £31.9M and our expenditure was £30.1M. This is broken down as follows:



What we delivered



Priority 1

**Provide emergency
specialist accommodation,
community-based and
specialist support services**



Priority 1

We continued to respond to increasingly complex need by expanding our services, strengthening specialist provision, and creating safer spaces for women and children.

Supporting children and young people

In 2024-25, almost half the residents in our refuges were children. Many of these children have experienced abuse and are often dealing with disrupted routines, instability and uncertainty. In their first few weeks, they typically need time and support to adjust, rebuild trust, and begin to understand what they’ve been through. Helping children to feel safe, heard and supported from the start is essential to breaking the cycle of trauma and laying the foundations for a healthier future. As a result of this, we have continued to strengthen and expand our specialist support for children and young people.

This year, in Warwickshire, we launched our first service dedicated solely to children and young people, led by a new Service Manager focused on improving access and delivering tailored interventions. We secured funding to place Children’s Support Workers (CSWs) in all of our refuges – including, for the first time, in Barking and Dagenham. These workers provide structured one-to-one and group support, lead regular activities, and advocate on behalf of children with schools, healthcare professionals and other services. For some children, this is the first time they’ve had a trusted adult to talk to about their experiences – and that support can change everything.

We also began rolling out a new therapeutic programme across our refuges, developed in partnership with the UK Trauma Council and generously funded by The Dahan Family Foundation. This six-to-eight-week intervention is designed to help children understand and process their experiences and begin to heal. The programme has been shaped by the voices of children and draws on trauma-informed practice to meet individual needs. We’ve already seen the difference it can make – helping children feel calmer, safer and more able to express themselves.



Underpinning this, we continued to build the foundations for long-term change. Refuge has supported children since 1971, but in recent years we’ve formalised our approach, tested new models, and strengthened the evidence base for our work. Over the past year, we have been developing our first dedicated Children and Young People’s Strategy, which will be published in 2026. This work is part of our wider ambition to ensure every child affected by domestic abuse gets the specialist support they need to recover, thrive, and build positive relationships in the future.

Improving access through specialist support

All too often, deaf survivors are turned away from refuges because the appropriate safety measures are not in place. This year, we were able to upgrade the fire alarm system in a refuge to ensure that deaf residents can live there safely – the new system includes flashing alarms and vibrating pillows. We are planning to continue to expand the number of units accessible to deaf residents in the future.

Our pan-London service partnered with Galop, meaning survivors who identify as LGBTQI+ now have access to specialist support. These changes are about ensuring every survivor can access safety and support that reflects who they are.

We entered the second year of our dispersed accommodation pilot, providing tailored homes and specialist support for survivors who may struggle to access traditional communal refuges, for example those with large families, disabilities, or much-loved family pets. For many women, this has meant the difference between staying in danger or reaching safety on their own terms.

In partnership with Warwickshire County Council, we refurbished a property to make it fully accessible for disabled women. We also created a sensory room for children with therapeutic and neurodivergent needs – a first for Refuge nationally. We are immensely proud of this development, which marks an important step towards providing inclusive refuge spaces that support children with diverse sensory



Our refurbished sensory room in a dispersed accommodation property, for children with neurodivergent and therapeutic needs.

requirements. The room provides a dedicated space where resident children can feel safe and connected to their new environment. It helps families settle into the refuge in a gentle, child-centred way. Spaces like this are vital for helping children feel calm and grounded during an otherwise turbulent time.

In Lewisham, we launched a new referral pathway to immigration advice, helping 47 women understand their rights and plan for their futures. In Kingston, we secured funding for an additional Independent Domestic Violence Advocate based within community mental health services. This doubled referrals and improved support for an often-underserved group. Specialist services like these are the key to unlocking long-term safety and independence – especially for women facing multiple layers of disadvantage.



Upgrading refuge accommodation

We're committed to creating safe, supportive spaces where survivors and their children can begin to heal, and this year we've made some important improvements to the accommodation we offer. In one example, women and children in our Hounslow and Hillingdon accommodation are now benefiting from brighter, more welcoming communal spaces that have been redesigned with their input to feel safer and more person centred. For survivors arriving after immense upheaval, these warm, thoughtful environments offer a sense of dignity and calm. These improvements were only possible thanks to dedicated funding.

We also built a new partnership with Solace Women's Aid to improve access to therapeutic support. As a result, survivors can now be referred for counselling within three weeks and can continue therapy even after leaving a refuge, providing continuity during a period of transition.

Introducing new services

Housing is an issue for many survivors of domestic abuse. In Hertfordshire, we launched our first housing advocacy service, supporting survivors who face multiple barriers to find safe and secure accommodation. This has been particularly impactful for those with no recourse to public funds, or specific needs that require a holistic approach. They now have an advocate helping them secure safe housing, reducing the risk of homelessness, and providing the stability needed to rebuild their lives.

In Lambeth, we relaunched the Gaia Centre with Lambeth Council, a one-stop shop that supports survivors through outreach programmes, independent advocacy, legal advice, economic empowerment, and accommodation and housing support. Now operating at greater scale, the expanded service works alongside four partners – AAF, Spires, Respeito and Bede House – to provide joined-up, trauma-informed support for survivors at every stage of their journey. It offers dedicated support to adults as well as children and young people affected by gender-based violence. At a time when specialist services are stretched and need is great, initiatives like this provide a vital lifeline and help more survivors move forward with confidence and dignity.



“Being able to bring my pets means I have a bit of my family with me even though I’ve had to leave the area my family is in because it’s my danger area. It’s made it feel a bit better knowing I have my cats.”

Zoe*

Priority 2

**Deliver high quality
services and set quality
standards for domestic
abuse services**



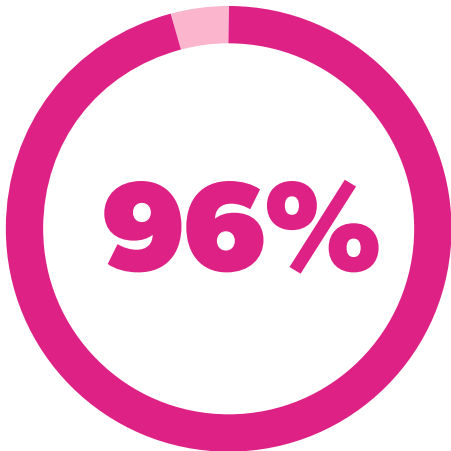
We are committed to providing the best possible services for women and children – and to setting the benchmark for quality across the sector.

Strengthening the National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Our National Domestic Abuse Helpline is a vital lifeline that’s often the first port of call for survivors – and this year we put in place numerous improvements to enhance the service.

We expanded our Volunteer team and, as a result, we now have 52 trained volunteers supporting the helpline across calls and Live Chat. Every one of these volunteers plays a critical role in ensuring that someone is there to listen, respond and guide survivors to safety at the moment they need it most. We also improved functions by adding a new chatbot that provides answers to common questions and directs people to the right support. This helps more survivors access guidance quickly and discreetly, even when they’re not ready or able to speak to someone.

Recognising the unique needs of those who turn to us, we introduced new call pathways for professionals, economic abuse survivors, technology-facilitated abuse survivors and British Sign Language users. We also offer a translation service, helping to ensure the service is accessible to every woman who needs it,



of survivors asked said they definitely had a better understanding of their rights and options at the end of their call to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline.



of professionals asked said they felt better equipped to support the survivor they were working with following a call to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline.

whatever her background, identity or situation. These improvements mean we can respond faster, prioritise more effectively, and remove barriers to safety for those at greatest risk.

We have a dedicated Tech Abuse Lead within the Helpline team to help respond to growing reports of technology-facilitated abuse. This year they supported 91 women whose abusers were using phones, apps and other digital tools to harass, monitor or control them. They also delivered training to the wider Helpline team providing them with the specialist knowledge to offer immediate, expert advice – a vital lifeline in situations where technology is being used to isolate and harm.

In May 2024, we launched a new contact centre platform developed by Genesys which has improved how we manage the service without any disruption to our 24/7 offering. A funding uplift from the Home Office in December allowed us to extend Live Chat hours, meaning the service is now open from 10am to 10pm Monday to Friday, and from 10am to 6pm on weekends. As a result of this, more survivors can now reach us at a time that’s safe for them, including evenings and weekends when other forms of support may not be available.

We were delighted that the vital role of the helpline – and our partnership with Genesys – was recognised through being shortlisted for Best Approach to Supporting Vulnerable Customers at the prestigious European Contact Centre and Customer Service Awards. But most importantly, feedback from survivors and professionals continues to demonstrate its impact with nearly all users saying the service helped them feel more informed, empowered and supported. At a time when domestic abuse remains a national emergency, services like this have never been more essential.



“It’s so beautiful to speak to someone so kind, understanding and knowledgeable. I’m not shaking anymore. It’s like magic.”
Claire*

*All names have been changed to protect survivors’ identities.

Delivering specialist tech and economic abuse services

Last year our expert Technology Facilitated Abuse and Economic Empowerment team supported 577 women facing complex and often hidden forms of abuse, helping them take critical steps towards regaining control, security and independence. They also trained professionals in the police, health and domestic abuse sectors through our accredited packages. We completed a Home Office-funded project delivering training to organisations including Sign Health, Karma Nirvana, Galop, Blind Aid and Stay Safe East, ensuring more survivors can access informed, inclusive support wherever they turn.

We continued gifting tech devices to survivors and their children from smartphones and tablets to security systems. Many survivors suspect their devices may be compromised, so before they are able to escape safely, we can provide burner phones enabling them safe access to their friends and family without fear of being monitored. When people are able to escape, we can provide comprehensive safety checks of their devices as well as new smart phones if necessary, enabling survivors to set up online bank accounts and start to regain autonomy over their lives and finances.

We also grew our podcast series, 'In Conversation With', covering topics such as intimate image-based abuse and romance fraud and translating the content into British Sign Language. Doing this has ensured that more survivors are able to access life-changing knowledge in ways that work for them.

Our tech safety website doubled its traffic, supported by new accessible content and videos. At a time when technology is being weaponised against survivors in increasingly sophisticated ways, this resource is providing vital protection and guidance to thousands.

Our work on economic empowerment continues to be a focus and priority, this year we have added a number of economic roles to the service, funded by The Aviva Foundation and Nationwide Building Society, to support more survivors to regain financial independence. What's more, we strengthened vital partnerships with organisations including Barclays, The Co-operative Bank, and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), to expand access to specialist support.

On top of all this, Refuge was invited to speak at major international events including the UN Conference on Tech-Facilitated Abuse in New York. By amplifying the voices of survivors and sharing our expertise on a global stage, we cemented our role as a global leader in this space and reinforced just how urgently this work is needed.

Launching our first Tech Safety Summit

In September 2024, we hosted our inaugural UK Tech Safety Summit to raise awareness and education around technology-facilitated domestic abuse. The two-day online event, which was sponsored by Bumble, featured over 25 sessions from 55 expert speakers on social media safety, AI, car tracking, economic abuse and more.

This landmark event equipped frontline professionals to recognise red flags, respond safely, and support survivors facing some of the most complex and isolating forms of abuse. It marked a crucial step forward in protecting survivors in an increasingly digital world.



Developing new training for frontline staff

To help address long waiting lists for external training, we developed and launched our own Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) programme which, so far, 47 members of staff have completed. It is a major step towards ensuring that more survivors receive timely, expert support from teams who fully understand the dynamics of abuse and how best to respond. This investment means women can access the help they need sooner – support that is consistent and tailored to their individual situation.

Priority 3

**Drive policy change to
ensure sustainability of
domestic abuse services**



Our policy and influencing work is grounded in survivors’ experiences and frontline expertise – pushing for legislation, funding and systems that prevent domestic abuse and enable survivors to get the support they need.

Influencing the future of domestic abuse policy

Domestic abuse impacts millions of women and children each year – it is a national emergency, and it must never fall off the political agenda. Ahead of the 2024 General Election, we took the opportunity to challenge all political parties to put violence against women and girls at the heart of their plans.

Through our *Dear Prime Minister* campaign, we called on every political party to prioritise

tackling domestic abuse. More than 17,000 people signed our open letter – a powerful show of public support – which we delivered to 10 Downing Street 100 days after the new Labour Government took office. Alongside our own manifesto, we also contributed to a joint sector manifesto, ensuring the voices and needs of survivors were front and centre in the policy debate.

The Government’s welcome commitment to halve violence against women and girls is bold and ambitious. We will work together with



survivors and partners and use our powerful collective voice to ensure that this mission leads to real change.

Our *Rotten Apples* campaign called for police officers and staff to be suspended while under investigation for violence against women and girls. It also demanded an overhaul of police vetting. These key asks were accepted by the new Government and work continues to shape the detail ahead of implementation later in 2025. These are crucial changes to rid police forces of dangerous perpetrators and to safeguard survivors.

These efforts are about more than politics – they are about the systems survivors rely on every day. Our wider mission is to make sure survivors of domestic abuse are not left behind in public sector reform – and that the services they turn to are properly funded, trauma-informed and responsive to their needs. We are using our collective voice to push for lasting reform that leads to safety, justice and support because survivors deserve nothing less.

“Although my experience with the police was overall positive, one police officer advised me to come off social media and change my name. Perpetrators need to be the ones to change their actions to keep survivors safe, not the other way round.”
Ivana*

Protecting survivors in a changing justice system

As the Government responds to the prison capacity crisis, we have taken a clear and determined stance to ensure that domestic abuse survivors are not put at further risk. Following direct advocacy from Refuge and our sector partners, perpetrators of domestic abuse have been excluded from early release schemes such as the SDS40. This is a critical safeguard that helps to protect survivors from further trauma, rebuilds trust in the justice system, and prevents reoffending.

We are continuing to push for deeper reform across the criminal justice system so that survivors' needs, safety and experiences are prioritised at every stage. In a system that all too often fails to deliver protection or accountability, this work has never been more urgent. Every survivor deserves to feel safe – not retraumatised – when seeking justice.

Turning laws into lasting change

Following our highly successful campaign to secure changes to the Online Safety Act, which passed in 2023, our focus has now shifted to implementation. This year, we've worked to ensure the law delivers the protection survivors need and deserve. Our Policy team, along with our Survivor Panel and Tech Abuse team, worked closely with Ofcom to ensure its violence against women and girls' guidance is as robust as possible.

These efforts are helping shape a safer online world – one where platforms are held accountable for abuse and survivors are no longer left to navigate digital spaces alone. This is an important and long overdue step forward for regulation of the tech sector – and it has been made possible by Refuge's persistence, expertise and survivor-led approach.

Strengthening relationships across Government

We've deepened our influence at the heart of Westminster to drive meaningful, survivor-centred reform. Over the past year we have built positive and productive relationships with the new Government and across Parliament to drive change in policy and practice that benefits survivors. We've hosted meetings and visits with key ministers, including many from the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, as well as committee chairs and backbench MPs. We continue to develop our work with officials across key government departments to inform and influence change in policy that impacts survivors. These connections will be critical to delivering long-term progress and ensuring that the experiences of women and children are not only heard but translated into real change.

In a year of political transition, our advocacy has helped keep domestic abuse high on the agenda – because the time to act is now.



Priority 4

Prevent violence against women and girls through awareness raising and changing harmful and pervasive societal attitudes



Priority 4

We use our platform to challenge misconceptions, share survivors’ stories, and create cultural moments that shift attitudes and drive change.

Launching a bold campaign film

In late 2024, Refuge released *Make the World a Refuge* – a powerful short film conceived by our Ambassador, renowned actor Billie Piper. The film featured Billie reading anonymised testimonies from survivors of domestic abuse, bringing to light the reality of coercive control, technology-facilitated abuse, financial abuse, and physical violence. These were stories of real women sharing what it means to live in fear, and what it takes to break free. It demonstrated how controlling behaviours – like tracking phones or isolating women from loved ones – are central to all forms of abuse.

The film’s raw and emotional portrayal of survivors’ experiences raised public awareness and deepened understanding of the many forms that domestic abuse can take. It reminded audiences that domestic abuse isn’t always visible and that listening to survivors is the first step towards change.

It sparked a remarkable online response with many survivors commenting on its authenticity, and it raised almost £50,000 in the process. These funds are helping us reach more women in crisis through the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, our refuges, and our frontline services. The film’s success culminated in it winning Film of the Year at the Smiley Charity Film Awards in March 2025.

The film was created in partnership with London-based creative agency AMV BBDO and directed by BAFTA-winner Georgi Banks-Davies (*I Hate Suzi* and *Kaos*). We are profoundly grateful to Billie, Georgi, the entire team at AMV BBDO, and all the survivors who shared their testimonies with us for being so generous with their time and talents.



Photo by Stacey Osborne

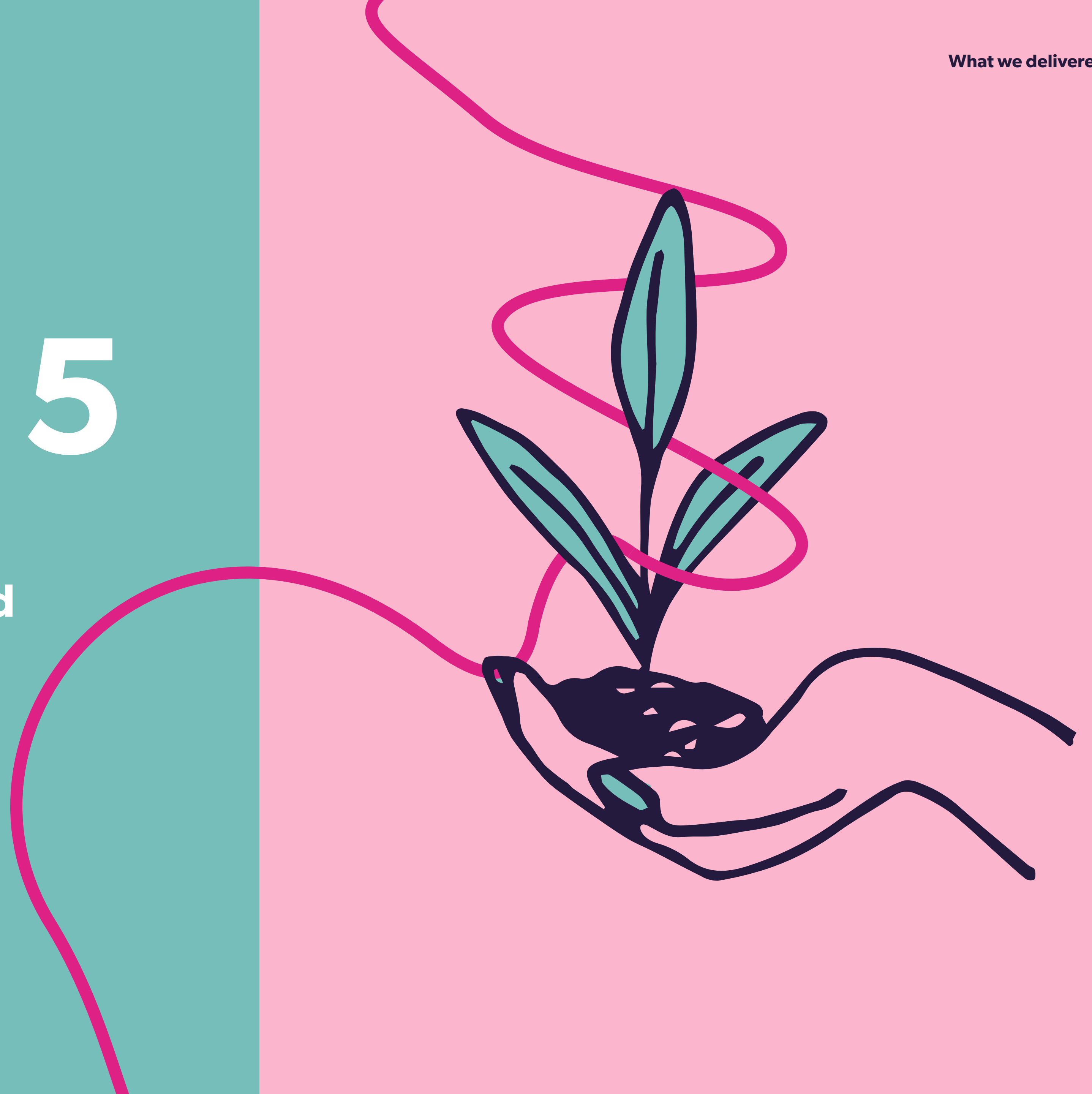
“Platforming survivor voices is vital in tackling domestic abuse, so *Make the World a Refuge* was an incredibly important project for me. The film’s impact has been truly remarkable, and I am honoured to have lent my voice to these survivors’ words. However, we cannot stop talking about domestic abuse and the many ways it can manifest. Understanding the signs of abuse could save a life, and I hope this film continues to show survivors that they are not alone.”

Billie Piper

*All names have been changed to protect survivors’ identities.

Priority 5

**Build partnerships to share
and grow our expertise and
expand our impact**



Priority 5

We collaborate with media, grassroots organisations and survivor campaigners to reach new audiences, influence policy, and develop life-changing services and solutions.

Coming together to fund two new homes for survivors

In September 2024, we partnered with The Independent to launch Brick by Brick, a bold public campaign rooted in the urgent need for safe, stable housing for women and children escaping abuse. Developed with national housebuilder Persimmon Homes, the campaign aimed to raise £350,000 to purchase a house fitted with discreet security features and designed as a safe, welcoming space for women and children to rebuild their lives. The Independent invited every reader to make a £15 donation, asking them to, 'Be a Brick. Buy a Brick.'

For survivors, a home like this is more than just a roof over their head – it's a foundation for freedom, healing and hope. An outpouring of support followed, fuelled by a powerful media campaign which saw over 70 articles published in The Independent, opening up a national conversation on domestic abuse. The campaign was backed by a host of Refuge Ambassadors, Champions and supporters including Olivia Colman, Helen Mirren, Patrick Stewart, Ranvir Singh, David Morrissey and Cherie Blair. It also gained support from The Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, HRH Queen Camilla and a number of philanthropic individuals, companies and Trusts.

Six survivors connected to Refuge chose to share their stories to help the public understand the barriers survivors face, and why safe, flexible accommodation is so essential to recovery.

Within a month, the initial target was met. The campaign was extended, and on Christmas Eve 2024 we announced that we had raised enough to fund two homes for survivors. In total £587,445 was raised. Construction was completed in spring 2025, and the first families have now moved in.

"This is a monumental achievement, and I'm immensely proud of the role our readers and supporters have played in building this house Brick by Brick. Together with Refuge and Persimmon Homes, we have delivered a state-of-the-art property which will provide sanctuary for countless women and children."

Geordie Greig,
Editor-in-Chief of The Independent



Bringing awareness into the workplace

For survivors who are navigating abuse while trying to hold down a job, having the right support at work can be life changing. This year, to help more workplaces support employees affected by domestic abuse, we were proud to partner with Sharon Livermore MBE, survivor, campaigner, and founder of Domestic Abuse Education.

After meeting Sharon at a fundraising event, we began working together to amplify *Sharon’s Policy* – a domestic abuse policy template for businesses and organisations. Now signposted on the Refuge website, the resource empowers employers to recognise and respond to domestic abuse with practical, survivor-centred steps. Following our announcement, downloads of the policy template jumped from eight to 51 in a single month – a clear sign that awareness is growing, and more employers are stepping up.

Since then, we’ve continued to collaborate. Our Communications and Policy teams supported the development of *Protecting Every Future*, a new policy focused on protecting pregnant women in the workplace. Sharon now promotes our National Domestic Abuse Helpline at events around the UK, helping even more women to know where they can turn for confidential, expert support. Her son even ran the Paris Marathon to raise funds for Refuge – a fantastic example of how personal connection and shared values can drive lasting change.



Supporting survivors and their pets

Another partnership that we forged in 2024-25 was with Cats Protection. Together, we’re tackling a hidden yet devastating barrier to safety: survivors’ fears of leaving their beloved pets behind when fleeing domestic abuse.

Research shows that worries about what may happen to their pets can keep many women in harm’s way. By offering specialist cat fostering through Cats Protection, we’re helping more survivors to escape sooner knowing that their pet will be taken care of until they can be safely reunited.



Photo by Cat’s Protection

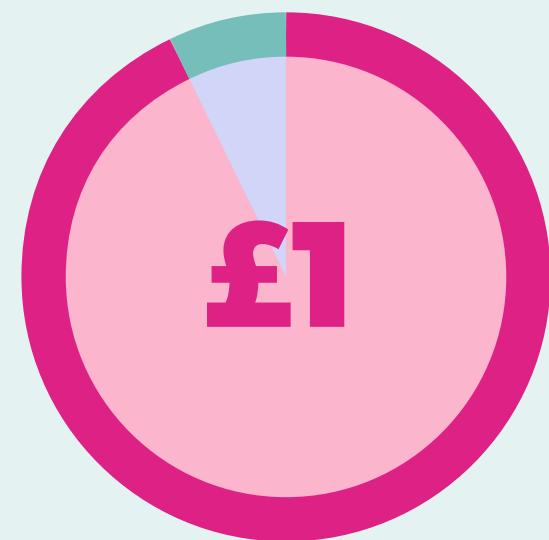
Thanks to our supporters

Every step we've taken this year has been made possible by an extraordinary community of supporters from major donors and corporate partners to individual fundraisers and volunteers.

We are forever grateful for the passion, commitment and enormous energy of those who give up their time to raise vital money and awareness for our cause.

So much of what we achieve wouldn't be possible without their unstoppable support, spirit and dedication. Whether they're running marathons, hosting events or sharing our message, our supporters play a crucial role in helping us reach more survivors and give women and children the chance to rebuild their lives.

In 2024-25, our supporters raised more than £8.3 million to fund our services, strengthen our voice, and provide safety, hope, and a pathway to freedom for women and children experiencing domestic abuse.



For every £1 our supporters give, 93p goes towards delivering vital services that change the lives of survivors and supporting costs. 7p is spent on fundraising to generate future income, enabling us to continue supporting and empowering survivors.

Fundraising with heart and creativity

This year 563 individuals, as well as school, business and community groups, took part in fundraising for Refuge. Whether hosting their own events, staging campaigns, or turning personal milestones into moments of giving, they demonstrated endlessly inspiring ways of supporting Refuge from DJ nights, plays and book clubs to birthdays, weddings and school initiatives.

Our supporters were all united by a shared belief in a future without domestic abuse – and a determination to do something about it. Many were survivors themselves, while others were moved by the stories of women and children who have experienced unimaginable harm. Together, they turned compassion into action. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who stepped up.

At Christmas, the generosity of companies, individuals, and community groups reached unprecedented heights, with festive donations totalling an incredible £82,948 in December alone – the highest amount we've ever received during the holiday season. These contributions meant more women and children could access safety and support at one of the hardest times of the year.

One of our longest-standing supporters, the Kew Women's Institute, reached an incredible milestone this year – raising £50,000 over 10 years for our Hounslow service through community events including quizzes, guided walks, and afternoon teas. We were delighted to welcome members to our offices to celebrate their decade of support, reflect on the enormous difference they've made, and thank them for their unwavering commitment to our mission.





Building momentum through events

This year, thousands of supporters went the distance by testing their limits, embracing discomfort and channelling their inner strength – all in solidarity with survivors of domestic abuse. From marathons and half marathons to virtual challenges and icy open-water dips, our events calendar continued to grow – reaching more people than ever before. In total, we supported over 10,500 participants this year. The highlights included:

- 42 London Marathon runners raised £123,044 – more than doubling the team’s target
- 51 runners raised £44,011 in the Royal Parks Half Marathon
- 47 runners raised £17,716 in the Hackney Half Marathon
- 880 brave participants raised £48,772 in the International Women’s Day Cold Water Dip Challenge

These extraordinary efforts reflect the growing power and passion behind our events programme. We are endlessly inspired by the strength, resilience and determination of everyone who goes above and beyond to support Refuge.

Their dedication doesn’t just raise vital funds – it keeps our services open, our National Domestic Abuse Helpline answering calls day and night, and our message of hope alive for every woman and child experiencing domestic abuse. It’s because of them that more survivors can find safety, begin healing, and look towards a future free from fear. We are profoundly grateful for every single supporter who puts their time, heart and determination into our shared mission. They are truly changing lives – today and tomorrow.

Making a major difference through philanthropy

Once again, our philanthropists have led with generosity and commitment and made a huge impact on the lives of survivors of domestic abuse. Their ongoing support allows us to deliver so much of our life-changing work. Every gift is a statement of solidarity – a shared belief in a world where no woman or child lives in fear.

This year, our supporters stepped forward in extraordinary ways. At Christmas, a matched giving appeal supported by The Brook Trust raised £136,604 – our most successful festive campaign to date. These funds are helping to keep the National Domestic Abuse Helpline running and supporting women and children across our refuges and legal programmes at a time when pressure remains high.

Rock legend Chris Rea also made a heartfelt contribution, donating a one-of-a-kind electric Mini decorated with lyrics from his iconic song *Driving Home for Christmas*. The car raised £27,000 at auction – money that has helped offer hope to the thousands of women and children we support every day.

We are also deeply proud of our ongoing three-year partnership with the UK Trauma Council, generously supported by the Dahan Family Foundation. Together, we are co-creating a vital programme that nurtures healing and hope for children living in our refuges. Through therapeutic play and trauma-informed care, we’re helping the youngest of survivors begin to rebuild their sense of safety, resilience and joy after the trauma they’ve endured. We continue to be humbled and appreciative of this wonderful tripartite collaboration.

Powering services through trusts and foundations

Many of our most vital services – including culturally specific support for Eastern European, Vietnamese and Chinese women – were made possible this year thanks to the generosity of charitable trusts and foundations. These services ensure that women from all backgrounds can access support that is safe, respectful, and responsive to their needs, so no survivor is left navigating abuse alone.

A standout opportunity was the *Brick by Brick* campaign, delivered in partnership with The Independent, which raised funds to purchase safe homes for survivors. With demand for safe accommodation rising, this campaign showed the power of philanthropy to create real, lasting change. A generous £150,000 donation from the Julia Rausing Trust paved the way for us to buy a second property, helping to meet the urgent need for safe and stable housing and providing more women and children with the stability they need to begin rebuilding their lives, free from fear.

Creating change with our corporate partners

We are hugely grateful to the 59 businesses and brands that partnered with us this year. They stood with us in our mission to end domestic abuse and showed that change is possible when values and action align. Together, they raised funds, increased visibility and helped us reach new audiences. Some of the highlights included:

- Our award-winning partnership with Barclays supported a dedicated role within our Tech Facilitated Abuse and Economic Empowerment team and contributed to their wider work, through extended funding. In addition, Barclays senior leaders came together to explore survivor-centred changes to products and services.

- The Co-operative Bank increased their annual donation to help support our National Domestic Abuse Helpline. They also supported our *No Red Flag is Too Small* campaign.
- Benefit Cosmetics raised nearly £79,000 through their most successful *Bold is Beautiful* campaign since the pandemic.
- Scamp & Dude revisited their hugely successful ‘Swag Bag with Purpose’ initiative and Refuge once again benefitted from sales of all bags curated by beauty pioneer Sam Chapman, raising £20,675.
- Home Bargains took part in a sleepout and raised £10,433. They have recently registered to fundraise again.
- Genesys supported us on a pro bono basis implementing the consolidation of all of our support channels into one cloud-based platform. This has the potential to save 75 hours per week in staff time and could enable us to support up to 40% more survivors.



Supporting survivors through lasting generosity

This year, we were proud to receive vital support through individual giving, legacy pledges and in-memory donations. Each special and meaningful contribution played a crucial role in helping us reach women and children living with abuse and offer the safety, support and stability they need.

Our three appeals this year – Summer, Christmas and Mother’s Day – raised £736,000 in total. Our Mother’s Day campaign was especially powerful, exceeding its target and welcoming over 1,500 new supporters to our cause.

This year, 160 incredible supporters pledged over £3.5 million to Refuge in their wills, ensuring their support and long-standing commitment to our work can continue for years to come. These gifts are more than generous – they are transformative. They help ensure Refuge will always be here, ready to offer safety, guidance and hope to any woman and her children experiencing abuse. One legacy gift we received this year was from an incredibly generous gentleman who left his whole estate – worth over £62,000 – to Refuge.

Donating in memory of a loved one also played a meaningful role. Following the death of Maggie Rae, a former chair of Refuge, her family selected us as one of two charities to receive donations in her memory. Over £8,000 was raised, and her family have since pledged their continued support. We are honoured by this tribute to Maggie’s legacy and deeply grateful for the continued solidarity of her loved ones.

At a time when survivors need us more than ever, this kind of enduring support helps keep our services running day and night. Our supporters make our work possible – and this year, they helped us adapt to new challenges and continue reaching survivors with the care and protection they deserve. Thank you to everyone who supported us for being a part of our movement.

“It’s astonishing that so many women and, by extension, so many of our customers will experience abuse in their lifetime. We’re incredibly proud to continue our work with Refuge and to support this campaign to raise awareness of the abusive red flags that are all too common in relationships.”

Maria Cearn,
Chief Operating Officer
at The Co-operative Bank

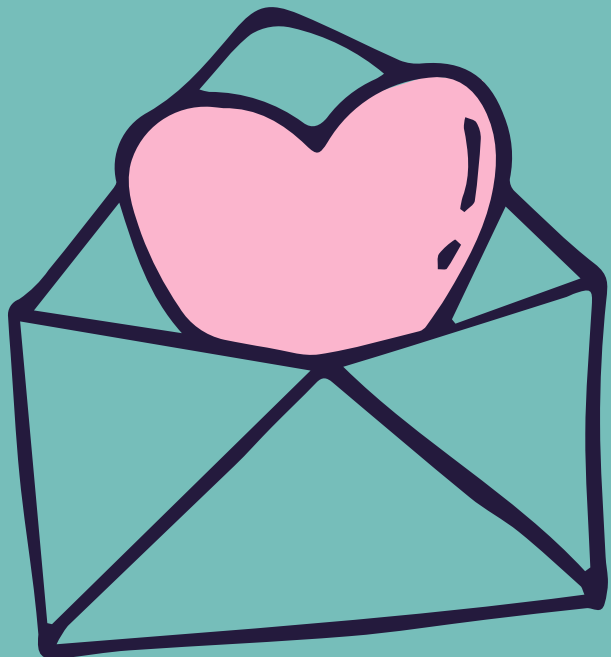
Our thanks

To all of our supporters – thank you. Whether you gave your time, your voice or your donations, you’ve helped Refuge be there for women and children when it’s mattered most.

To our generous partners, Ambassadors, donors, the families of those who left a gift in their will, and to everyone who wished their gift to remain anonymous – your support means so much. You’ve helped keep our services running and sent a powerful message to survivors: ‘You are not alone’.

And, finally, to every survivor who has shared their time and their lived experiences with us – thank you for your trust and strength. Whether you’ve spoken to the media, joined our survivor panel, supported our policy work, fundraised, or helped improve how we deliver our services, your voice has shaped every part of what we do. You remind us every day of why this work is so important.

Thank you all for being part of our mission towards a future without domestic abuse.



- A&O Shearman
- Adjoa Andoh
- Aisling Bea
- Alex Scott MBE
- AMV BBDO
- Anna Whitehouse
- Avon Cosmetics Ltd
- Barclays
- Baroness Helena Kennedy LT KC
- Bella Ramsey
- Benefit Cosmetics
- Billie Piper
- Bumble
- Caitlin O’Ryan
- Chanita Stephenson
- Charli Howard
- Cherie Blair CBE KC
- Chris Rea
- Christopher A. Holder
- Collective Studios
- Dame Helen Mirren
- David Morrissey
- Ellie Bamber
- Ennismore Foundation
- Flo Finch
- Garfield Weston Foundation

- Genesys
- Harrison-Frank Family Foundation
- Her Majesty the Queen
- Hubbub & Virgin Media O2
- Igor Tulchinsky
- Imelda Staunton
- Julie and Richard Swann
- Juliet Stevenson
- Lloyds Banking Group
- Lorien Haynes
- Maggie Rae and family
- Mastercard
- Matchroom Charitable Foundation
- McCann Worldgroup UK
- Mint Velvet
- Nationwide Building Society
- Neil Amos and Maggie Poe
- Nikita Kanda
- Olivia Colman
- Outernet
- PA Consulting
- PayPlan
- Persimmon Charitable Foundation
- Picturehouse Cinemas
- Pixel Artworks

- Players of People’s Postcode Lottery, with funds awarded from Postcode Support Trust
- PwC
- QBE Foundation
- Ranvir Singh
- Richard Herring
- Ring
- Rosemary Reed
- Rothesay
- Saffron Hocking
- Sharegift
- Sharon Gaffka
- Sir Mohamed Mansour
- Sir Patrick Stewart
- SpaceNK
- Stratford Town Trust
- The Alchemy Foundation
- The Aviva Foundation
- The Brook Trust
- The Caring Family Foundation
- The Co-operative Bank

- The Dahan Family Foundation
- The Eveson Trust
- The Independent
- The Julia Rausing Trust
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The People’s Picture
- TP ICAP
- Two Magpies Fund
- Tyl by NatWest
- Victoria Derbyshire
- Weil Gotshal & Manges LLP
- Wells Fargo Foundation
- Wendy Turner-Webster
- Zara McDermott
- 2CV

Mrs Pham’s* Story

“Without Refuge, I would not have any freedom. I am very happy and grateful to Refuge workers who have been with me in this journey. Support from Refuge is very meaningful to me.”

Legal, administrative and governance

Administrative details

Charity number: 277424
Company number: 1412276
Regulator of Social Housing number: 4730

Principal office:

Refuge, Fora, 92 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TY

Auditors:

Crowe U.K. LLP, 55 Ludgate Hill, London, EC4M 7JW

Bankers:

HSBC Bank Plc, 281 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4HJ
Barclays Bank Plc, 1 Churchill Place, London E14 5HP

Investment Managers:

Charles Stanley & Co, 70-72 Chertsey Street, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4HL

Solicitors:

Bates Wells, 10 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BE
PJH Law, 18a Maiden Lane, Stamford, Lincolnshire, PE9 2AZ

Trustees, officers and advisers

Under its Memorandum and Articles of Association, Refuge was originally incorporated as Chiswick Family Rescue on 30th January 1979 as a company limited by guarantee not for profit and not having share capital. The name was subsequently changed to Refuge on 5 March 1993.

It is a charity with a registered office at Fora, 92 Albert Embankment, London. On 13 August 2012 Refuge became a Registered Provider of Social Housing regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. A Board of Trustees (whose members are also directors of the charitable company) oversees Refuge’s policies and the execution of its activities. Members are elected upon a resolution of the Board and may resign their membership by notice in writing to the company.

The members of the Board who held office during the year were:

Board of Trustees:

Hetti Barkworth–Nanton (*Chair*)
Selina Sagayam (*Vice-Chair from 01.01.2024, Chair of People, Nomination and Remuneration Committee to 23.05.2024*)
Dheepa Balasundaram (*Chair of Audit and Risk Committee*) (*to 31.03.2025*)
Meera Bedi (*Chair of Services and Safeguarding Committee from 29.05.2025*)
Justin Derbyshire (*from 23.02.2024 and Chair of People, Nomination and Remuneration Committee from 05.09.2024*)
Jeremy Lewis (*Chair of Audit and Risk Committee from 28.11.2024*)
Amy Nelsen (*from 23.02.2024*)
Ayanna Nelson (*to 31.03.2025 and Chair of Services and Safeguarding Committee from 01.01.2024 to 18.03.2025*)
Katharine Patel (*from 6.02.2025 and Chair of Resources Committee from 05.06.2025*)
Jon Rowney (*Chair of Resources Committee to 06.03.2025*)
Alex Sufit

Ambassadors:

Ellie Bamber
Cherie Booth CBE KC
Olivia Colman CBE
Sharon Gaffka
Saffron Hocking

Charli Howard
Nikita Kanda
Baroness Helena Kennedy KC
Zara McDermott
Dame Helen Mirren
Billie Piper
Rosemary Reed
Alex Scott MBE
Ranvir Singh
Chanita Stephenson
Sir Patrick Stewart OBE

Chief Executive

Abigail Ampofo (*interim from 04.03.2024 to 6.05.2025*)
Gemma Sherrington (*from 24.03.2025*)

Senior Leadership Team

Director of Corporate Services:
Michaela Chamberlain (*to 11.07.2024*)
Jo Knowles (*interim to 07.05.2025*)
Jayne Thorpe (*from 22.04.2025*)
Director of Fundraising, Policy and Communications:
Louise Firth (*to 03.07.2024*)
Ikram Dahman (*interim from 11.06.2024*)
Director of People and Culture:
Lornette Pemberton (*to 31.12.2024*)
Director of Service Delivery:
Denise Brown
Director of Technology:
Cathryn Symons (*to 30.09.2024*)

Governing document

Refuge is a charitable company limited by guarantee, originally incorporated as Chiswick Family Rescue on 30 January 1979 and registered as a charity on 31 March 1979. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. Refuge is a Registered Provider of Social Housing regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing.

Refuge is compliant with the Regulator of Social Housing’s Governance and Financial Viability Standard. We maintain strong governance arrangements and sound financial management to ensure the long-term sustainability of our services and assets. Refuge has also adopted the Charity Code of Governance, which further strengthens our commitment to high standards of leadership, accountability, and transparency.

Refuge Trading Limited, a registered company and wholly owned subsidiary of Refuge, was established in 2021 to carry out non-primary purpose trading on behalf of Refuge. It has its own Board of Directors consisting of three Refuge Trustees: Jon Rowney (Chair), Katharine Patel and Jeremy Lewis as well as two members of Refuge’s senior Leadership Team: the Interim Director of Fundraising, Policy and Communications Ikram Dahman and the Director of Corporate Services Jayne Thorpe. Refuge Trading Limited’s Board meets once a year in September to approve the statutory accounts.

Recruitment and appointment of The Board of Trustees

The Directors of the company are also charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law. There shall be a minimum of five and a maximum of twelve Trustees who are appointed by a decision

of the Trustees. Appointments are made on an initial three-year term of office. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association each Trustee shall retire from office at the third Annual Retirement Meeting following the commencement of his or her term of office, this being the meeting of the Trustees at which the accounts of the Charity are adopted. Retiring Trustees may be reappointed for a maximum of three consecutive terms of office.

Periodic skills audits are undertaken to ensure that the skills/ experience of the Board of Trustees align with those necessary for the management of the Charity’s business. Where necessary, Trustees are recruited and appointed to meet any skills gaps.

The Board of Trustees induction and training

All new members of the Board of Trustees receive an induction pack containing detailed information about Refuge, its organisation and its work. The induction pack is updated periodically and reissued to all Trustees. New Trustees spend time with the Chief Executive, Chair and senior staff to familiarise themselves with Refuge’s activities and their role and responsibilities as a charity Trustee. Training is provided to introduce Trustees to their legal and governance duties, including mandatory dynamics of domestic abuse, data protection/GDPR, safeguarding, cybersecurity, EDI and Microaggressions training. There are visits to community services, opportunities for specific training and presentations by staff at Board meetings. All Trustees have received a copy of the Charity Commission publication ‘The Essential Trustee’ and regular self-assessments are undertaken against the Charity Governance Code.

Organisation

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the overall governance of Refuge, overseeing its compliance, strategy

and planning. They meet regularly to agree and monitor the strategic direction of the organisation, with the following four committees including Specialist Committee Members focusing on specific aspects of the charities work: Audit and Risk; People, Nominations and Remuneration; Resources; Services and Safeguarding. Refuge’s Chief Executive, Gemma Sherrington, is responsible for the day-to-day management of the charity and the implementation of policy, supported by a highly dedicated and professional team of staff and volunteers.

Partnerships

In pursuit of its charitable aims, Refuge works in partnership with a range of charitable, government and statutory agencies to provide safe accommodation for women and children escaping domestic abuse.

Housing associations:

Abrol Ltd, BPHA, Central and Cecil, Clarion Housing Group, Derby Homes, Gateway, Hexagon, London and Quadrant, Metropolitan Thames Valley, Notting Hill Genesis, Orbit, PA Housing, Peabody, Sanctuary Housing, HomeGroup and Tuntum. Refuge also works with the Women in Safe Homes Fund.

Statutory partners:

The London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hillingdon, Kingston upon Thames, Lewisham, Lambeth, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond, Southwark, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth and Westminster. The counties of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Warwickshire. The city of Derby and Derby Homes. The Greater London Authority. London Councils. Derbyshire PCC, Hertfordshire PCC, Warwickshire PCC, MOPAC, Home Office, Ministry of Justice.

In addition to our statutory partners, Refuge also receives funding from the social enterprise IRISi.

Objectives

The objects of the charity are:

- To provide for the relief of women and their children or other victims who have been subject to:
 - (i) physical, sexual, emotional and/or mental abuse within an intimate or “family” relationship (“domestic abuse”); or
 - (ii) other gender-based abuse, which term, for the purposes of these Articles, shall include but not be limited to rape, prostitution, gang abuse, sex-trafficking or female genital mutilation, in either of cases or
 - (iii) above, throughout the United Kingdom and abroad
- To provide specialist supported housing and social housing and any associated amenities in England, designed to meet the needs of women and children who are the victims of domestic abuse and/or other gender-based abuse, and other services designed to facilitate their onward progression; and
- To advance public education, research and training on understanding of the issues of domestic abuse and gender-based abuse throughout the United Kingdom and abroad.

Refuge’s mission continues to be that of providing emergency accommodation and support to women and children escaping domestic abuse whilst raising awareness and understanding of the issue. Its principal aims and objectives are to:

- Provide a range of high-quality specialist services to women and children escaping domestic abuse including a Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline, a growing number of safe houses with additional specialist support services for women and children, outreach and floating support services, refuges and outreach for black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee (BAMER) women, independent domestic abuse advocates and specialist support.
- Raise public awareness of the issues surrounding domestic abuse and campaign to ensure the voices of survivors are heard.

Public benefit statement

Refuge operates for public benefit. The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission’s general guidance on public benefit, “Charities and Public Benefit”.

Respect, Inclusion and Belonging

Respect, inclusion, and belonging are fundamental to what we want to achieve in all that we do at Refuge. We aim to build a culture where our staff, volunteers, trustees, service users, survivors, partners, and all who work with or alongside us are valued and respected. As an intersectional feminist organisation committed to challenging inequality across society, equality and equity remain at the forefront in helping us to achieve our strategic priorities.

Our Respect, Inclusion, and Belonging (RIB) Strategy (which were launched in 2022/23) ensures that our commitment to equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion (EEDI) remains central and active within Refuge. The supporting RIB action plan requires the senior leadership team (SLT) and their directorates to review and consult on actions which will ensure the strategy remains active and relevant to our EEDI values.

Through our Equality Network Groups we ensure employees are represented, have a voice and can raise ideas or concern to their SLT sponsor.

As a recognised Disability Confident Employer, we are committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive working environment for all. This accreditation reflects our dedication to removing barriers, increasing opportunities, and ensuring that everyone can thrive through our recruitment process.

This is supported through a broad range of professional and personal development opportunities, including access to an extensive range of both classroom based and e-learning resources tailored to diverse learning needs.

Furthermore, through employee engagement with our EEDI principles we remain committed to being active allies, celebrating diversity, challenging inequality and discrimination and creating an inclusive space for all.

Employee Engagement

The introduction of our Colleague Forum, chaired by the CEO, provides further opportunities for employees to raise issues/ ideas that can improve the employee experience. These groups also form part of our staff consultation process, with members of the groups being given opportunity to provide feedback on new and amended policies and procedures.

Employees are regularly kept updated, and successes celebrated, via a weekly email from the CEO, which always includes information on how to access any additional support that may be required, including clinical supervision and the Employee Assistance programme. Monthly All Staff meetings are held, which often feature guest presentations from sector partners. The meetings also include regular updates on the financial performance of the organisation, against budget.

There is an established annual appraisal process for employees, and staff work towards clear goals and objectives for the year, tied to the organisational strategy.

The Trustees, including the Chair, regularly attend events and staff sessions, and staff are invited to make presentations to the board and its committees on relevant subjects throughout the year.

Fundraising

In 2024/25, our incredible supporters donated a total of £8.3 million by sponsoring marathon runners, contributing to our Mother’s Day appeal, giving regular gifts, and making donations in memory of loved ones. Across the country, communities came together – connecting, campaigning and collaborating – to raise vital funds for women and children escaping domestic abuse.

Behind every donation, large or small, is a person with a story and a reason for supporting Refuge. This shared sense of purpose unites our supporters, and thanks to their generosity we are able to keep our phone lines open and our refuges running. Their support provides a lifeline to women fleeing abuse and seeking safety, dignity and a life free from fear.

We are deeply committed to the supporters and donors who make our work possible, placing them at the heart of everything we do. This commitment is reflected in our Supporter Promise and in the policies we’ve developed to protect and respect them, including our Ethical Fundraising Policy and Complaints Policy.

We know we won’t always get everything right, and we value every opportunity to listen and improve. In 2024/25, we received nine complaints related to our fundraising activity, all of which were resolved without the need for escalation to the Fundraising Regulator. We worked with three professional fundraising organisations for payroll giving recruitment and one telemarketing agency. We ensure any agencies we work with observe the highest standards of fundraising practice, and we regularly evaluate their work.

We are proud to follow the guidance set out by the Fundraising Regulator, which underpins every aspect of our work – from safeguarding data and embracing new technologies to ensuring that any third parties we work with uphold the same high standards. We are always striving to go above and beyond, seeking new ways to grow, learn and do better for the survivors we support and for those who stand beside us.

We work with companies across a variety of sectors to build mutually beneficial partnerships. We encourage our corporate partners to commit to raising a minimum of £25,000, which can be achieved through commercial participation, staff or customer fundraising, events, and company donations. We are also grateful to the many corporate supporters and donors who contribute through one-off gifts, regular donations or gifts in kind, in ways that work best for them.

As part of our approach to fundraising from businesses, trusts, foundations and high-net-worth individuals, we conduct due diligence to ensure alignment with our ethical policy and to assess any potential risks by association.

While raising unrestricted income remains vital to our mission, we also work with a small number of donors to fund specific programmes where they have a particular passion for certain areas of our work.



Financial review

Refuge, along with many other charities, continues to operate against the backdrop of a difficult macro-economic environment, requiring us to maintain a steady focus on the performance of our voluntary income streams, our portfolio of contracts, income from grants (see ‘Income’) and our operational costs (see ‘Expenditure’). We rely on central and local government funding to run many of our services. Contracts and grants make up over half of our income: £17.3m, 54% (2023/24: £14.5m, 52%), with an additional £6.0m, 19% income from housing management (2023/24: £5.3m, 19%). The value of donations and legacies received was £8.3m, 26% of our total income (2023/24: £7.5m, 27%).

Refuge generated a surplus of £1.8m in 2024/25 (deficit of £1.9m in 2023/24), of which £1.5m was unrestricted and £0.3m was restricted funds. This is a significant turnaround from the prior year. This reflects in part the outcomes of the multi-year programme of planned activities to return the charity to a break-even position. A significant part of the turnaround reflected a £2.1m or 29% increase in grant income (2024/25: £9.2m, 2023/24: £7.1m) which contributes positively towards central support costs, along with increases in all our other major revenue streams.

This surplus has increased Refuge’s reserves which are ahead of the policy range and sufficient to enable us to continue our charitable activities for the foreseeable future (see ‘Reserves and other funds’) and importantly to enable us to make investments in some areas of our business (see ‘Looking ahead’).

Income

Income totalled £32.0m in 2024/25, which is £4.2m (15%) higher than in 2023/24.

Income from operating activities, including grants, contracts and housing management income, has increased by £3.4m (17%). An increase in units under management (2024/25: 338, 2023/24: 329) contributed towards the increase in housing management income year on year (2024/25: £6.0m, 2023/24: £5.3m).

Fundraising income grew by 11% compared to 2023/24 and exceeded budget by 4.5%, reflecting the strength of Refuge’s supporter base and the continued relevance of our mission in a challenging external environment.

This growth was achieved despite persistent pressures across the fundraising landscape, particularly in digital-led giving. We saw increased engagement from regular donors, event participants, trusts and foundations, and corporate partners. Legacy giving also continued an upward trajectory, with more individuals choosing to leave a gift to Refuge in their wills and is a significant opportunity for the future.

A key driver of increased public and private sector support was The Independent’s *Brick by Brick* campaign, a high-profile partnership that amplified awareness of our work and mobilised new audiences to act. This strong performance provides a solid foundation for further investment in sustainable income streams and supporter engagement in the year ahead.

Expenditure

2024/25 was a year where costs continued to be considered, as part of moving out of the phase of financial sustainability planning which had overarched the previous two budgets. Our costs remain an area of focus where we continue to implement our plans to move towards a sustainable break-even or surplus position. This does not mean that we will continually seek to reduce our expenditure, but we will maintain a focus on where we are spending our money to best support our survivors. In the current year, expenditure totalled £30.1m, which is £0.4m (1%) higher than the prior year. We spent more money on our charitable activities (£1.2m (5%) higher) and reduced our spending on raising funds (£0.8m (24%) lower) as we worked towards achieving our break-even budget.

Staff costs, which are a significant part of our operational costs, have dropped slightly year on year by £0.2m (1%) reflecting restructuring activities within the charity, particularly in central support functions, and the continued emphasis on this area of our fixed cost base. We also reduced our costs in relation to the usage of temporary staff by £0.2m (27%).

Property and other non-staff costs at £11.5m and 38% of overall costs (2023/24: £10.7m, 36%) continue to reflect a general upward trend - an 8% year on year increase, driven by economic factors which are outside the control of the charity. We also increased the number of services that we have in some areas, adding 9 units to reach 338 (2023/24: 329) properties under our ownership or management, again, leading to higher - but planned for - costs. In addition, cost savings were made by exiting our previous head office premises part way through the year and moving to smaller and cheaper serviced offices. Additional savings will be recognised from this move in the next financial year.

Looking ahead

Refuge is preparing to move beyond its multi-year programme of assessing its financial position and implementing a financial sustainability plan. This plan, introduced in 2022/23, aimed to move the organisation from a deficit to a financially stable position - either breaking even or generating a small surplus. This transition does not mean we are stepping away from our commitment to sustainable income growth and careful monitoring of expenditure. As we move into the next phase of multi-year planning, we are also beginning to develop a new strategy which will be shaped during 2025/26 and launched at the start of the 2026 financial year.

To support this growth and unlock future cost and time efficiencies, the Board has agreed a new investment programme beginning in the next financial year. Refuge will draw on its reserves as part of this ‘invest to grow’ programme, which aims to drive income growth and replace and bolster key systems. This will enable our staff to be more efficient and will drive improvements in our ability to generate insightful management information. As a result of these strategic investments, Refuge will be well-positioned to implement its new strategy and continue delivering our impactful work for survivors of domestic abuse.



Value For Money

Refuge is a charity and a registered provider of social housing and is obligated by the Regulator of Social Housing to provide an overview of its approach to Value for Money. This is set out below together with a set of indicators required by the regulator. For Refuge, value for money means delivering our strategic objectives in a cost-conscious way, enabling us to maximise our provision of a range of high-quality specialist services to women and children escaping domestic abuse, and remain financially sustainable for the long term. The Board regularly monitors performance through budget setting, financial reporting and forecasting. Refuge regularly reviews the allocation of resources to ensure the most effective contribution towards our strategic objectives which are discussed under Objectives, above. As a charity we also choose to use fundraised income to invest in projects or the provision of services which contribute to our core strategic objectives.

The Value for Money measures as required by the Regulator of Social Housing are set out below. Refuge is extremely small in comparison to the Housing Association sector in general and the nature of the work that we do is very specialised, which means that our data will compare unfavourably to the sector average data. It should be noted that, given the complexity of needs of our survivors, the range of services that we provide, and given that Refuge is a charity with charitable goals to invest the maximum possible to support those goals, there will be significant variations in the measures for Refuge as set against the Housing Association sector average. For the reasons outlined, the data below does not represent like for like comparison. Refuge is not a developing housing association and currently owns 1 property which has 8 units.

	2024 Sector Average	2024 Refuge	2025 Refuge
Reinvestment	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%
New supply (social)	1.7%	N/A	N/A
New supply (non social)	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Gearing	0.9%	N/A	N/A
EBITDA MRI Interest cover	N/A	N/A	N/A
Housing cost per unit (£'000)	5.76	17.18	20.32
Operating margin	16.9%	-7.2%	-15%
Return on captial employed (ROCE)	2.5%	-5.2%	-9.6%

Reinvestment

Most of the units (98%) operated by Refuge are under lease agreements and therefore this measure is not applicable to our portfolio.

New supply (social)

Refuge does not operate social housing units, and this measure is therefore not applicable.

New supply (non social)

Refuge does not own non social housing units.

Gearing/ EBITDA MRI Interest Cover

Refuge is debt free and therefore these measures do not apply.

Social Housing Cost per Unit

The housing cost per unit is higher than the sector average due to the short-term nature of our tenancies and hence, higher renewal rates, and also reflects the higher levels of staffing and services required to safely support survivors.

Operating Margin

Refuge’s negative margins are the result of the higher costs associated with running supported accommodation and services to meet the complex and intersectional needs of survivors.

Return on Capital Employed

The negative return on capital employed reflects our decision to use our income generated through fundraising activities to contribute towards running our services.

Reserves and other funds

Reserves are the funds that are freely available to spend on Refuge’s purposes. This definition excludes restricted reserves which are discussed below. The reserves, shown on the balance sheet as ‘general funds’, are the free reserves which are unrestricted and not designated by the Board for any other purpose. They provide resilience in the event of financial shocks, such as an unexpected decline in income.

The Reserves Policy determines the target level for reserves. The Board have taken a risk-based approach in setting the policy of general reserves to be within the range of £5.2m to £6.4m. The current policy was set during 2023/24, and a re-assessment of risks is due to be undertaken during the 2025/26 financial year. The general reserves balance of £8.6m is currently £2.4m higher than the policy maximum. As noted under ‘Looking ahead’ above, Refuge expects to achieve a small surplus in 25/26 which was set as a target during the period of financial sustainability planning which has been ongoing for the last few years. Refuge has plans to use some of these reserves to make investments in core business systems.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside for a specific purpose by the Board. As at 31 March 2025, Refuge has one designated fund, the Fixed Asset Fund which holds the balance of all tangible and intangible fixed assets. This reflects the fact that these assets are not available to be expended in the same way that general reserves are, as they are utilised in Refuge’s day-to-day operations and are not readily realisable as cash.

Restricted reserves or funds relate to income which must be used for a specific purpose, as stipulated by the donor, and which has not yet been expended.

In summary, total reserves as at 31 March 2025 were £9.7m (2024: £7.8m). We held restricted reserves of £1.0m (2024: £0.7m) and unrestricted or free reserves of £8.6m (2024: £6.6m). The year end cash balance was £9.8m (2024: £6.5m).

Further information on Refuge’s reserves can be found in notes 20-22 of the accounts.

Therefore, the Trustee Board has assessed Refuge’s ability to continue as a going concern and is satisfied that it has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. In making this assessment, the Trustee Board has considered Refuge’s financial position, cash flow forecasts, liquidity, lack of outstanding debt, as well as the broader economic environment and sector-specific challenges. These include inflationary pressures, regulatory changes under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, and increased costs associated with building safety and decarbonisation. Refuge has undertaken stress testing of its financial plans, including downside scenarios, and has identified appropriate mitigating actions. The Trustee Board is confident that Refuge remains financially resilient. There are no material uncertainties that cast significant doubt on Refuge’s ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements.

Going concern

The Board has considered the current levels of reserves and cash, the forecast position to September 2026 and mitigating actions available should unforeseen circumstances arise, and it is the position of the trustees that the charity is able to continue as a going concern and accordingly the financial statements have been prepared on this basis. For further information please refer to the Going concern section under Note 1. on page 41.

Principal risks

The Board of Trustees are responsible for establishing and monitoring internal control systems within Refuge. The Board reviews the major risks which may impact on the operations of Refuge on a regular basis and are satisfied that the system of internal control currently in place is sound and effective, whilst recognising that it is designed to manage rather than eliminate risk. This year, the Board and staff have worked to improve and refine our risk register, ensuring it is clear, informative and reviewed each quarter. The Board of Trustees agree that the following are the principal risks that Refuge faces:

- Safeguarding. The nature of Refuge’s work leads to a high risk of safeguarding issues. We have improved and strengthened our policies, processes and ways of working to meet our high safeguarding standards including comprehensive external reviews of services where issues have been raised. Due to the nature of our work, this will always remain high risk for us and an area of ongoing governance focus.
- Staff capacity, continuity and capability. We have invested heavily into our workforce and will continue to focus on this, recognising the challenges we have with recruitment and retention in our sector. This is due to the high pressured and traumatic nature of our work, the lack of multi-year funding or contracts as well as our desire to be an employer of choice.
- Financial sustainability. As outlined in the ‘Financial Review’ p.33, during FY24/25 Refuge continued to work through a financial sustainability programme aimed at reducing reliance on reserves to fund our vital work. While good progress has been made, the current economic climate means financial sustainability remains a principal risk. It is essential that Refuge strengthens its business model, maximises income opportunities, and invests in modern business systems to ensure long-term resilience and sustainability.

- Effective and efficient systems. Refuge continues to strengthen our robust data security measures and to invest in technology solutions, policies and procedures to mitigate risks and improve performance. Financial plans for FY25/26 include capital investment to improve our business systems.
- Continuity of services. There are several significant contracts due for recommissioning during FY25/26. To maintain and extend contracts a local engagement and ‘win’ strategy is prepared for each service. Maintaining good relations with commissioners, negotiating contract extensions where possible and tight budgeting and control of costs are priorities.

Investment powers

The Articles of Association contain powers for the Board of Trustees to invest funds in any investments, securities and properties. As of 31st March 2025, Refuge held £706k of investments, the portfolio showing a small increase of £6k (<1%) on the previous year’s value. Refuge’s appetite for risk is medium to low, seeking to balance capital growth and income generation. Performance for the year was in line with the market and comparable indices. The portfolio is managed by Charles Stanley. Further information is provided in note 15 to the accounts.

Statement of the Board of Trustees responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the strategic report, the Trustees’ annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company and social housing regulations require the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the group and parent charity and of the surplus or deficit of the group for the year. In preparing financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed and the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by registered providers of social housing 2014, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the group and parent’s transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the group and parent charity and enable us to ensure that the financial statements comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, and the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2022. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the group and parent

charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the report of the Board is prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by registered social housing providers 2014. Financial statements are published on Refuge website in accordance with legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements, which may vary from legislation in other jurisdictions. The maintenance and integrity of this website is the responsibility of the board. The Board’s responsibility also extends to the ongoing integrity of the financial statements contained therein.

As far as the Board of Trustees is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company’s auditor is unaware; and
- The Board of Trustees has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the pay and remuneration of key management personnel is reasonable and appropriate. Director salaries are determined annually by the People, Nominations and Remuneration Committee (PNRC). A separate policy outlines the approach to CEO pay which is capped relative to other salaries.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton - Chair

This report acts as a Directors’ report for the charitable company as required by s415 of the Companies Act 2006 and includes the Strategic Report which has been approved by the Board of Trustees in their capacity as company Directors.



Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Refuge

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Refuge (the "charitable company") and its subsidiary (the "group") for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, Group and Charitable Company Balance sheets, Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of the group's 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; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 and the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2022.

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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group 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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report 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.

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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report and the strategic report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and

- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the parent company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the parent company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees’ responsibilities statement set out on page 36, 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.

Auditor’s 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 an auditor’s report 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:

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council’s website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor’s report.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements from irregularities, whether due to fraud or error, and discussed these between our audit team members. We then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company and group operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, including financial reporting legislation and the Housing SORP, and tax regulations. We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which might be necessary to the group’s ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

We also considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the group for fraud. We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be within the timing of recognition of income as well as management override of controls. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management, legal counsel and the Audit and Risk Committee about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals and income, reviewing regulatory correspondence with the Regulator of Social Housing, the Charity Commission and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it.

In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company’s members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company’s members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor’s 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 members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Julia Poulter
Senior Statutory Auditor
For and on behalf of
Crowe U.K. LLP
Statutory Auditor
London

30 September 2025



Financial statements

Consolidated statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2024 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	4	6,497,879	1,798,556	8,296,435	7,522,107
Operating activities					
Contracts for Support Services	5	8,076,327	-	8,076,327	7,406,866
Housing Management	3	5,972,637	-	5,972,637	5,270,785
Grants	6	-	9,174,474	9,174,474	7,118,321
Other trading activities	8	128,168	-	128,168	125,602
Investments	7	286,252	-	286,252	265,507
Other income		41,605	-	41,605	104,806
Total income	3	21,002,868	10,973,030	31,975,898	27,813,994
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	9	2,562,614	-	2,562,614	3,370,224
Charitable activities					
• Refuge provision		10,641,408	1,664,560	12,305,968	8,900,974
• Advocacy		3,320,774	2,280,191	5,600,965	5,659,358
• Integrated services		2,349,764	803,196	3,152,960	5,824,509
• Outreach and Floating Support		776,437	2,577,581	3,354,018	2,521,288
• National Domestic Abuse Helpline		232,463	2,688,610	2,921,073	3,058,287
• Public information		(177,060)	364,558	187,498	390,090
• Specialist support services		29	64,755	64,784	27,510
Total Expenditure	3,11	19,706,429	10,443,451	30,149,880	29,752,240
Reconciliation of funds:					
Net gains on investments	15	10,911	-	10,911	59,301
Net income/(expenditure)		1,307,350	529,579	1,836,929	(1,878,945)
Transfers between funds	20,21	204,490	(204,490)	-	-
Net movement in funds		1,511,840	325,089	1,836,929	(1,878,945)
Fund balances brought forward at 01 April 2024		7,120,629	715,279	7,835,908	9,714,853
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2025	20, 21, 22	8,632,469	1,040,368	9,672,837	7,835,908

The notes on pages 41 to 53 form part of these financial statements.

All of the activities of the charitable company related to continuing operations. There were no recognised gains and losses other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Included within expenditure is a cost of £82,656 (2024: £72,637) relating to the amortisation of intangible assets.

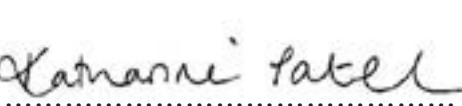
Balance sheet

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Group		Charity	
		2025 £	2024 £	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	13	-	400,187	-	400,187
Intangible assets	14	39,777	100,841	39,777	100,841
Investments	15	706,351	701,084	706,352	701,084
		746,128	1,202,112	746,129	1,202,112
Current Assets					
Debtors	16	5,426,762	6,095,685	5,533,158	6,237,069
Cash at bank and in hand		9,826,197	6,456,668	9,700,989	6,296,127
		15,252,959	12,552,353	15,234,147	12,533,196
Creditors: Amounts falling due					
within one year	17	(5,960,670)	(5,267,671)	(5,941,859)	(5,248,514)
Net Current Assets		9,292,289	7,284,682	9,292,288	7,284,682
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		10,038,417	8,486,794	10,038,417	8,486,794
Provisions for liabilities and charges	19	(365,580)	(650,886)	(365,580)	(650,886)
Net Assets		9,672,837	7,835,908	9,672,837	7,835,908
Represented by:					
Unrestricted Funds	20				
General		8,592,692	6,619,601	8,592,692	6,619,601
Designated Funds		39,777	501,028	39,777	501,028
		8,632,469	7,120,629	8,632,469	7,120,629
Restricted Funds					
	21	1,040,368	715,279	1,040,368	715,279
Total Funds	22	9,672,837	7,835,908	9,672,837	7,835,908

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 25/09/2025


.....
Hetti Barkworth-Nanton


.....
Katharine Patel

The notes on pages 41 to 53 form part of these financial statements.

Company number: 1412276

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities	1	3,105,235	(3,428,377)
• Investment income received	7	286,252	265,507
Capital Expenditure and financial investment			
• Payments to acquire Tangible Fixed Assets	13	(1,079)	(38,922)
• Payments to acquire Intangible Fixed Assets	14	(26,523)	(26,523)
• Payments to acquire Financial Investments	15	(111,918)	(117,810)
• Investment disposal proceeds	15	118,257	88,676
Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	3,370,224	(3,257,449)

Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows

1 Reconciliation of Changes in Resources to Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Net movement in funds	1,836,929	(1,878,945)
Depreciation	266,629	220,185
Amortisation	87,587	72,637
Loss on fixed asset disposal	134,637	-
Investment income	(286,252)	(265,507)
Unrealised/Realised (gains)	(10,911)	(59,301)
Decrease/(increase) in trade and other Debtors	668,923	(2,543,205)
Increase in trade and other Creditors	692,999	458,502
Movement in provision	(285,306)	530,886
	3,105,235	(3,464,748)

2 Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movements in Net Funds

	2025 £	2024 £
Increase/(decrease) in Cash and Cash at Bank in the year	3,370,224	(3,257,449)
Increase/(decrease) in net funds	3,370,224	(3,257,449)
Net funds at 1 April 2024	6,463,952	9,721,401
Net funds at 31 March 2025	9,834,176	6,463,952

3 Reconciliation of net funds to cash at bank and in hand

	2025 £	2024 £
Net funds	9,834,176	6,463,952
Cash held with investment managers	(7,979)	(7,284)
Cash at bank and in hand	9,826,197	6,456,668

Notes

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements are prepared on the historical cost convention of accounting, as modified by the revaluation of Fixed asset Investments and in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and in compliance with The Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2022, Housing SORP 2018, the Statement of Recommended Practice “Accounting for Registered Social Providers”, the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with “The Financial Reporting Standard Accounts applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (“FRS 102”), The Charities Act 2011 and the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. The charity is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102.

Going concern

Refuge’s financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis. Per FRS 102, an entity is a going concern unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the entity or to cease operating, or has no realistic alternative but to do so. Refuge’s Trustees have assessed Refuge’s ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months after the signing of the 2024/25 accounts, i.e. until September 2026, based on projections of Refuge’s income, expenditure and cashflow over that period.

Refuge has generated a surplus of £1.8m in 2024/25. (See the annual report’s financial review for more information.) Year end unrestricted and free reserves which exclude designated funds are £8.6m which is above the risk based reserves policy range of £5.2m to £6.4m, with a cash balance of £9.8m. Reserves and cash at these levels are expected to be sufficient to cover ongoing operations. In 2025/26 we have planned to generate a small surplus and to maintain an ongoing surplus thereafter.

The risk based reserves policy was determined by the Board at the end of 2023/24 by assessing the key risks, their potential likelihoods and impacts in order to establish how much the Charity should hold as reserves against those risks materialising, to ensure that the charity would be able to continue in operation. The policy is due for review to re-assess those risks and this work is planned to be undertaken in the 2025/26 financial year.

Should Refuge experience an unexpected short-term drop in liquidity, mitigating actions are available, including the liquidation of £706k of investments. After considering the current level of reserves and cash, the forecast to September 2026, and the mitigating actions available, should unforeseen circumstances arise, it is the opinion of the trustees that the Group has adequate financial resources to continue its activities for the foreseeable future and that there are no material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. Accordingly, these financial statements have been prepared using the going concern basis of preparation.

Basis of Consolidation

The consolidated financial statements comprise Refuge together with its wholly owned subsidiary, Refuge Trading Ltd. A summarised profit and loss account for the subsidiary is given in note 26. The results of the subsidiary have been consolidated on a line by line basis.

As permitted by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 no separate statement of financial activities is presented in respect of the parent charity. The net movement of funds attributable to the parent charity is an increase of £1,836,929.

Tangible Fixed Assets - Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000, except items of high wear and tear for refuges, have been capitalised and recorded at cost.

Depreciation is provided on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over their estimated useful lives or the length of the contract/project for which the fixed assets were acquired. Land is not depreciated.

Freehold buildings	50 years straight line
Leasehold improvements	5 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	4 years straight line
Office equipment	4 years straight line

Intangible Fixed Assets - Amortisation

Intangible assets costing more than £1,000 are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation. Intangible assets are capitalised once the charity can reliable measure the expenditure attributable to the software or website implementation or development and has demonstrated its intention to bring the software or website into use. Amortisation, included in expenditure in the SOFA, is recognised so as to write off the cost of these assets over their estimated useful lives which are determined to be as follows:

Software	4 years straight line
Website	4 years straight line

Impairment of fixed assets

An assessment is made at each reporting date of whether indications exist that an asset may be impaired. Impairment losses are recognised through expenditure, with the depreciation or amortisation being adjusted to reflect the revised carrying amount.

Income

All income is accounted for when the charity has entitlement to the funds, receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Donations and legacies include donations, gifts, legacies and some grants receivable.

Income from trading activities which includes income from running events or summits, including sponsorship for those events or summits, is recognised in the accounting period in which the event takes place. Income from delivering training is recognised when the contract has been agreed and the invoice raised. Income from partnership sales is recognised when we are notified of the confirmed amount. Income from license fees is recognised over the license period. All such income is recognised in the charity’s subsidiary company, Refuge Trading Limited, company registration No. 13799550.

Gifts in kind and intangible income are treated either as donations in the period the gift or intangible income is received, or as an asset, in both cases at a reasonable estimate of the gross value to the charity.

Contractual income is recognised when the obligations of the contract are delivered.

Fundraising income, shown as ‘donations and legacies’ in the SOFA, is shown gross except for small fundraising events where the cash is received net of expenditure. Donations and income from fundraising activities are recognised when there is entitlement to these and the probably of receipt which is effectively at the point of receipt of the cash.

Legacies notified prior to year end are accounted as income where it can be demonstrated that the charity had entitlement as at the year end, the amounts can be quantified with reasonable certainty and where receipt is probable. Entitlement is usually indicated by receipt of grant of probate.

Investment income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

Grants are recognised when the entitlement to the grant is confirmed and any conditions not within the charity’s control have been met. Grants can either provide core funding, or be of a general nature provided by the government and charitable foundations.

Housing income includes rental and service charge income and is recognised on units which are available to rent, net of void units.

Interest income is accrued on a time apportioned basis, by reference to the principle outstanding at the effective interest rate.

Cost of raising funds

Fundraising expenditure comprises costs incurred encouraging people and organisations to contribute financially to the charity’s work. This includes costs of advertising and staging of special fundraising events.

Support costs

Support costs are allocated to services and fundraising on the basis of headcount.

Redundancy and termination payments

Statutory redundancy payments are made subject to applicable law where an employee has two or more years’ continuous service at the date they are made redundant, they are entitled to a tax free statutory redundancy payment. Other termination payments made are subject to entitlement including pay in lieu of notice where this is applicable. All such payments are accounted for at the point at which the charity has an obligation to pay them.

Governance costs

Governance costs comprise all expenditure not directly related to the charitable activity or fundraising ventures including audit fees. The costs are allocated over the activities on the same basis as other administrative costs.

Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Group has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, which it is probable will result in the transfer of economic benefits and that obligation can be reliably estimated. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation.

For additional information about the provisions held refer to note 19

At its meeting in March 2024 the Board decided to terminate the lease of the now former Head Office premises giving rise to a commitment to pay dilapidations to the landlord. Appropriate provisions for that were included in the 2023/24 accounts. Negotiations in relation to this are now complete and will be settled in 2025/26.

Additionally, we have made a provision in relation to potential VAT liabilities.

We have also made a provision for costs that we anticipate incurring in relation to a refuge property.

Bad debts

Bad debts are recognised when all arrears and debt collection procedures have been exhausted. Bad debts are written off on a percentage basis depending on their age and the probability of collection.

Investments

Investments are held in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Any change from market value at the previous balance sheet date or from cost if purchased during the year, is included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

Financial instruments

The company accounts for its financial instruments as ‘basic’ in accordance with the recognition criteria of Section 11 of FRS 102.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company’s balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Financial assets and liabilities

Financial assets and liabilities are classified as payable or receivable within one year on initial recognition and are measured at the undiscounted amounts of cash or other consideration exected to be paid or received , net of any impairment.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, including trade and other debtors, cash and bank balances, and balances due from the subsidiary, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including trade and other creditors, are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest.

Other financial assets

Other financial assets, including investments in equity instruments which are not subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures, are initially measured at fair value, which is normally the transaction price. Such assets are subsequently carried at fair value and the changes in fair value are recognised in the SOFA, except that investments in equity instruments that are not publicly traded and whose fair values cannot be measured reliably are measured at cost less impairment.

Impairment of financial assets

Financial assets, other than those held at fair value through the SOFA, are assessed for indicators of impairment at each reporting end date.

Financial assets are impaired where there is objective evidence that, as a result of one or more events that occurred after the initial recognition of the financial asset, the estimated future cash flows have been affected. The impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire, or when it transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity.

Pension Funds

Refuge operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all staff. The amount charged to the Income and Expenditure Account in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year.

Operating Lease Agreement

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the SOFA on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Fund Account

Restricted funds represent monies received for specific projects undertaken by the charity. Designated funds represent monies set aside by the trustees for a specific purpose. General unrestricted funds of the charity are freely available for the general purposes of the charity.

Status

Refuge is a registered social landlord with the Regulator of Social Housing. The register number is 4730.

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. It is also a registered charity (Number 277424). In the event of the company winding up, members are required to contribute a sum not exceeding £1.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the company’s accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount 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 estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

Critical estimates

The following estimates have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

The company has an obligation to pay dilapidations on expiry of the company’s leases. The cost of these reinstatements and the present value of the obligation depend on a number of factors including the expected rise in cost of building maintenance, uncertainty over the timing of the cost of reinstatements, and the discount rate. Management estimates these factors in determining the net dilapidation provision in the balance sheet. The assumptions reflect historical experience and current trends. See note 19 for the disclosures relating to the dilapidation provision. See note 23 which includes anticipated costs under a full repair lease.

2. Comparative statements of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2024 and 31 March 2025

The charity makes an estimate of the recoverable value of trade and other debtors. When assessing impairment of trade and other debtors, management considers factors including the current credit rating of the debtor, the ageing profile of debtors and historical experience. See note 16 for the net carrying amount of the debtors and associated impairment provision.

The annual depreciation charge for property, plant and equipment is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 13 for the carrying amount of the property, plant and equipment and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of asset.

Similarly the amortisation charge for intangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments and economic utilisation of the assets. See note 14 for the carrying amount of the intangible assets and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.

The charity recognises income on grants in line with the expenditure of those grants and defers income received but not yet spent to future periods. This is considered to be a prudent approach as grants have deliverable requirements which, if not met, could result in the return of funds to the grantor.

The charity considers that the lease agreements for properties under its management are in their nature operating leases and accounts for them as such, recognising the costs of those as rental payments.

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2025 £	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2024 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	4	6,497,879	1,798,556	8,296,435	6,141,977	1,380,130	7,522,107
Operating activities							
• Contracts for Support Services	5	8,076,327	-	8,076,327	7,406,866	-	7,406,866
• Housing Management	3	5,972,637	-	5,972,637	5,270,785	-	5,270,785
• Grants	6	-	9,174,474	9,174,474	-	7,118,321	7,118,321
Other trading activities	8	128,168	-	128,168	125,602	-	125,602
Investments	7	286,252	-	286,252	265,507	-	265,507
Other income		41,605	-	41,605	104,806	-	104,806
Total income	3	21,002,868	10,973,030	31,975,898	19,315,543	8,498,451	27,813,994
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	9	2,562,614	-	2,562,614	3,370,224	-	3,370,224
Charitable activities							
• Refuge provision		10,641,408	1,664,560	12,305,968	7,847,398	1,053,576	8,900,974
• Advocacy		3,320,774	2,280,191	5,600,965	4,145,590	1,513,768	5,659,358
• Integrated services		2,349,764	803,196	3,152,960	5,031,016	793,493	5,824,509
• Outreach and Floating Support		776,437	2,577,581	3,354,018	444,471	2,076,817	2,521,288
• National Domestic Abuse Helpline		232,463	2,688,610	2,921,073	487,396	2,570,891	3,058,287
• Public information		(177,060)	364,558	187,498	66,850	323,240	390,090
• Specialist support services		29	64,755	64,784	27,510	-	27,510
Total Expenditure	3, 11	19,706,429	10,443,451	30,149,880	21,420,455	8,331,785	29,752,240
Realised gains/(losses) on investments							
	15	10,911	-	10,911	59,301	-	59,301
Net income/(expenditure)							
		1,307,350	529,579	1,836,929	(2,045,611)	166,666	(1,878,945)
Transfers between funds	20, 21	204,490	(204,490)	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		1,511,840	325,089	1,836,929	(2,045,611)	166,666	(1,878,945)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances brought forward		7,120,629	715,279	7,835,908	9,166,240	548,613	9,714,853
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2025							
	20,21,22	8,632,469	1,040,368	9,672,837	7,120,629	715,279	7,835,908

3a. Particulars of turnover, cost of sales, operating costs and operating surplus

	2025 Turnover £	2025 Operating Costs £	2025 Operating Surplus/ (deficit) £	2024 Turnover £	2024 Operating Costs £	2024 Operating Surplus/ (deficit) £
Social housing lettings	5,972,637	6,868,779	(896,142)	5,270,785	5,651,903	(381,118)
Other social housing activities:						
Contracts for Support Services	2,779,570	3,739,811	(960,241)	2,376,425	2,113,036	263,389
Other grants and donations*	1,697,378	1,697,378	-	1,136,035	1,136,035	-
	10,449,585	12,305,968	(1,856,383)	8,783,245	8,900,974	(117,729)
Non-social housing activities	21,538,334	17,843,912	3,694,422	19,030,750	20,851,266	(1,820,516)
Total:	31,987,919	30,149,880	1,838,039	27,813,995	29,752,240	(1,938,245)

* No government grants are included within the Other grants and donations line above.

The costs of running refuges which form part of our Integrated Services, are included in Operating Costs for Social housing lettings and Operating Costs for Contracts for Support Services. In 2024 these costs were included in Operating Costs for Non-social housing activities.

3b. Particulars of income and expenditure from social housing lettings

	2025 £	2024 £
Social housing income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charges	2,588,679	2,266,891
Service charges receivable eligible for Housing Benefit	3,783,805	3,313,456
Service charges receivable ineligible for Housing Benefit	342,715	312,901
Rent losses due to voids	(742,562)	(622,463)
Turnover from social housing lettings	5,972,637	5,270,785
Expenditure on social housing lettings		
Services	1,970,862	1,271,752
Management	2,360,977	2,735,105
Routine maintenance	189,052	132,735
Planned maintenance	38,778	97,459
Bad debts	292,869	216,834
Lease charges	2,000,925	1,186,742
Property depreciation	15,316	11,276
Operating costs on social housing lettings	6,868,779	5,651,903
Operating deficit on social lettings	(896,142)	(381,118)

Social (supported) housing units	2025	2024
The number of supported housing units under management at the end of the period:		
Owned and managed	8	8
Not owned but managed	330	321
	338	329

All units under management are designated supported housing.

4. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted 2025 £	Restricted 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted 2024 £	Restricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Trusts	354,713	1,077,645	1,432,358	298,247	851,152	1,149,399
Corporates	623,855	477,396	1,101,251	413,313	477,811	891,124
Major donors	537,159	152,827	689,986	562,862	11,972	574,834
Private donors	4,370,696	89,416	4,460,112	4,151,693	39,195	4,190,888
	5,886,423	1,797,284	7,683,707	5,426,115	1,380,130	6,806,245
Legacies	456,340	1,272	457,612	715,218	-	715,218
Donations in kind	155,116	-	155,116	644	-	644
	6,497,879	1,798,555	8,296,435	6,141,977	1,380,130	7,522,107

Private donors includes:Fundraising from Events of £903k (2024: 734k), Local Fundraising of £449k (2024: £518k) and Individual Giving of £2,414k (2024: £2.3m)

5. Contracts for Support Services

	2025 £	2024 £
Refuge provision	2,348,886	2,678,619
Advocacy	2,737,101	2,487,299
Integrated services	2,753,898	2,240,948
Outreach and floating Support	236,442	-
	8,076,327	7,406,866

Support services under housing related support would encompass such activities that enabled the service user to develop the appropriate skills needed for maintaining independence in their own home once outside of the support service framework i.e. building local networks for support, making links into the community, understanding benefit entitlement and how to apply, developing personal finance awareness to pay rent and other associated household bills.

6. Grants

	2025 £ Restricted	2024 £ Restricted
Cambridgeshire County Council	10,256	5,234
City Of London	353,850	212,311
Greater London Authority including MOPAC	4,348,588	2,897,215
Hertfordshire County Council	258,051	81,996
Home Office	2,489,091	2,210,572
IRISi	291,750	86,430
Job Centre plus	3,019	2,980
London Borough Barking and Dagenham	172,062	227,237
London Borough of Hounslow	40,932	44,073
London Borough of Hackney	-	32,564
London Borough of Lambeth	295,340	115,267
London Borough of Lewisham	203,917	156,230
London Borough of Redbridge	-	3,852
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Wandsworth	210,840	239,430
London Borough of Southwark	46,173	-
London Community Foundation	60,817	38,342
Nuneatonand Bedworth Borough Council	5,000	-
Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames	-	72,977
Standing Together	-	112,904
The Ministry of Justice	-	21,924
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire	39,979	239,500
Standing Together	75,154	-
The Ministry of Justice	95,752	-
Wandsworth Borough Council	48,000	-
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire	-	88,124
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire	38,546	39,979
Warwickshire County Council	80,182	189,180
Womens Aid Fedoration of England	7,175	-
	9,174,474	7,118,321

There are no government grants included within grants

Section 37 Statement

Refuge received a grant of £283,081 from London Councils in 2024/25 for the Pan-London Domestic and Sexual Abuse Helplines Project, funded under Prioirty 2, Service area 2.3, which Refuge runs in partnership with Women and Girls Network, Rape Crisis South London and Respect. As Lead Partner, Refuge retained £125,047 of this grant, which was spent on staff, delivery costs and overheads on the National Domestic Abuse Helpline. The following summary illustrates how money was allocated across the partnership and that it has been used for the purposes outlined in the grant. Overspend/ underspend relates to prior year activity.

	Grant £	Grant Spent £
Lead Partner - Refuge	125,047	149,189
Delivery Partner - Women and Girls Network	78,772	77,261
Delivery Partner - Rape Crisis South London	67,939	87,755
Delivery Partner - Respect	11,323	11,323
	283,081	325,528

7. Investment income

	2025 £	2024 £
Listed investments	14,258	14,956
Interest receivable	271,994	250,551
	286,252	265,507

8. Other trading activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Logo licence	25,708	54,208
Corporate partnerships	83,402	71,394
Tech Income	19,058	-
	128,168	125,602

9. Costs of raising funds

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs	1,082,555	1,271,445
Depreciation and amortisation	20,395	19,667
Trading activities	63,506	62,864
Advertising, campaigns and events	825,618	875,644
Support costs	290,874	840,002
Other costs	279,666	300,602
	2,562,614	3,370,224

10. Governance Costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Auditors' remuneration (net)	39,000	30,600
Auditors' remuneration non-audit (net)	-	1,105
Irrecoverable VAT	7,800	6,120
Total auditors' remuneration inclusive of VAT	46,800	37,825
Legal advice and recruitment of trustees	-	3,855
Total governance costs	46,800	41,680

Governance costs for the year which are included in support cost in note 11 are £46,800 (inclusive of irrecoverable VAT) (2024: £41,680).

11. Total Expenditure

	Cost of Raising Funds £	Refuge Provision £	Advocacy £	Integrated services £	Outreach and Floating Support £	National Domestic Abuse Helpline £	Public Information £	Specialist Support Services £	Total 2025 £
2025									
Direct Costs including	2,251,345	10,819,609	4,711,017	2,605,667	3,078,197	2,646,239	161,605	64,784	26,338,463
Operational Support									
Support Costs*	311,269	1,486,359	889,948	547,293	275,821	274,834	25,893	-	3,811,417
	2,562,614	12,305,968	5,600,965	3,152,960	3,354,018	2,921,073	187,498	64,784	30,149,880

*Support Costs include governance costs of £46,800 incl. VAT

	Cost of Raising Funds £	Refuge Provision £	Advocacy £	Integrated services £	Outreach and Floating Support £	National Domestic Abuse Helpline £	Public Information £	Specialist Support Services £	Total 2024 £
2024									
Direct Costs including	2,510,555	6,871,121	4,083,203	4,421,831	1,963,989	2,265,208	278,631	27,510	22,422,048
Operational Support									
Support Costs	859,669	2,029,853	1,576,155	1,402,678	557,299	793,079	111,459	-	7,330,192
	3,370,224	8,900,974	5,659,358	5,824,509	2,521,288	3,058,287	390,090	27,510	29,752,240

*Support Costs include governance costs of £41,680 incl. VAT

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs	17,461,132	17,684,155
Temporary staff	628,746	861,138
Consultants	58,781	33,928
Other staff costs	468,139	477,106
Property costs	2,948,990	2,801,719
Equipment costs	107,873	39,250
Telephone	505,442	480,236
Audit	62,634	59,094
Depreciation and amortisation	354,214	292,824
Other costs	7,553,929	7,022,790
	30,149,880	29,752,240

12. Staff Costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	15,089,772	15,234,065
Apprenticeship levy	58,111	59,435
Social security costs	1,431,622	1,476,810
Pension costs	881,627	913,845
	17,461,132	17,684,155

These include Redundancy and termination payments of £78,633 (2024: £141,607). Statutory redundancy payments are made subject to applicable law where an employee has two or more years’ continuous service at the date they are made redundant, they are entitled to a tax free statutory redundancy payment. Other termination payments made are subject to entitlement including pay in lieu of notice where this is applicable. All such payments are accounted for at the point at which the charity has an obligation to pay them.

Pension commitments on the balance sheet of £109k (2024: £120k) relate only to the prior month’s pension payment which settles after each month end. There are no amounts within this balance due to Directors who have left the organisation.

The average monthly number of employees, analysed by operating activities, during the year was:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Refuge provision	150	119
Advocacy	91	77
Integrated Services	61	67
Outreach and Floating Support	31	28
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	39	45
Public information	4	4
Other Refuge services	96	111
	472	450

The full time equivalent number of staff whose remuneration payable in relation to the period of account fell within each band of £10,000 from £60,000 upwards (including benefits in kind and compensation for loss of office but excluding employers’ National Insurance and employers’ pension contributions) was in excess of £60,000 during the year was:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£60,001 - £70,000	11	7
£70,001 - £80,000	3	2
£80,001 - £90,000	-	3
£90,000 - £100,000	1	1
£120,001 - £130,000	1	1
£130,001 - £140,000	-	1

	2025 £	2024 £
Employers’ Pension contributions in respect of employees whose remuneration was in excess of £60,000 during the year	85,144	106,634

Emoluments to key management personnel

The remuneration paid to the key management personnel of Refuge (the Chief Executive, the Director of Technology, the Director of Fundraising and Communications, the Director of Corporate Services, the Director of People and Culture and the Director of Service Delivery was:

	2025 £	2024 £
Emoluments (including pension contributions, employers’ National Insurance, benefits in kind and termination payments)	653,608	728,450
Emoluments include amounts paid to the highest paid member of key management personnel (including employers’ National Insurance, benefits in kind and termination payments but excluding pension contributions):	148,495	115,475

The highest paid director, the Chief Exective, is an ordinary member of the charity’s defined contribution salary sacrifice pension scheme with Aegon and no enhancements or special terms are applied.

No members of the Board of Trustees received any remuneration during the year (2024: £Nil).

Remuneration Policy

The remuneration of key management personnel is set by undertaking an annual review of their roles considering:

- Any change or additional scope to the role requiring a re-evaluation
- The benchmarking of similar roles within the market relevant for the professional field and /or sector
- Recruitment and retention issues or requirements

Any significant changes are discussed by the People, Nomination and Remuneration Committee.

13. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Freehold Property £	Leasehold Improvements £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Group and Charity					
Cost					
At 1 April 2024	17,689	100,743	193,222	554,322	865,976
Additions	-	-	653	426	1,079
Disposals	(17,689)	(100,743)	(193,875)	(554,748)	(867,055)
At 31 March 2025	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2024	11,515	44,775	93,392	316,107	465,789
Charge for the year	6,174	22,203	49,446	188,806	266,629
Loss on Disposal	-	33,765	51,037	49,835	134,637
Disposals	(17,689)	(100,743)	(193,875)	(554,748)	(867,055)
At 31 March 2025	-	-	-	-	-
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2025	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2024	6,174	55,968	99,830	238,215	400,187

14. Intangible Fixed Assets

	Website £	Software £	Total £
Group and Charity			
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	339,137	126,367	465,504
Additions	26,523	-	26,523
Disposals	(312,614)	(126,367)	(438,981)
At 31 March 2025	53,046	-	53,046
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2024	238,296	126,367	364,663
Charge for the year	87,587	-	87,587
Loss on disposal	-	-	-
Disposals	(312,614)	(126,367)	(438,981)
At 31 March 2025	13,269	-	13,269
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2025	39,777	-	39,777
At 31 March 2024	100,841	-	100,841

Intangible assets held at the year end comprise the National Domestic Abuse Helpline website.

15. Investments

a) Financial Investments - Group and Charity

	2025 £	2024 £
Investments at market value at beginning of the year	693,800	605,365
Additions at cost	111,918	117,810
Disposal proceeds	(118,257)	(88,676)
Unrealised/ Realised gains	10,911	59,301
	698,372	693,800
Cash held with investment managers	7,979	7,284
Market value at end of the year	706,351	701,084
Historic cost at end of the year	569,041	570,711

Comprising:		
Global fixed interest	149,749	147,210
UK equities and funds	115,063	120,578
Overseas equities and funds	317,880	334,850
Property	13,087	11,306
Alternatives	73,496	52,890
Cash	37,076	34,250
	706,351	701,084

All investments are listed on a recognised stock exchange.

There were no individual holdings the market value of which is considered to be material in the context of the portfolio as a whole.

b) Charity Investment in Trading Subsidiary

	2025 £	2024 £
Issued share capital	1	1

16. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £	2024 £	2025 £	2024 £
Trade Debtors	2,302,719	3,469,540	2,286,714	3,458,220
Bad debt provision	(49,184)	(49,184)	(49,184)	(49,184)
Prepayments	547,967	468,851	547,967	468,851
Rent deposit	75,692	36,058	75,692	36,058
Other Debtors	2,549,568	2,170,420	2,549,568	2,158,420
Intercompany Debtors	-	-	122,401	164,704
	5,426,762	6,095,685	5,533,158	6,237,069

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £	2024 £	2025 £	2024 £
Trade Creditors	2,587,154	2,596,428	2,587,154	2,596,428
Accruals	1,050,574	798,646	1,041,674	791,647
Deferred income (note 18)	1,701,499	1,249,268	1,690,077	1,238,691
Other taxes and social security	369,505	405,297	371,016	403,716
Other Creditors	251,938	218,032	251,938	218,032
Intercompany Debtors				
	5,960,670	5,267,671	5,941,859	5,248,514

18. Deferred Income

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £	2024 £	2025 £	2024 £
Balance as at 1 April	1,249,269	679,861	1,238,692	679,861
Created in the year	1,211,754	1,275,902	1,210,910	1,265,385
Released in the year	(759,525)	(706,494)	(759,525)	(706,554)
Balance as at 31 March	1,701,498	1,249,269	1,690,077	1,238,692

19. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2025 £	2024 £
Provision at beginning of the year	650,886	120,000
Created during the year	4,200	530,886
Released during year	(289,506)	-
Balance at the end of the year	365,580	650,886

The total provision comprises: i) amounts calculated to realise the exit from the current Head Office premises including amounts in accordance with the provisions of the lease in dilapidations £66k; ii) £70k in relation to estimated future deficits concerning Refuge’s Admitted Body Status of Hertfordshire LGPS scheme, a final salary scheme for one ex-employee; iii) £165k in relation to potential VAT liabilities; iv) dilapidations provisions against a refuge property £60k; v) sinking fund in relation to 17 properties £4k. The timing of realising these provisions is for items i, ii and iii expected to be during 2025/26 but for items iv and v, is uncertain.

20. Unrestricted Funds

Group and Charity - Current Year	1 April 2024 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers £	31 March 2025 £
General	6,619,601	21,013,779	(19,706,429)	665,741	8,592,692
Fixed Asset Fund	501,028			(461,251)	39,777
	7,120,629	21,013,779	(19,706,429)	204,490	8,632,469

Group and Charity - Prior Year	1 April 2023 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers £	31 March 2024 £
General	8,403,795	19,315,543	(21,361,154)	261,417	6,619,601
Fixed Asset Fund	762,445			(261,417)	501,028
	9,166,240	19,315,543	(21,361,154)	-	7,120,629

General funds

These funds are available for Refuge’s general purposes.

Designated funds

The Board has created a designated Fixed Asset Fund to hold the balance of all tangible and intangible fixed assets separately from general funds. This reflects the fact that these assets are not available to be expended in the same way general funds are, as they are utilised in Refuge’s day-to-day operations and are not readily realisable as cash.

21. Restricted Funds

Group and Charity - Current Year	1 April 2024 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers £	31 March 2025 £
Refuge Provision	49,487	2,209,271	(1,664,560)	-	594,198
Outreach and Floating Support	96,183	2,580,520	(2,577,581)	(75,702)	23,420
Integrated Services	53,907	803,687	(803,196)	-	54,398
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	82,435	2,660,377	(2,688,610)	(54,202)	-
Specialist Services	-	65,817	(64,755)	-	1,062
Advocacy	233,267	2,488,800	(2,280,191)	(74,586)	367,290
Others	200,000	164,558	(364,558)	-	-
	715,279	10,973,030	(10,443,451)	(204,490)	1,040,368

Group and Charity - Prior Year	1 April 2023 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers £	31 March 2024 £
Refuge provision	150,456	1,037,910	(1,053,576)	(85,303)	49,487
Outreach and Floating Support	106,628	2,095,997	(2,076,817)	(29,625)	96,183
Integrated Services	-	847,400	(793,493)	-	53,907
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	73,094	2,535,731	(2,570,891)	44,501	82,435
Advocacy	218,436	1,409,170	(1,513,768)	119,429	233,267
Others	-	572,242	(323,240)	(49,002)	200,000
	548,614	8,498,450	(8,331,785)	49,002	715,279

21. Restricted Funds (cont)

Refuge provision

Housing benefit and Supporting People funding used in an emergency accommodation setting to provide critical support services to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. Relevant support activities range from support to set up and maintain a home making links with community groups and organizations; assistance in developing independent living skills (finance, social and domestic/life); signposting to specialist services to help maintain health and well being; signposting to culturally specific legal services, health services, counselling and advocacy.

Outreach and Floating Support

Used in the local community setting to provide critical support services to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. Relevant support activities range from support to maintain a home; making links with community groups and organizations; assistance in developing independent living skills (finance, social and domestic/life); signposting to specialist services to help maintain health and well being; signposting to culturally specific legal services, health services, counselling and advocacy.

Integrated services

Refuge runs a number of integrated services, which act as the first point of contact for any victim of gender-based violence. This service supports those who have experienced domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, prostitution, stalking, trafficking, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and so-called ‘honour’ based violence. Our clients are able to come to one place to access a range of specialist support, including safety, alongside emotional and practical support.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Used to fund the National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Advocacy

Used to fund intensive short to medium support to women at high risk of domestic violence as they pursue legal remedies and protection through the criminal and civil justice systems.

22. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Group and Charity - Current Year	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-
Intangible fixed assets	39,777	-	39,777
Financial Investments	706,351	-	706,351
Net current assets	8,251,921	1,040,368	9,292,289
Provisions	(365,580)	-	(365,580)
	8,632,469	1,040,368	9,672,837

Group and Charity - Prior Year	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	400,187	-	400,187
Intangible fixed assets	100,841	-	100,841
Financial Investments	701,084	-	701,084
Net current assets	6,569,403	715,279	7,284,682
Provisions	(650,886)	-	(650,886)
	7,120,629	715,279	7,835,908

23. Commitments

At 31 March 2025 the group had future minimum lease commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below:

	2025 Land and Buildings £	2025 Other £	2024 Land and Buildings £	2024 Other £
Group and Charity				
Up to one year	1,096,526	754	394,745	1,404
Between one and five years	1,174,903	-	587,246	702
Later than five years	523,128	-	45,236	-
	2,794,557	754	1,027,227	2,106

Operating lease costs in the year amounted to £181,418 (2024: £368,767) in respect of land and buildings and £3,167 (2024: £20,684) in respect of other leases. Amounts have been included for budgeted repairs and estimated future costs for a property that is managed under a full repair lease.

24. Related Party Transactions

During the year 3 (2024: 5) trustees received reimbursement of expenses totaling £1,388 (2024: £1,232). Donations from trustees during the year were £97 (2024: £NIL).

During the year the charity received income from its trading subsidiary for the use of charity staff, data and facilities and for the use of the charity logo. At the year end the trading company owed the charity £122,401 (2024: 164,704).

25. Net Income for the year is stated after charging:

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation (see Note 13)	266,629	254,224
Amortisation (see Note 14)	87,587	72,637
Auditors' remuneration		
- external audit	39,000	30,600
Auditors' remuneration non-audit (net)	-	1,105
Non recoverable VAT	7,800	6,120
Operating leases – property	181,418	368,767
Operating leases – other	3,167	20,684

26. Subsidiary Undertakings

Refuge has a wholly owned subsidiary, Refuge Trading Ltd, incorporated in the UK and registered in England with its registered office at Fora, 92 Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7TY. The company registration number is 13799550.

The purpose of Refuge Trading Ltd is to manage the corporate partnerships of the charity, including the use of the charity logo, and the sale of Refuge merchandise. Each year the distributable profits of Refuge Trading Ltd will be donated to Refuge under Deed of Covenant.

(a) Investment in Subsidiary

	2025 £	2024 £
Investment in Subsidiary Undertaking	1	1

Refuge’s investment in Refuge Trading Ltd is £1, being the whole of the issued share capital of that company.

(b) Refuge Trading Ltd

	2025 £	2024 £
Total Income	123,168	125,602
Cost of Sales	(55,268)	(56,055)
	67,900	69,547
Admin Costs	(8,237)	(6,809)
Net Profit gifted to Refuge	(59,663)	(62,738)
Retained Profit for the year	-	-

At 31 March 2025 Refuge Trading Ltd had net assets and called up share capital of £1 (2024: £1).

Domestic abuse and violence against women and girls will only end when we create gender equality. Refuge is committed to a world where domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is not tolerated, and where women and children can live in safety.

refuge.org.uk

Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline is available on 0808 2000 247 for free, confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A live chat service is also available from 10am to 10pm, Monday to Friday, and from 10am to 6pm on weekends. For further information and advice, visit www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk.



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Refuge, For, 92 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TY

Charity number: 277424 | Company number: 1412276

Regulator of Social Housing number: 4730

REFUGE

England & Wales - Charity number 277424

Accounts



For women and children.
Against domestic violence.

Our call for commitment

Domestic abuse is everyone's problem

Annual report and
financial statements

2023-2024

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Looking back
The triple impact of greater demand, increased costs and lower income continues to challenge our vital work for women and children experiencing domestic abuse.

Perpetrators are using fast-changing technological and financial ways to control women. Agencies and commissioners are trying to respond to need that has been intensified by years of austerity. Women and children are experiencing domestic abuse alongside housing, health, mental health and immigration disadvantages. And confidence in the justice system, the police and public services is at an all-time low.

We've shouldered responsibilities that, in previous years, would have been shared across a wider support system. Still, we've pulled together, campaigned and collaborated to maintain our services, influence policy and call for urgent funding.



Looking ahead
We know that our efforts, and the work of our sector, has never been more needed. At the time of writing this report, Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley warned, on behalf of the National Police Chiefs' Council, that the scale of the problem requires a national, multi-agency strategy with prevention and protection measures.

We remain resolved in our vision, mission and focus. Whatever it takes, we will continue to grow our work in partnership with others and share our expertise. We will continue to listen to survivors. And we will continue to review and develop our work so that women and children get the service they deserve.

Why we're here

To ensure all women and children experiencing domestic abuse in England can access the services they need and deserve – to have the opportunity to live their lives free from fear, safe from abuse and empowered to regain control of their lives.

“

Lisa's* story

My experience from Refuge is, simply put, that the services provided saved my life so, to me, it's a remarkable organisation that I believe is so vital in this world. I don't wish for anyone to go a day without being able to have access to resources such as Refuge, it's too important to ever disregard.

VISION
Refuge is committed to a world where domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is not tolerated and where women and children can live in safety.

Refuge believes that domestic abuse and violence against women and girls will only end when we create gender equality.

MISSION
We aim to empower women and children to rebuild their lives, free from violence and fear.

We provide a range of life saving and life changing services. We put the experiences of survivors at the heart of our work and help amplify their voices.

Why we're here

Every two minutes someone turns to Refuge for help

1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse during their lifetime

This year the number of women affected was estimated at 1.4 million

And 17.5%¹ of them reported "it's just something that happens"

¹ ONS (2023), Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November.

Women and children approach us with different and often concurrent disadvantages:
75% experienced psychological violence
53% experienced physical abuse
34% experienced economic abuse
32% experienced technology-facilitated abuse
37% had their lives threatened by an abuser
26% were injured at the point of accessing our services
23% experienced sexual violence
18% had mental health difficulties

“

Grace’s* story

I was a shell of the person I used to be. Throughout the last years of my marriage I was afraid, always on edge, I felt ashamed, hated, resented, insignificant, powerless, unloved, used and, more than anything, worthless.

For anyone going through this right now don’t hide it, talk to your friends and family, and most importantly seek help.

We supported 25,487 women and children:
1,529 (6%) accessed our refuge provision
23,958 (94%) accessed our community-based services

2023/2024 at a glance

Our National Domestic Abuse Helpline supported people 49,787 times via phone, live chat, email and our British Sign Language interpretation service:
75% were survivors of domestic abuse,
8% were concerned friends, family members, neighbours or colleagues
8% were police, social workers, healthcare staff or other professionals

We maintained 329 units of safe accommodation within 53 refuges across 16 local authorities

We received 17,559 community-based referrals and 1,131 accommodation referrals

We supported survivors through the returning of 124 guilty verdicts for their perpetrators

We continued to improve women’s safety and wellbeing at the point of leaving our service:
99% felt confident they knew how to access help in the future
96% said they were no longer living in fear
95% felt safer when they left our services
93% said their quality of life had improved,
88% achieved the changes they wanted in their lives
76% were supported to find a safe new home (where this was a requested need)
42% reported an end to all abuse and controlling behaviour

Our supporters campaigned alongside us:
54 companies collaborated with us
11 celebrity ambassadors, 7 champions and 47 other celebrities and influencers raised awareness and support
9 members of our survivor panel campaigned for change alongside Refuge and many other survivors worked with us behind the scenes

Our social media content was seen 183 million times with:
142.5 million Twitter post impressions
37.7 million Facebook post impressions
1.5 million Instagram post impressions
824,000 TikTok views
595,000 LinkedIn post impressions

Our funders helped us deliver more than we can with limited statutory funding alone:
9,545 people signed up to a fundraising event
We raised £7,522,107 in voluntary income
At least £61,001 of gifts in kind and pro bono services were donated by partners



Why we're here



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair

Just when public awareness is growing, it's becoming even harder to make a difference

Without a doubt, we've noticed more open discussion about domestic abuse this year. That's got to be a good thing. But it's happened because we've all become aware of a number of horrific incidents. We've seen women experience situations where things have gone wrong – with the police, with the criminal justice system, or due to gaps in the wider network of support. And we're hearing from women that the ongoing cost of living crisis leaves them with little choice but to return to abusive partners. We're constantly reminded that the safety of many women and children depends on the work we do.

We are responding to growing demand for our accommodation and community-based services. At the same time our world, and the context around us, is changing rapidly. Our costs are going through the roof. Fundraising is harder because people have less money in their pockets. Local authorities are trying to manage on reduced budgets, with some facing effective bankruptcy. And our own people are dealing with the higher cost of living themselves. Our response has to be multifaceted.

We are building new partnerships. Our work for children is a great example. The Domestic Abuse Act recognises children as victims in their own right but, in practice, this has meant little without clarity on how best to support them and funding to do it. This year through the Dahan Family Foundation, we've partnered with the UK Trauma Council to develop and pilot an intervention for children and young people affected by the trauma of domestic abuse.

We're also strengthening our existing partnerships. Our collaboration with Warwickshire County Council continues to demonstrate how providing 'own front door' accommodation expands the potential for the number and diversity of people we can support.

These circumstances mean we need to fully understand what drives our costs and maximise the contribution that every £1 donated gives to our frontline services. This is no different to other organisations facing these challenges, but our scale means we need to work even harder to make changes that are sustainable.

“
We're strengthening our partnerships and building new ones. And we're doing even more to listen to survivors, focusing our efforts on the priorities that have the biggest impact for them.

Message from our chair and interim chief executive



Abigail Ampofo, interim chief executive

Just when the challenges feel overwhelming, our people keep going

This year we've had to make difficult decisions. Throughout these changes, everyone at Refuge has remained focused on our purpose and mission. Everyone has stood together. Everyone has kept going. Our colleagues' determination to provide the best support to women and children has shone through again this year. They've shown an openness and willingness to look for new solutions and do things differently. Their resilience is phenomenal, and we don't take it for granted.

Refuge would not be the organisation we are without our incredible people who work, day in day out, to be there for the women and children who so desperately need our help. And, this year, our people have found themselves holding responsibilities that were, and should be, shared across a wider support system.

“
Domestic abuse is everyone's problem. We will continue to do whatever we can to create a society where domestic abuse is not tolerated.

We're making progress in building an inclusive and empowering culture. Our authentic commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion is delivering real change and an environment where psychological safety is evident.

With so much change occurring internally and across our external environment, Refuge's board and executive have decided to extend our current 2022-2025 strategy for a further year. This will allow us to build upon strong foundations at a more manageable pace.

Our call for renewed commitment to lasting change
Domestic abuse is everyone's problem. For too long, women have spoken, with extraordinary and inspiring voices, about their experiences. This year, we've done even more to listen to survivors, focusing our efforts on the priorities that have the biggest impact for them.

We are ready to have a fresh conversation with government. The pledges to deliver real change are welcome. As the leading provider of frontline domestic abuse services, we will share our expertise and insights, informed by survivors. We are here to shape an ambitious agenda with survivors at its centre. To provide high quality support. To work in partnership to deliver an effective response to survivors and their children. And to do whatever we can to create a society where domestic abuse is not tolerated.

What we've delivered

Priority 1

Provide emergency specialist accommodation, community-based and specialist support services

'Business as usual' has been tough this year. We're functioning in a broken ecosystem. We're overstretched. The cost of living crisis is affecting our running costs and women's choices. The UK Government's £300,000 emergency fund pilot, for one-off payments for survivors, closed within a week due to overdemand.

We've never been needed more. That's why we continue to respond to emergent need, pioneer new approaches and build relationships that allow us to deliver high quality, high impact services.

Our National Domestic Abuse Helpline

We've been running the National Domestic Abuse Helpline independently for five years and our online Live Chat service since 2020. This year we supported people 49,787 times. We've laid the foundations for the launch of our National Domestic Abuse Helpline Contact Centre to significantly modernise and improve the way we manage calls and data. The contact centre will consolidate the ways we support women, improve their access to our services and give our staff and volunteers a system that is intuitive and easy to use.

Our safe accommodation

With 6 of our 30 London properties refurbished last year, the Safe Accommodation – Psychologically Informed Environment grant programme meant we could turn our attention to the other 24. Awarded by the Greater London Authority and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, this vital support has enabled us to transform the social spaces within our refuges.

In response to feedback from our residents, we redecorated lounges, kitchens, dining rooms, bathrooms and playrooms.

We bought furniture, rugs and plants, and we installed play equipment and outdoor furniture, making every corner of our refuges welcoming. Women and children have enjoyed annual festivities, 'mothers' meeting' discussions, and celebrations in their renewed safe spaces.

Supporting children and young people

Children and young people don't just witness abuse. They live with it. And it can affect every part of their development, wellbeing and mental health. In 2021, the landmark Domestic Abuse Act recognised children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right. Since then, we've been sharing good practice in working with children and young people, securing funding to recruit additional children support workers, and developing policy, procedures and standards to guide their vital work.

This year we've joined forces with the UK Trauma Council, thanks to the Dahan Family Foundation, to address the impact of trauma on children and young people affected by domestic abuse. Our three-year project draws on the latest evidence to develop and pilot a flexible intervention that can be adapted to diverse cultures and multiple languages. Together we're designing an approach that can be delivered by non-specialist workers, so that the pilot's findings can have the widest possible application and impact.

“

I was scared and worried, I didn't know where we were going. On the first day, I didn't know what to do, then I saw my children support worker, my life changed. I remember her playing with me and my brother and it was fun.

Assad*, 8-year-old who stayed in a refuge

Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

Our community-based services

Our 'Local Lifelines' report, launched in June, revealed that around 95% of our survivors use community-based services. These empower women to access holistic, specialist support at all stages of their journey, whether they are still living with their abuser, planning to flee, or have already left to rebuild their lives.

Wherever we can, we extend our impact by positioning our community services alongside local organisations. Examples this year include co-locating with the police, the safeguarding referral team, the homeless team and the drug and alcohol support service in Lambeth, and the Hogarth Trust in Chiswick.

We've created a small boutique within our Gaia Centre, our community-based hub in the heart of Lambeth. Stocked with donations of new and second-hand clothing, and products donated by Beauty Banks, The Glamour Room increases survivors' emotional wellbeing while easing their financial pressures. In January, Her Majesty The Queen visited, met with survivors, experienced a children's playroom and heard from our specialist staff how they support children who have experienced domestic abuse and other forms of violence, including child sexual exploitation.

“

Laura's* story

When something like this happens and your life falls apart, to have somebody who understands and can support you emotionally the next day was just priceless. I cannot tell you in words.

The worker I had was from my own country, so she spoke my language. It gave me the ability to have conversations about our cultural background and upbringing.

I had someone with me consistently. I felt like a person. Without the Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor, I would have had no support at all.



*All names have been changed to protect survivor's identities

photo credit Stacey Osborne

What we've delivered

Priority 2

Deliver high quality services and set quality standards for domestic abuse services

We provide the best quality services we can. That's what women and children need and deserve. And we continuously review our quality standards so we can improve how we measure our impact.

We will continue to develop and evolve our sector-leading specialist tech and economic abuse services, sharing our expertise to extend our impact and achieve widespread change for survivors of domestic abuse.

Providing safe accommodation that includes more survivors

The 2021 Domestic Abuse Act made the provision of safe accommodation statutory and required local authorities to assess their provision against the needs of people in their communities. These assessments often highlight groups who are underserved, including disabled survivors, older survivors with mobility needs, those with serious mental ill health, substance use or criminal justice experience, large families or those with older male children, survivors with pets, and transgender survivors. Traditional models of refuge accommodation are not always able to meet the needs of survivors from these groups.

In August, in partnership with the charity Commonweal Housing, we launched our report 'More than Bricks and Mortar' to address this area of need. This feasibility study, drawing on feedback from survivors, frontline practitioners and managers, explored what safe accommodation could look like for these groups and set out how it could be delivered. It offers a model of dispersed, self-contained accommodation, where people can live independently but with appropriate specialist support and protection from the risk of abuse.

Building on the incredible refuge and community-based services delivered by our team in Warwickshire, in September we launched our new, two-year dispersed accommodation pilot project. This pilot will deliver fourteen one-, two- and three-bedroom properties along with bespoke emotional and practical support. It will also test our approach, tackle the challenges, demonstrate the benefits and share good practice.

Providing support that includes more survivors

The women and children who approach us often experience other disadvantages. That's why, with funding from the Vision Foundation, we've worked with Blind Aid to share our mutual areas of expertise. Together we developed a resource pack filled with practical advice on how best to support a visually impaired survivor in a refuge and offered specialist training on domestic abuse to Blind Aid staff.

We're also thrilled to announce that our Gaia Centre won the Pride in Practice Silver Award of Excellence, in recognition of its proactive commitment to LGBTQ+ service equality.

“

It really helped that my domestic abuse worker was openly queer. I felt able to be more relaxed and open about my experiences. It turned out we'd been to many of the same places, often at the same time! I felt less like a 'charity case' and more like I was receiving help from my community

Vicky*, a survivor who accessed a community-based service

Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

Evolving and sharing our sector-leading tech abuse expertise

Technology has become one of the most pervasive ways that woman and girls are controlled and abused. And, at the same time, technology is critical to survivors' empowerment. Women can't just disconnect.

Refuge was the first UK organisation to respond by creating a tech-facilitated and economic abuse service. We are proud of the expertise of our dedicated team: the survivors we support, the policies we influence, the tech companies we inform, the funding we secure, the agencies we partner with, and the people we train. This year, the innovative work of our tech abuse team was recognised by Civil Society Media, winning the Social Care, Advice and Support category in their Charity Awards.

“

This project is innovative, it's interesting, it's scalable, there was good reach, and it was value for money.

A judge for The Charity Awards organised by Civil Society Media

Alongside our accessibility working groups with survivors, this year we've reviewed and improved our Tech Safety website. We've produced newsletters, podcasts and guides for survivors. And we've shared content for survivors and professionals on our parallel economic abuse webpages.

The scale of technology-facilitated abuse means we can't tackle it alone. We've secured Home Office funding to support 'by and for' partners to respond to tech abuse concerns. We've delivered over 50 training and consultancy sessions. And we've planned a Tech Safety Summit for September 2024 to equip professionals, policymakers and advocates to work together to shape the future of tech safety.



What we've delivered

Priority 3

Drive policy change to ensure sustainability of domestic abuse services

Supporting survivors of domestic abuse is complex. Perpetrators are using pervasive economic constraints and fast-changing technologies to control women.

Commissioners and agencies are trying to respond to local need intensified by years of austerity and the cost of living crisis. Women and children are trying to survive abuse alongside housing, health, mental health and immigration disadvantages.

Confidence in the justice system, the police and public services is at an all-time low. We continue to advocate for changes in policy, practice and legislation, informed by our data and expertise, and the experiences and voices of our survivors.

Influencing the Victims and Prisoners Act

Alongside ten partner organisations, we urged MPs and peers to introduce amendments to secure a commitment within the legislation to adequate funding for community-based domestic abuse services, estimated by Women's Aid to require £238 million per year to meet demand. Our research report, 'Local Lifelines', set out the vital importance and value of community-based services. We called for a requirement that local commissioners ensure services are delivered on sustainable contract terms of at least three years.

We campaigned with sector partners for a separate, national 'by and for' funding pot to be established to provide long overdue investment for specialist services for D/deaf and disabled, LGBTQ+, Black, minoritised, and migrant women, including those with no recourse to public funds. Together we secured greater breadth and flexibility in the upcoming statutory guidance around victim support roles such as Independent Domestic Violence Advocates, honouring a survivor's right to a specialist advocate.

“

Louise's* story

Louise* survived economic abuse from her perpetrator. She was not allowed to work and only recently paid off a debt her perpetrator put in her name. It took 10 years. She is now working with Refuge to raise awareness of domestic abuse and drive positive change.

Before meeting this man, I was independent. I had worked from the age of 16. It was scary. I felt very alone. I felt like he controlled everything.

I'll continue to have therapy probably for the rest of my life. But my life is back on track. I feel in control of my life for me and my children.

Emergency funds or grants should be provided. There should be help for victims with their bills and essentials, daily needs, to help lift that burden.

And there should definitely be more help, so they don't feel alone.

Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

Removing the rot

A year after Baroness Casey's review of the Metropolitan Police, we handed the Home Secretary a 48,580-signature petition calling for the immediate suspension of all police officers and staff accused of violence against women and girls. Informed by our Freedom of Information analysis, our Remove the Rot campaign revealed a wide variation in the response of police forces across England and Wales. On average, only 24% of accused officers and staff were suspended pending an investigation.

We know that reporting domestic abuse to the police takes extraordinary courage, with only 1 in 5 survivors taking this step. Our survey in January, obtained via YouGov polling, showed that 59% of women would feel increased trust in the police if a policy of immediate suspension from duty for officers and staff accused of violence against women and girls was introduced. We were able to influence College of Policing guidance on the vetting of police staff and, in February, the UK Government announced it would suspend police officers charged with specific offences.

Improving women's safety online

After two years of campaigning alongside sector colleagues and cross-party parliamentarians, we welcomed the significant amendments we had called for during the progress of the Online Safety Act. It is now illegal to share or threaten to share intimate AI-generated images, or 'deepfakes', without consent. Ofcom is now required to publish guidance for social media platforms to make online spaces safer for women and girls. And the UK Government has added controlling or coercive behaviour to the list of priority offences in the Act, requiring tech companies to take steps to prevent and take down coercive and controlling content.

However, with more than 1 in 3 women experiencing online abuse or harassment on social media, we will continue to hold tech and social media companies to their responsibilities and remain vigilant about how the law will be policed and enforced.

Amplifying survivors' voices

Our survivor panel goes from strength to strength, ensuring that our work is informed by women's experiences and voices. In January we started work on our General Election Manifesto, focusing on improving education for children and young people, a priority of our panel. Launched in May, alongside our guide to anonymous voting, our manifesto outlines the changes the next government needs to make to eradicate domestic abuse.

“

As a victim of domestic abuse, so many of my rights have been forcibly taken away by my perpetrator. Neither myself, nor the many other survivors who are just like me, should lose the right to vote because it's not safe to do so. The government has an obligation to protect us. We have a right to choose who will represent us and will deliver change to minimise the risks of domestic abuse for the next generation.

Penelope*, a survivor of domestic abuse



What we've delivered

Priority 4

Prevent violence against women and girls through awareness raising and changing harmful and pervasive societal attitudes

Domestic abuse, in all its manifestations, is still misunderstood. We work hard to ensure that as many women as possible know what they can do to protect themselves and how to access our services.

We continue to campaign to raise public awareness, mobilise public action and secure financial resources. And we continue to challenge societal norms and drive the culture change that leads to policy change.

Keeping domestic abuse in the news

This year we've held the spotlight on domestic abuse, despite a very busy news agenda. We built on last year's highly effective 'Rotten Apples' campaign, drawing attention to the 1,071 Metropolitan Police officers under investigation for allegations of domestic abuse or violence against women and girls. The campaign's success saw Refuge win the Charity Times PR Team of the Year award and make the shortlist for the Third Sector Awards Communication Team of the Year.

With 17.5% of survivors reporting that domestic abuse is "just something that happens", we need to keep working for a society where domestic abuse is not tolerated. And this year we've been supported by a number of popular women's magazines. In July, Grazia ran an article on the Online Safety Bill, joining us in petitioning readers to call for tech companies to prioritise women's safety when designing new products.

In September, Cosmopolitan interviewed actor Saffron Hocking, one of our ambassadors, on how we helped her understand the realities of domestic abuse for her part in Netflix's Top Boy series.



photo credit Jaime Lee/Philipp Raheem - for Cosmopolitan Magazine cover September 2023



Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

And in October, Glamour interviewed our new champion, Georgia Harrison, about her experience of image-based sexual abuse and her recent book 'Taking Back My Power: Our Bodies. Our Consent.'

We've also raised awareness to keep women safe. We've repeated our warning that the government's Emergency Alerts System test can expose a woman's safe, hidden, secondary phone. And we've highlighted the potential misuse of women's medical records being made available automatically via the NHS app

Campaigning for change

Our 'Remove the Rot' campaign helped us reveal the magnitude of the police force's failure to tackle violent misogyny by police officers and staff. Nearly 50,000 people signed our petition calling for the immediate suspension of accused officers and staff. The press responded to the strong public support for our call, highlighting the increase in public trust and confidence that would result from government and police action.



EXCLUSIVE Britain's 'misogynistic' police forces blasted for 'failing' young women after shocking figures reveal more than half do not trust officers

“

This type of domestic abuse isn't well publicised and understood. I think this comes down to there being a real lack of awareness of the effects of emotional and psychological abuse

Grace*, a survivor who experienced coercive control

The Independent, Georgia Harrison and Sharon Gaffka used their influence to boost our calls for amendments to the Online Safety Act. With their support, the Act made it a crime to share or threaten to share intimate AI-generated images, or 'deepfakes', without consent, and included a requirement for Ofcom to develop guidance for tech companies on violence against women and girls.



What we've delivered

Priority 5

Build partnerships to share and grow our expertise and expand our impact

We're used to working in crisis. But we can't do it alone. By working with our sister organisations across the violence against women and girls sector, we strengthen our services, our thought leadership and our impact.

Through our partnerships with commissioners and specialist providers, we respond quickly and effectively to local need. And our joint campaigns create powerful advocacy for policy change and sustainable funding.

Raising standards and widening our reach

For over two years, we've maintained our joint campaign for amendments to the Online Safety Bill, now in effect. Together with survivors, academics and our sector partners, we've commented, shared research and presented a violence against women and girls Code of Practice, urging government to mandate its use to hold tech and social media companies to account. Our supporters sent more than 3,500 emails to the House of Lords. We welcomed the changes to the Bill that recognised the protection that women and children need. Together, we will keep tech companies under scrutiny and remain vigilant over how the legislation will be policed and enforced.

With more than 20 sector partners and the British Medical Association, we urged survivors to contact their GP practices to request that automatic online medical record sharing be switched off if they fear access could compromise their safety. And, together, we called on NHS England to improve safety provisions.

“
For the majority of patients, access to their GP record on their smartphone will be a welcome development. However, for a significant number, especially those members of our society who are most vulnerable, the forced implementation of this process is a cause for concern for us as GPs. We would encourage any such patient to let their GP practice teams know if they wish to opt-out at the present time, or to not install the NHS app, until we have reached safe and practical agreements with the UK government and NHS leaders.

Dr Katie Bramall-Stainer, Chair of the BMA GP Committee for England

In July, with 10 of our sector partners, we launched a petition to the Secretary of State for Justice calling for annual funding of at least £238 million for the delivery of specialist community-based services through the Victims and Prisoners Bill. We followed up in March – alongside Women's Aid, SafeLives, Solace Women's Aid, and Agenda Alliance – with a joint, open letter to the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Justice, urging for this funding, plus £189 million for refuge services, to be included in the Spring Budget.

Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

Sharing insights and expertise

Domestic abuse is everyone's concern. This year we've worked even more closely with other agencies to support women and children, wherever they are, with their specific needs. We're particularly proud of the specialist services we've co-located with local police stations, Civic Centres, drug and alcohol support services, and homelessness teams.

This year, we've partnered with Richmond Fellowship and the London Boroughs of Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Kingston, Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth. Part of their Prevent and Change Panel, we are contributing our complementary expertise to address the complexities of domestic abuse, ensuring best practice in risk identification and management. This unique, multiagency approach is learning and modelling new ways to protect and support survivors, hold perpetrators to account, and offer interventions to high-risk perpetrators who typically have multiple, complex and unmet needs themselves.

Building long-term awareness and support

For the first time in our history, we've enjoyed a year-long partnership with a major news brand. Involving commercial, editorial and internal initiatives, our relationship demonstrates The Independent's commitment to making change happen. It has enabled us to reach more people, raise more funds and increase public awareness of domestic abuse.

We celebrated International Women's Day together by unveiling Independent Women: The Influence List 2024, The Independent's exhibition of inspirational women at Outernet in London. Proceeds from the sale of ten of the portraits will support our essential services, including the National Domestic Abuse Helpline.



Independent Women: The Influence List. The Portrait Project

This International Women's Day, join Refuge and The Independent in celebrating influential women and supporting survivors.



What we've delivered

The hard work carried out by our dedicated Refuge team could not have been achieved without the amazing help of our wider Refuge community.

Time, enthusiasm, influence and funding

Many supporters, ambassadors, champions, donors and charitable trusts contribute to our work in powerful, creative and long-lasting ways. Here are just some of this year's highlights.

- We extended our key fundraising events, Christmas and Mother's Day, by developing a 'new moment' to encourage giving. Our Summer Appeal portrayed how children living in a refuge experience the summer holidays and returning to school. It performed well on social ads and by email, generating £77,000.
- As part of our Christmas appeal, we were able to offer a matched giving opportunity to our supporters, thanks to the generosity of a philanthropist who agreed to match any donations up to £125,000. This proved very popular and resulted in us raising over £250,000.
- We developed a new legacy marketing programme and materials to promote this area of giving. New pledgers have been recruited and we have implemented bespoke stewardship communications to keep supporters informed of our work.
- The Dahan Family Foundation has brought about an incredible collaboration with the UK Trauma Council. This three-year partnership will transform how children and families affected by domestic abuse are supported in refuges.
- Rosemary Reed generously supported our annual dinner for philanthropists, hosting alongside Helena Kennedy KC and helping to raise over £56,000 for our work.
- Billie Piper, Alex Scott, Rosemary Reed, Ranvir Singh and Chanita Stephenson gave their pazzazz to our fundraising events, lunches and charity days, along with TP ICAP and our other corporate partners.
- Thousands of people joined one of our fundraising events, or organised their own, including 42 London Marathon runners who raised over £120,000.
- Georgia Harrison and Chanita Stephenson were announced as Refuge champions.
- Alex Scott and Rosemary Reed joined us as Refuge ambassadors.

“
It is an incredible honour to be joining Refuge as an ambassador. I first started working with Refuge following the launch of my book, in which I opened up about my experience of domestic abuse as a child. Since then, I have learned so much more about the scale of domestic abuse in society and the impact sharing your experience can have on fellow survivors.

Alex Scott, Refuge ambassador



Our thanks

To all our loyal supporters and generous partners. To the families of those who left a gift in their will. To our ambassadors and donors. We are deeply grateful for the commitment and support you give Refuge.

Thank you!

- Aisling Bea
Alex Scott MBE
Allen Overy Shearman Sterling Foundation
AMV BBDO
Avon Cosmetics
Barclays
BBC Children in Need
Benefit Cosmetics
Billie Piper
Bumble Inc
Chanita Stephenson
Cherie Blair CBE KC
Christopher A. Holder
David Morrissey
Decorté UK
Garfield Weston Foundation
Genesys
Georgia Harrison
Harrison-Frank Family Foundation
Dame Helen Mirren
Baroness Helena Kennedy LT KC
Henry Oldfield Trust
Her Majesty The Queen
Hogan Lovells
Hubbub & Virgin Media O2
Lorien Haynes
McCann Worldgroup UK
Mint Velvet
Neil Amos and Maggie Poe
Olivia Colman
PA Consulting
Sir Patrick Stewart
PayPlan
Picturehouse Cinemas
Postcode Support Trust (funding raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery)
PwC
Ranvir Singh
Richard Herring
Julie and Richard Swann
Ring, an Amazon company
Rosemary Reed

- Saffron Hocking
Sharon Gaffka
Stratford Town Trust
The Alan Edward Higgs Charity
The Alchemy Foundation
The Brook Trust
The Co-operative Bank
The Dahan Family Foundation
The Eveson Trust
The Independent
The National Lottery Community Fund
The Olwyn Foundation
The People's Picture
The Pye Foundation
TP ICAP
Two Magpies Fund
Wendy Turner-Webster



Legal, administrative and governance

Administrative details

Charity number: 277424
Company number: 1412276
Regulator of Social Housing number: 4730

Principal office:
Refuge, Fora, 92 Albert Embankment,
London SE1 7TY

Auditors:
Moore Kingston Smith LLP, 9 Appold Street, London,
EC2A 2AP

Bankers:
HSBC Bank Plc, 281 Chiswick High Road, London W4
4HJ

Investment Managers:
Charles Stanley & Co, 70-72 Chertsey Street, Guildford,
Surrey GU1 4HL

Solicitors:
Bates Wells, 10 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BE
Rradar Limited, 6 Beacon Way, Hull, HU3 4AE

Trustees, officers and advisers
Refuge is a charity with a registered office at Fora, 92
Albert Embankment, London. Refuge is a registered
provider regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing.
A Board of Trustees (whose members are also directors
of the charitable company) oversees Refuge’s policies
and the execution of its activities. Members are elected
upon a resolution of the Board and may resign their
membership by notice in writing to the company.

The members of the Board who held office during the
year were:

Board of Trustees:
Hetti Barkworth–Nanton (Chair)
Selina Sagayam (Vice-Chair from 01.01.2024, Chair of
People, Nomination and Remuneration Committee to
23.05.2024)
Dheepa Balasundaram (Chair of Audit and Risk
Committee)
Meera Bedi (from 23.02.2024)
Andrea Daniels (to 13.12.2023 including Chair of
Services and Safeguarding Committee)
Justin Derbyshire (from 23.02.2024 and Chair of
People, Nomination and Remuneration Committee from
23.05.2024)
Elizabeth Edwards (to 13.12.2023)
Jeremy Lewis (from 23.02.2024)
Amy Nelsen (from 23.02.2024)
Ayanna Nelson (Chair of Services and Safeguarding
Committee from 01.01.2024)
Jon Rowney (Chair of Resources Committee)
Ruth Smith (to 13.12.2023)
Alex Sufit (from 23.02.2024)

Ambassadors:
Cherie Booth CBE KC
Olivia Colman CBE
Sharon Gaffka
Saffron Hocking
Baroness Helena Kennedy KC
Dame Helen Mirren
Billie Piper
Rosemary Reed
Ranvir Singh
Sir Patrick Stewart OBE

Chief Executive
Ruth Davison (to 29.09.2023)
Ellen Miller (interim from 02.10.2023 to 08.03.2024)
Abigail Ampofo (interim from 04.03.2024)

Senior Leadership Team
Director of Corporate Services:
Trevor Richards (interim to 31.05.2023)
Michaela Chamberlain (from 05.06.2023 to
07.07.2024)
Jo Knowles (interim from 27.11.2023)
Director of Fundraising, Policy and Communications:
Louise Firth (to 03.07.2024)
Ikram Dahman (interim from 11.06.2024)
Interim Director of Operational Change:
Shameem Sadiq-Tang (to 28.04.2023)
Director of People and Culture:
Lornette Pemberton
Director of Service Delivery:
Abigail Ampofo (to 03.03.2024)
Denise Brown (interim from 04.03.2024)
Director of Strategic Insights and Partnerships:
Tracy Blackwell (to 21.02.2024)
Director of Technology:
Cathryn Symons

Governing document
Refuge is a charitable company limited by guarantee,
originally incorporated as Chiswick Family Rescue
on 30 January 1979 and registered as a charity on 31
March 1979. The company was established under a
Memorandum of Association which established the
objects and powers of the charitable company and is
governed under its Articles of Association. In the event
of the company being wound up members are required
to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Refuge Trading Limited, a registered company and
wholly owned subsidiary of Refuge, was established
in 2021 in order to correctly account for the amount of
non-primary purpose trading by Refuge. It has its own
Board of Trustees consisting of two Refuge Trustees
- Jon Rowney (Chair) and Dheepa Balasundaram as
well as two members of Refuge’s senior Leadership
Team - the Interim Director of Fundraising, Policy and
Communications – Ikram Dahman and the Interim
Director of Corporate Services - Jo Knowles. Refuge
Trading Limited’s Board meets once a year in September
to approve the statutory accounts.

Recruitment and appointment of The Board of
Trustees
The directors of the company are also charity trustees for
the purposes of charity law. There shall be a minimum
of five and a maximum of twelve Trustees who are
appointed by a decision of the Trustees. Appointments
are made on an initial three-year term of office. Under
the requirements of the Articles of Association each
Trustee shall retire from office at the third Annual
Retirement Meeting following the commencement
of his or her term of office, this being the meeting of
the Trustees at which the accounts of the Charity are
adopted. Retiring Trustees may be a reappointed for a
maximum of three consecutive terms of office.

Periodic skills audits are undertaken to ensure that the
skills/ experience of the Board of Trustees align with
those necessary for the management of the Charity’s
business. Where necessary Trustees are recruited and
appointed to meet any skills gaps.

The Board of Trustees induction and training
All new members of the Board of Trustees receive an
induction pack containing detailed information about
Refuge, its organisation and its work. The induction
pack is updated periodically and reissued to all trustees.
New trustees spend time with the Chief Executive, Chair
and senior staff to familiarise themselves with Refuge’s
activities and their role and responsibilities as a charity
trustee. Training is provided to introduce trustees to
their legal and governance duties, including mandatory
dynamics of domestic abuse, data protection/GDPR,
safeguarding, cybersecurity and EDI training. There
are visits to community services, opportunities for
specific training and presentations by staff at Board
meetings. All trustees have received a copy of the
Charity Commission publication ‘The Essential Trustee’
and regular self assessments are undertaken against the
Charity Governance Code.

Organisation

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the overall governance of Refuge overseeing its compliance, strategy and planning. They meet regularly to agree and monitor the strategic direction of the organisation, with the following four committees including non-trustee committee members focusing on specific aspects of the charity’s work – Audit and Risk; People, Nominations and Remuneration; Resources; Services and Safeguarding. Refuge’s chief executive, Abigail Ampofo, is responsible for the day to day management of the charity and the implementation of policy, supported by a highly dedicated and professional team of staff and volunteers.

Partnerships

In pursuit of its charitable aims, Refuge works in partnership with a range of charitable, government and statutory agencies to provide safe accommodation for women and children escaping domestic abuse.

Housing associations:

BPHA, Central and Cecil, Clarion Housing Group, Derby Homes, Peabody, Gateway, Hexagon, London and Quadrant, Metropolitan Thames Valley, Notting Hill Genesis, Orbit, Paragon, Sanctuary Housing, Home Group, Southern Housing and Tuntum.

Statutory partners:

The London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hillingdon, Kingston upon Thames, Lewisham, Lambeth, Merton, Redbridge, Southwark, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth and Westminster. The counties of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Warwickshire. The city of Derby, Derby Homes and the borough of Warrington. The Greater London Authority. London Councils. Derbyshire PCC, Hertfordshire PCC, MOPAC, Home Office, Ministry of Justice

Objectives

The objects of the company are:

- To provide for the relief of women and their children or other victims who have been subject to:
 - (i) physical, sexual, emotional and/or mental abuse within an intimate or “family” relationship (“domestic abuse”); or
 - (ii) other gender-based abuse, which term, for the purposes of these Articles, shall include but not be limited to rape, prostitution, gang abuse, sex-trafficking or female genital mutilation, in either of cases or
 - (iii) above, throughout the United Kingdom and abroad

- To provide specialist supported housing and social housing and any associated amenities in England, designed to meet the needs of women and children who are the victims of domestic abuse and/or other gender-based abuse, and other services designed to facilitate their onward progression; and
- To advance public education, research and training on understanding of the issues of domestic abuse and gender based abuse throughout the United Kingdom and abroad.

Refuge’s mission continues to be that of providing emergency accommodation and support to women and children escaping domestic abuse whilst raising awareness and understanding of the issue. Its principal aims and objectives are to:

- Provide a range of high quality specialist services to women and children escaping domestic abuse including a Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline, a growing number of safe houses with additional specialist support services for women and children, outreach and floating support services, refuges and outreach for black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee (BAMER) women, independent domestic abuse advocates and specialist support.
- Raise public awareness of the issues surrounding domestic abuse and campaign to ensure the voices of survivors are heard.

Public benefit statement

Refuge operates for public benefit. The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission’s general guidance on public benefit, “Charities and Public Benefit”.

Respect, inclusion and belonging

Respect, inclusion, and belonging are fundamental to what we want to achieve in all that we do at Refuge. We aim to build a culture where our staff, volunteers, trustees, service users, survivors, partners, and all who work with or alongside us are valued and respected. As an intersectional feminist organisation committed to challenging inequality across society; equality and equity remain at the forefront in helping us to achieve our strategic priorities. To this end, following the launch of our Respect Inclusion and Belonging Strategy and Action Plan in 2022/23, last year we developed an EEDI pledge that we ask our suppliers to sign up to, as well as developed an anti-racism policy and inclusive language guide for our staff. These will help us to develop a diverse team of incredible people and an inclusive culture that celebrates diversity and support us in having a workplace of allies where all forms of discrimination and less favourable treatment is challenged.

Fundraising

In 2023/24, we communicated and engaged with thousands of people across the UK and raised £7.5m from a vibrant community of supporters who joined us in our mission to support women and children escaping domestic abuse. We are hugely grateful for every individual donation and contribution, never taking for granted their incredible commitment.

Our supporter promise sets out our heartfelt commitment to them and the supporter care we provide. We work hard to ensure that we always listen, showing sensitivity to their needs and motivations, and put them at the heart of all we do. We have a range of policies to ensure that vulnerable supporters are protected.

Our charity’s assets are safeguarded through a range of policies that align with the Code of Fundraising Practice. We are members of the Fundraising Regulator.

We are deeply committed to protecting the data and privacy of our supporters and adhere to all relevant legislation and best practice in the sector. In 2023/24 we received 15 complaints about our fundraising activity, which were resolved without the need to be escalated to the Fundraising Regulator. We responded to all complaints within three working days. We worked with three professional fundraising organisations for payroll giving recruitment and provide feedback on an ongoing basis to both maintain and improve performance. We aim to ensure any agencies we employ observe the highest standards in terms of fundraising practice, and we ensure that the work of the suppliers is regularly evaluated.

We work with companies across a variety of sectors to build mutually beneficial partnerships. We encourage our Corporate Partners to commit to raising a minimum level of £25,000 of funds. This can be raised through a range of mechanisms including commercial participation, staff or customer fundraising, events and company donations. We are also grateful for the support of a number of corporate supporters and donors which fund us through one off or regular donations or gifts in kind at a level that suits them best. We conduct due diligence as part of our research process in relation to both proactive and reactive fundraising from businesses, trusts, foundations and high net worth individuals. This is to ensure alignment with our ethical policy as well as assess potential risks by association. It is vital that we continue to raise income that can be used where it is most needed, although we also work a small number of donors to fund distinct programmes where they are particularly passionate about specific areas of our work.

Financial review

Refuge, like many other charities, continues to experience the effects of the financial challenges and crises of recent years. Our finances are impacted by greater demand for our services, costs which continue to increase, together with a challenging fundraising climate. Inflation, while steadying, has continued to affect expenditure with costs remaining higher than in previous years. All of these factors which impact us as a charity also impact on our donors’ ability to support us. We rely on central and local government funding to run many of our services and over two thirds of our income is from these sources in an environment of declining funding to the sector.

Within this challenging economic climate, Refuge generated a deficit of £1.9m in 2023/24, of which £2.0m was unrestricted off-set by a small surplus in restricted funds. This is significantly lower (40%) than the deficit generated in 2022/23 of £4.7m (£4.3m unrestricted) and reflects, at the end of this financial year, the part way position in the multi-year programme of planned activities to return the charity to a break-even position. Refuge’s reserves are sufficient to cover this deficit this year (see ‘Reserves and other funds’ below). We remain committed to implementing plans to move to a break-even position and in future years to further build financial resilience. (see ‘Looking ahead’).

Income

Income totalled £27.8m in 2023/24, which is £2.4m (10%) higher than in 2022/23. Income from operating activities, including grants, contracts and housing management income, has increased by £3.2m (20%) as a result of new contract activity and the renewal of existing contracts at higher values. A one-off grant of £1.3m was also received towards funding the National Domestic Abuse Helpline.

The external events of the past two years continued to impact on our fundraising performance. Total fundraising income was down on 2022/23 figures by 11% (£7.5m vs £8.4m), due to the continuing difficult economic conditions. A fall in income from private donors (13%) was driven by a lower than anticipated performance in community and events, with a more competitive online environment impacting on our digital events offer. Individual giving income stayed relatively static, and we were pleased to see a rise of 153% in legacy income on 2023/23 figures. We remain grateful to all of the individuals who choose to support us, including our high value supporters, who contributed £2.6m in 23/24 (£3.2m in 22/23).

As a result of lower performance and the tough climate, fundraising expenditure dropped significantly in 23/24. This has meant that we have been able to put more of the income raised towards our charitable activities, with a 70% net target achieved.

Expenditure

2023/24 was a year where costs were also considered as part of financial sustainability planning. Expenditure totalled £29.8m, which is £0.3m (1%) lower than the prior year. Our costs will be an ongoing area of focus where we continue to implement our plans to move towards a break-even position.

Headcount has increased overall, due to new contract activity and realising the long-term benefits and savings that come from replacing temporary staff with permanent appointments off-set by headcount savings made as part of the financial sustainability plan.

Increased property costs are partly driven by inflationary pressure which is outside the control of the charity. We also increased the number of services that we have in some areas, again, leading to higher but planned for costs.

Looking ahead

Refuge entered 2023/24 with a reserves position which, whilst being well above Reserves Policy levels thanks to a significant one-off increase in donations received during the 2020 lockdown, was depleted from the losses generated in the previous financial year 2022/23. However, Refuge recognises that it would not be sustainable to continue generating deficits in the medium or longer term.

A financial sustainability plan was implemented in the previous financial year 2022/23, which includes income growth and reductions to expenditure. This programme has seen us generate a smaller deficit in 2023/24 which is covered by reserves (please see ‘Reserves and other funds’ below), and we are planning to reach a break-even position in 2024/25.

Reserves and other funds

Refuge’s reserves, shown on the balance sheet as ‘general funds’, are its unrestricted funds not designated by the Board for any other purpose. They provide resilience in the event of financial shocks, such as an unexpected decline in income.

The Reserves Policy determines the target level for reserves. At the end of 2023/24, the Board have taken a risk-based approach in setting the policy to be within the range of £5.2m to £6.4m. The reserves balance

of £6.6m is currently £0.2m higher than the policy maximum. As noted under ‘Looking ahead’ above, Refuge expects to reach a break-even position in 24/25 through a continued focus on plans for achieving financial sustainability.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside for a specific purpose by the Board. As at 31st March 2024,

Refuge has one designated fund, the Fixed Asset Fund which holds the balance of all tangible and intangible fixed assets. This reflects the fact that these assets are not available to be expended in the same way reserves are, as they are utilised in Refuge’s day-to-day operations and are not readily realisable as cash.

Restricted funds relate to income which must be used for a specific purpose, as stipulated by the donor, and which has not yet been expended.

Further information on Refuge’s funds can be found in notes 20-22 of the accounts.

Principal risks

The Board of Trustees are responsible for establishing and monitoring internal control systems within Refuge. The Board reviews the major risks which may impact on the operations of Refuge on a regular basis and are satisfied that the system of internal control currently in place is sound and effective, whilst recognising that it is designed to manage rather than eliminate risk. This year, the Board and staff have worked to improve and refine our risk register, ensuring it is clear, informative and reviewed each quarter. The Board of Trustees agree that the following are the principal risks that Refuge faces:

- Safeguarding. The nature of Refuge’s work leads to a high risk of safeguarding issues. We have improved and strengthened our policies, processes and ways of working to meet our high safeguarding standards including comprehensive external reviews of services where issues have been raised. Due to the nature of our work, this will always remain high risk for us and an area of ongoing governance focus.
- Financial Health and Sustainability. As noted in the ‘Financial review’ above, Refuge continues to draw on reserves to fund our vital work and invest in longer term efficiencies, in line with our 3 year strategy. This is not sustainable indefinitely and moving forward consolidation will be essential alongside income maximisation, ensuring we have a viable business model.
- Staff capacity, continuity and capability. We have invested heavily into our workforce and will continue to focus on this, recognising the challenges we have with recruitment and retention

in our sector. This is due to the high pressured and traumatic nature of our work, the lack of multi-year funding or contracts as well as our desire to be an employer of choice.

- Effective and efficient systems. Refuge continues to strengthen our robust data security measures and to invest into our IT team, policies and procedures to mitigate risks. Financial plans for future years include capital investment to improve our systems.
- Continuity of services. There are a number of significant contracts due for recommissioning during 2023. In order to maintain and extend contracts a local engagement and ‘win’ strategy is prepared for each service. Maintaining good relations with commissioners, negotiating contract extensions where possible and tight budgeting and control of costs are priorities.

Investment powers

The Articles of Association contain powers for the Board of Trustees to invest funds in any investments, securities and properties. As at 31st March 2024, Refuge held £701k of investments, £59k higher than the prior year. Refuge’s appetite for risk is medium to low, seeking to balance capital growth and income generation. Performance for the year was in line with the market and comparable indices. The portfolio is managed by Charles Stanley. Further information is provided in note 15 to the accounts.

Statement of the Board of Trustees responsibilities

The Board of Trustees (whose members are also directors of Refuge for the purposes of company law) is responsible for preparing the trustees’ report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Company law requires the Board of Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the outgoing resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Board of Trustees is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Housing and Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business

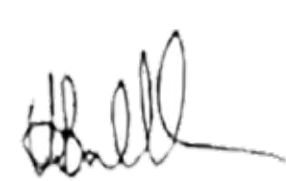
The Board of Trustees is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding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

As far as the Board of Trustees is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company’s auditor is unaware; and
- The Board of Trustees has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the pay and remuneration of key management personnel is reasonable and appropriate. Director salaries are determined annually by the People, Nominations and Remuneration Committee (PNRC). A separate policy outlines the approach to CEO pay which is capped relative to other salaries.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair

This report acts as a directors’ report for the charitable company as required by s415 of the Companies Act 2006 and includes the Strategic Report which has been approved by the Board of Trustees in their capacity as company directors.

Independent auditors report to the members of Refuge

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Refuge (the ‘parent charitable company’) and its subsidiary (the ‘group’) for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Group Statement of Financial Activities, the Group Summary Income and Expenditure Account, the Group and Parent Charitable Company Balance Sheets, the Group Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice)

In our opinion the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the group’s and the parent charitable company’s affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the group’s 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; 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 Auditor’s 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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the group’s and parent charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained in the annual report. 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.

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 course of 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 themselves. 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.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the strategic report and the trustees’ annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The strategic report and the trustees’ annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and parent charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the trustees’ annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- The parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The parent charitable company’s financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees’ remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees’ responsibilities statement set out on page 25, 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 group and parent 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 group or parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor’s 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 an auditor’s report 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 aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the group and parent charitable company’s internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the group and parent charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor’s report. However, future events or conditions may cause the group or parent charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the group to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit report.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

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.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council
- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters which we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Neil Finlayson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP,
Statutory Auditor
26/09/2024

9 Appold Street
London
EC2A 2AP



Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
		2024	2024	2024	2023
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	4	6,141,977	1,380,130	7,522,107	8,475,881
Operating activities					
Contracts for Support Services	5	7,406,866	-	7,406,866	7,074,400
Housing Management	3	5,270,785	-	5,270,785	4,546,451
Grants	6	-	7,118,321	7,118,321	4,942,497
Other trading activities	8	125,602	-	125,602	118,526
Investments	7	265,507	-	265,507	141,676
Other income		104,806	-	104,806	88,600
Total income	3	19,315,543	8,498,451	27,813,994	25,388,031
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	9	3,370,224	-	3,370,224	4,392,144
Charitable activities					
Refuge provision		7,847,398	1,053,576	8,900,974	9,045,086
Advocacy		4,145,590	1,513,768	5,659,358	5,379,860
Integrated services		5,031,016	793,493	5,824,509	5,275,857
Outreach and Floating Support		444,471	2,076,817	2,521,288	2,467,570
National Domestic Abuse Helpline		487,396	2,570,891	3,058,287	3,122,488
Public information		66,850	323,240	390,090	372,763
Specialist support services		27,510	-	27,510	165
Total Expenditure	3,11	21,420,455	8,331,785	29,752,240	30,055,933
Net (losses)/ gains on investments	15	59,301	-	59,301	(63,635)
Net (expenditure)/ income		(2,045,611)	166,666	(1,878,945)	(4,731,537)
Net movement in funds		(2,045,611)	166,666	(1,878,945)	(4,731,537)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward		9,166,239	548,614	9,714,853	14,446,390
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2024	20, 21, 22	7,120,628	715,280	7,835,908	9,714,853

The notes on pages 32-53 to form part of these financial statements.

All of the activities of the charitable company related to continuing operations. There were no recognised gains and losses other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2024

			Group		Charity
	Note	2024	2023	2024	2023
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	13	400,187	615,490	400,187	615,490
Intangible assets	14	100,841	146,955	100,841	146,955
Investments	15	701,084	641,737	701,084	641,738
		1,202,112	1,404,182	1,202,112	1,404,183
Current Assets					
Debtors	16	6,095,685	3,552,480	6,237,069	3,589,120
Cash at bank and in hand		6,456,668	9,685,030	6,296,127	9,630,028
		12,552,353	13,237,510	12,533,196	13,219,148
Creditors: Amounts falling due					
within one year	17	(5,267,671)	(4,806,839)	(5,248,514)	(4,799,900)
Net Current Assets		7,284,682	8,430,671	7,284,682	8,419,248
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		8,486,794	9,834,853	8,486,794	9,823,431
Provisions for liabilities and charges	19	(650,886)	(120,000)	(650,886)	(120,000)
Net Assets		7,835,908	9,714,853	7,835,908	9,703,431
Represented by:					
Unrestricted Funds 20					
General		6,619,601	8,403,794	6,619,601	8,403,794
Designated Funds		501,028	762,445	501,028	762,445
		7,120,629	9,166,239	7,120,629	9,166,239
Restricted Funds 21		715,279	548,614	715,279	548,614
Total Funds 22		7,835,908	9,714,853	7,835,908	9,714,853

Approved by the Board on 26 September 2024

Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

Jon Rowney

The notes on pages 32 to 53 form part of these financial statements.
Company number: 1412276

Consolidated statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Statement of Cash Flows			
Net Cash (Outflow) from Operating Activities	1	(3,428,377)	(4,325,006)
- Investment income received	7	265,507	141,676
Capital Expenditure and financial investment			
- Payments to acquire Tangible Fixed Assets	13	(38,922)	(64,593)
- Payments to acquire Intangible Fixed Assets	14	(26,523)	-
- Payments to acquire Financial Investments	15	(117,810)	(98,220)
- Investment disposal proceeds	15	88,676	103,809
Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	(3,257,449)	(4,242,334)
Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows			
1			
Reconciliation of Changes in Resources to Net Cash Outflow from operating activities			
Net movement in funds		(1,878,945)	(4,731,537)
Depreciation		220,185	208,717
Amortisation		72,637	78,678
Investment income		(265,507)	(141,676)
Unrealised/Realised losses/(gains)		(59,301)	63,635
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other Debtors		(2,543,205)	475,462
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other Creditors		458,502	(278,285)
Movement in provision		530,886	-
		(3,464,748)	(4,325,006)
2			
Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movements in Net Funds			
(Decrease) /Increase in Cash and Cash at Bank in the year		(3,257,448)	(4,242,334)
(Decrease)/Increase in net funds		(3,257,448)	(4,242,334)
Net funds at 1 April 2023		9,721,402	13,963,736
Net funds at 31 March 2024		6,463,954	9,721,402
Reconciliation of net funds to cash at bank and in hand			
		2024	2023
		£	£
Net funds		6,463,954	9,721,402
Cash held with investment managers		(7,284)	(36,372)
Cash at bank and in hand		6,456,668	9,685,030

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements are prepared on the historical cost convention of accounting, as modified by the revaluation of Fixed asset Investments and in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and in compliance with The Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019, Housing SORP 2018, the Statement of Recommended Practice “Accounting for Registered Social Providers”, the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with “The Financial Reporting Standard Accounts applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (“FRS 102”), The Charities Act 2011 and the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. The charity is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102.

Going concern

Refuge’s financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis. Per FRS 102, an entity is a going concern unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the entity or to cease operating, or has no realistic alternative but to do so. Refuge’s Trustees have assessed Refuge’s ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months after the signing of the 2023/24 accounts, i.e. until September 2025, based on projections of Refuge’s income, expenditure and cashflow over that period.

Refuge has generated a deficit of £1.9m in 2023/24. (See the annual report’s financial review for more information.) Despite this, year end unrestricted reserves of £6.6m are above the Reserves Policy range of £5.2m to £6.4m, and the cash balance remains healthy at £6.5m.

Reserves and cash are therefore expected to be sufficient to cover ongoing operations. In 2024/25, we expect to break even and are planning on generating a small surplus thereafter. These financial results will be delivered through a two-year financial sustainability plan incorporating both income growth and expenditure reductions. This plan is already underway and is being closely monitored by the Board. Should Refuge experience an unexpected short-term drop in liquidity, mitigating actions are available, including the liquidation of £701k of investments.

After considering the current level of reserves and cash, the forecast to September 2025, and the mitigating actions available, it is the opinion of the trustees that the Group has adequate financial resources to continue its activities for the foreseeable future and that there are no material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. Accordingly, these financial statements have been prepared using the going concern basis of preparation.

Basis of Consolidation

The consolidated financial statements comprise Refuge together with its wholly owned subsidiary, Refuge Trading Ltd. Refuge Trading Ltd was incorporated on 14 December 2021 and began trading in 2022-23. A summarised profit and loss account for the subsidiary is given in note 26. The results of the subsidiary have been consolidated on a line

by line basis.As permitted by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 no separate statement of financial activities is presented in respect of the parent charity. The net movement of funds attributable to the parent charity is a reduction of £1,878,945.

Tangible Fixed Assets - Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000, except items of high wear and tear for refuges, have been capitalised and recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over their estimated useful lives or the length of the contract/project for which the fixed assets were acquired.

Leasehold improvements	5 years straight line
Freehold buildings	50 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	4 years straight line
Office equipment	4 years straight line

Intangible Fixed Assets - Amortisation

Intangible assets costing more than £1,000 are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets over their useful lives on the following bases:

Software	4 years straight line
Website	4 years straight line

Income

All income is accounted for when the company has entitlement to the funds, receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Donations and legacies include donations, gifts, legacies and some grants receivable. Gifts in kind and intangible income are treated either as donations in the period the gift or intangible income is received, or as an asset, in both cases at a reasonable estimate of the gross value to the charity. Contractual income and legacies are recognised as income where there is entitlement, probability of receipt and measurability. Fundraising income is shown gross except for small fundraising events where the cash is received net of expenditure. Investment income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

Grants are recognised when the entitlement to the grant is confirmed and any conditions not within the company’s control have been met.

Grants that provide core funding, or are of a general nature provided by the government and charitable foundations, are recorded as voluntary income.

1 Accounting Policies (Continued)

Costs of raising funds

Fundraising expenditure comprises costs incurred encouraging people and organisations to contribute financially to the charity’s work. This includes costs of advertising and staging of special fundraising events.

Governance costs

Governance costs comprise all expenditure not directly related to the charitable activity or fundraising ventures including audit fees. The costs are allocated over the activities on the same basis as other administrative costs.

Provisions

There are three elements to the provision as shown on the balance sheet, refer to note 19 for additional information. At its meeting in March 2024 the Board decided to terminate the lease of the Head Office premises and subsequently the notice of termination has been served in accordance with the contractual obligations of the lease. Appropriate provisions for the exit of the premises have been included in the 2023/24 accounts.

The provision also comprises an estimate of future deficits concerning Refuge’s Admitted Body Status of Hertfordshire LGPS scheme, a final salary scheme for one former employee.

Additionally, we have made a provision in relation to potential VAT liabilities.

Bad debts

Bad debts are recognised when all arrears and debt collection procedures have been exhausted. Bad debts are written off on a percentage basis depending on their age and the probability of collection.

Investments

Investments are held in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Any change from market value at the previous balance sheet date or from cost if purchased during the year, is included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Stocks

No value has been ascribed to stocks of publications on the basis that the majority of these are normally given away and therefore it is considered prudent to account for the costs of all publications in the period they are incurred.



Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 ‘Basic Financial Instruments’ and Section 12 ‘Other Financial Instruments Issues’ of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company’s balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial instruments, which include trade and other receivables and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest.

Other financial assets

Other financial assets, including investments in equity instruments which are not subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures, are initially measured at fair value, which is normally the transaction price. Such assets are subsequently carried at fair value and the changes in fair value are recognised in the SOFA, except that investments in equity instruments that are not publicly traded and whose fair values cannot be measured reliably are measured at cost less impairment.

Impairment of financial assets

Financial assets, other than those held at fair value through the SOFA, are assessed for indicators of impairment at each reporting end date.

Financial assets are impaired where there is objective evidence that, as a result of one or more events that occurred after the initial recognition of the financial asset, the estimated future cash flows have been affected. The impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire, or when it transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity.

Pension funds

Refuge operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all staff. The amount charged to the Income and Expenditure Account in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year.

Operating lease agreement

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the SOFA on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Research and development

Research and development costs are expensed to the SOFA in the year that they are incurred.

Fund account

Restricted funds represent monies received for specific projects undertaken by the charity. Designated funds represent monies set aside by the trustees for a specific purpose. General unrestricted funds of the charity are available for the general purposes of the charity.

Status

Refuge is a registered provider regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. The register number is 4730.

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. It is also a registered charity (Number 277424). In the event of the company winding up, members are required to contribute a sum not exceeding £1.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the company’s accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount 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.



Critical judgements

The following judgements (apart from those involving estimates) have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

The company has an obligation to pay dilapidations on expiry of the company’s leases. The cost of these reinstatements and the present value of the obligation depend on a number of factors including the expected rise in cost of building maintenance, uncertainty over the timing of the cost of reinstatements, and the discount rate. Management estimates these factors in determining the net dilapidation provision in the balance sheet. The assumptions reflect historical experience and current trends. See note 19 for the disclosures relating to the dilapidation provision.

The company makes an estimate of the recoverable value of trade and other debtors. When assessing impairment of trade and other debtors, management considers factors including the current credit rating of the debtor, the ageing profile of debtors and historical experience. See note 16 for the net carrying amount of the debtors and associated impairment provision.

The annual depreciation charge for property, plant and equipment is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 13 for the carrying amount of the property, plant and equipment and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of asset.

Similarly the amortisation charge for intangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments and economic utilisation of the assets. See note 14 for the carrying amount of the intangible assets and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.

Registered Company Number: 1412276

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

2. Comparative statements of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Note		2024	2024	2024	2023	2023	2023
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	4	6,141,977	1,380,130	7,522,107	6,726,086	1,749,795	8,475,881
Operating activities							
Contracts for Support Services	5	7,406,866	-	7,406,866	7,074,400	-	7,074,400
Housing Management	3	5,270,785	-	5,270,785	4,546,451	-	4,546,451
Grants	6	-	7,118,321	7,118,321	-	4,942,497	4,942,497
Other trading activities	8	125,602	-	125,602	118,526	-	118,526
Investments	7	265,507	-	265,507	141,676	-	141,676
Other income		104,806	-	104,806	88,600	-	88,600
Total income	3	19,315,543	8,498,451	27,813,994	18,695,739	6,692,292	25,388,031
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	9	3,370,224	-	3,370,224	4,392,144	-	4,392,144
Charitable activities							
Refuge provision		7,847,398	1,053,576	8,900,974	7,688,394	1,356,692	9,045,086
Advocacy		4,145,590	1,513,768	5,659,358	4,414,203	965,657	5,379,860
Integrated services		5,031,016	793,493	5,824,509	4,538,107	737,750	5,275,857
Outreach and Floating Support		444,471	2,076,817	2,521,288	428,717	2,038,853	2,467,570
National Domestic Abuse Helpline		487,396	2,570,891	3,058,287	1,101,980	2,020,508	3,122,488
Public information		66,850	323,240	390,090	326,664	46,099	372,763
Specialist support services		27,510	-	27,510	165	-	165
Total Expenditure	3, 11	21,420,455	8,331,785	29,752,240	22,890,374	7,165,559	30,055,933
Realised gains/(losses) on investments		15	59,301	59,301	(63,635)	-	(63,635)
Net income/(expenditure)		(2,045,611)	166,666	(1,878,945)	(4,258,270)	(473,267)	(4,731,537)
Transfers between funds	20, 21	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(2,045,611)	166,666	(1,878,945)	(4,258,270)	(473,267)	(4,731,537)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances brought forward		9,166,239	548,614	9,714,853	13,424,509	1,021,881	14,446,390
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2024	20,21,22	7,120,628	715,280	7,835,908	9,166,239	548,614	9,714,853

3a. Particulars of turnover, cost of sales, operating costs and operating surplus

	2024	2024	2024	2023	2023	2023
	Turnover	Operating Costs	Operating Surplus/(deficit)	Turnover	Operating Costs	Operating Surplus/(deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Social housing lettings	5,270,785	5,651,903	(381,118)	4,546,450	5,866,303	(1,319,853)
Other social housing activities:						
Contracts for Support Services	2,376,425	2,113,036	263,389	2,130,826	2,523,931	(393,105)
Other grants and donations	1,136,035	1,136,035	-	744,905	744,905	-
	8,783,245	8,900,974	(117,729)	7,422,181	9,135,139	(1,712,958)
Non-social housing activities	19,030,750	20,851,266	(1,820,516)	17,965,850	20,920,794	(2,954,944)
Total:	27,813,995	29,752,240	(1,938,245)	25,388,031	30,055,933	(4,667,902)

3b. Particulars of income and expenditure from social housing lettings

	2024	2023
	£	£
Social housing income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charges	2,266,891	1,487,050
Service charges receivable eligible for Housing Benefit	3,313,456	3,196,387
Service charges receivable ineligible for Housing Benefit	312,901	282,582
Rent losses due to voids	(622,463)	(419,568)
Turnover from social housing lettings	5,270,785	4,546,451
Expenditure on social housing lettings		
Services	1,271,752	1,382,092
Management	2,735,105	2,567,791
Routine maintenance	132,735	245,298
Planned maintenance	97,459	250,126
Bad debts	216,834	171,314
Lease charges	1,186,742	1,248,315
Property depreciation	11,276	1,367
Operating costs on social housing lettings	5,651,903	5,866,303
Operating (deficit)/surplus on social lettings	(381,118)	(1,319,852)

Social housing units		
The number of supported housing units under management at the end of the period:		
	2024	2023
Owned and managed	8	8
Not owned but managed	321	291
	329	299

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

4.Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted 2024 £	Restricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Trusts	298,247	851,152	1,149,399	491,015	604,035	1,095,050
Corporates	413,313	477,811	891,124	471,686	862,532	1,334,218
Major donors	562,862	11,972	574,834	586,361	264,338	850,699
Private donors	4,151,693	39,195	4,190,888	4,824,289	18,890	4,843,179
	5,426,116	1,380,130	6,806,245	6,373,351	1,749,795	8,123,146
Legacies	715,218	-	715,218	281,383	-	281,383
Donations in kind	644	-	644	71,352	-	71,352
	6,141,977	1,380,130	7,522,107	6,726,086	1,749,795	8,475,881

The comparative figures have been restated to reflect the correct analysis between categories.
Private donors includes:Fundraising from Events of £734k (2023: £1.2m), Local Fundraising of £518k (2023: £0.4m) and Individual Giving of £2.3m (2023: £3.2m)

5. Contracts for support services

	2024 £	2023 £
Refuge provision	2,678,619	2,112,604
Advocacy	2,487,299	2,595,385
Integrated services	2,240,948	2,366,411
Outreach and floating Support	-	-
	7,406,866	7,074,400

Support services under housing related support would encompass such activities that enabled the service user to develop the appropriate skills needed for maintaining independence in their own home once outside of the support service framework i.e. building local networks for support, making links into the community, understanding benefit entitlement and how to apply, developing personal finance awareness to pay rent and other associated household bills.

6 Grants

	2024 £ Restricted	2023 £ Restricted
Cambridgeshire Community Foundation	-	12,338
Cambridgeshire County Council	5,234	77,764
City Of London	212,311	-
Derby City Council	-	39,973
Greater London Authority including MOPAC	2,897,215	2,312,523
Hertfordshire County Council	81,996	10,995
Home Office	2,210,572	1,001,019
IRISi	86,430	-
Job Centre plus	2,980	4,102
London Borough Barking and Dagenham	227,237	268,639
London Borough of Hounslow	44,073	45,913
London Borough of Hackney	32,564	25,275
London Borough of Lambeth	115,267	-
London Borough of Lewisham	156,230	200,774
London Borough of Redbridge	3,852	-
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Wandsworth	239,430	300,713
London Councils	-	290,436
London Community Foundation	38,342	-
NHS Lewisham Clincial Commissioning Group	-	17,153
Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames	72,977	-
Standing Together	112,904	-
The Ministry of Justice	21,924	-
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire	239,500	210,070
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire	88,124	51,374
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire	39,979	41,479
Warwickshire County Council	189,179	31,250
Others	-	710
	7,118,321	4,942,497

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Section 37 Statement

Refuge received a grant of £283,081 from London Councils in 2023/24 for the Pan-London Domestic and Sexual Abuse Helplines Project, funded under Priority 2, Service area 2.3, which Refuge runs in partnership with Women and Girls Network, Rape Crisis South London and Respect. As Lead Partner, Refuge retained £125,047 of this grant, which was spent on staff, delivery costs and overheads on the National Domestic Abuse Helpline. The following summary illustrates how money was allocated across the partnership and that it has been used for the purposes outlined in the grant agreement. £7,511 expenditure related to unspent 2022/23 grant.

	Grant (£)	Grant Spent (£)
Lead Partner - Refuge	125,047	124,895
Delivery Partner - Women and Girls Network	78,772	78,924
Delivery Partner - Rape Crisis South London	67,939	75,450
Delivery Partner - Respect	11,323	11,323
	283,081	290,592

7 Investment income

	2024 £	2023 £
Listed investments	14,956	12,713
Interest receivable	250,551	128,963
	265,507	141,676

8 Other trading activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Logo licence	54,208	46,527
Corporate partnerships	71,394	71,999
	125,602	118,526

9 Costs of raising funds

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs	1,271,445	1,527,595
Depreciation and amortisation	19,667	23,733
Trading activities	62,864	5,940
Advertising, campaigns and events	875,644	1,333,081
Support costs	840,002	814,965
Other costs	300,602	405,420
	3,370,224	4,110,734

10 Governance costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Auditors’ remuneration (net)	30,600	30,950
Auditors’ remuneration (net) prior year	-	1,264
Auditors’ remuneration non-audit (net)	-	1,035
Irrecoverable VAT	6,120	6,650
Total auditors’ remuneration inclusive of VAT	36,720	39,899
Legal advice and recruitment of trustees	3,855	1,200
Tax review	1,105	984
Total governance costs	41,680	42,083

Governance costs for the year which are included in support cost in note 11 are £41,680 (inclusive of irrecoverable VAT) (2023: £42,083) representing less than 1% of our total costs.



Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

11 Total Expenditure (continued)

2024

	Cost of Raising Funds £	Refuge Provision £	Advocacy £	Integrated services £	Outreach and Floating Support £	National Domestic Abuse Helpline £	Public Information £	Specialist Support Services £	2023/24 Total £
Direct Costs including Operational Support	2,510,555	6,871,121	4,083,203	4,421,831	1,963,989	2,265,208	278,631	27,510	22,422,048
Support Costs*	859,669	2,029,853	1,576,155	1,402,678	557,299	793,079	111,459	-	7,330,192
	3,370,224	8,900,974	5,659,358	5,824,509	2,521,288	3,058,287	390,090	27,510	29,752,240

*Support Costs include governance costs of £41,680 incl. VAT

2023

	Cost of Raising Funds £	Refuge Provision £	Advocacy £	Integrated services £	Outreach and Floating Support £	National Domestic Abuse Helpline £	Public Information £	Specialist Support Services £	2022/23 Total £
Direct Costs including Operational Support	3,272,036	7,154,801	3,912,078	3,969,624	1,942,940	2,383,939	268,967	165	22,904,550
Support Costs	838,699	1,980,338	1,537,707	1,368,462	543,704	773,733	108,741	-	7,151,383
	4,110,734	9,135,139	5,449,785	5,338,086	2,486,644	3,157,672	377,708	165	30,055,933

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs	17,684,155	16,897,547
Temporary staff	861,138	1,205,243
Consultants	33,928	12,847
Other staff costs	477,106	827,636
Property costs	2,801,719	2,383,028
Equipment costs	39,250	25,610
Telephone	480,236	532,153
Audit	59,094	44,997
Depreciation and amortisation	292,824	287,388
Other costs	7,022,791	7,839,484
	29,752,241	30,055,934

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

12. Staff costs	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	15,234,064	14,520,247
Apprenticeship levy	59,435	57,069
Social security costs	1,476,810	1,501,437
Pension costs	913,845	818,794
	17,684,154	16,897,547

These include redundancy and termination payments of £141,607 (2023: £231,075).

The number of employees, analysed by operating activities, during the year was:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Refuge provision	108	101
Advocacy	86	79
Integrated Services	93	70
Outreach and Floating Support	28	28
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	38	37
Public information	6	5
Other Refuge services	82	95
	441	415

The number of employees whose remuneration (including benefits in kind and termination payments but excluding employers’ National Insurance and employers’ pension contributions) was in excess of £60,000 during the year was:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	7	9
£70,001 - £80,000	2	3
£80,001 - £90,000	3	2
£90,000 - £100,000	1	-
£120,001 - £130,000	1	2

	2024	2023
	£	£
Employers’ Pension contributions in respect of employees whose remuneration was in excess of £60,000 during the year	106,634	69,243

12. Staff costs (cont)

Emoluments to key management personnel

The remuneration paid to the key management personnel of Refuge (the Chief Executive, the Director of Technology, the Director of Fundraising and Communications, the Director of Corporate Services, the Director of People and Culture, the Director of Service Delivery, the Director of Strategic Insights and Partnerships and the Interim Director Operational Change was:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Emoluments (including pension contributions, employers’ National Insurance, benefits in kind and termination payments)	728,450	829,534
Emoluments include amounts paid to the highest paid member of key management personnel (including employers’ National Insurance, benefits in kind and termination payments but excluding pension contributions):	115,475	139,960

During the year, 5 (2023: 3) members of the Board of Trustees received reimbursement of expenses totalling £1,232 (2023: £984). No members of the Board of Trustees received any remuneration during the year (2023: £Nil).

Remuneration Policy

The remuneration of key management personnel is set by undertaking an annual review of their roles considering:

- Any change or additional scope to the role requiring a re-evaluation
- The benchmarking of similar roles within the market relevant for the professional field and /or sector
- Recruitment and retention issues or requirements

Any significant changes are discussed by the People, Nomination and Remuneration Committee.



Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

13. Tangible Fixed Assets

Group and Charity					
	Freehold	Leasehold	Fixtures	Office	
	Property	Improvements	and	Equipment	Total
	£	£	Fittings		£
£			£	£	
Cost					
At 1 April 2023	34,173	100,743	591,054	730,649	1,456,619
Additions			20,784	18,138	38,922
Disposals	(16,484)	-	(418,616)	(194,465)	(629,565)
At 31 March 2024	17,689	100,743	193,222	554,322	865,976
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2023	17,785	22,387	423,737	377,220	841,129
Charge for the year	10,214	22,388	88,271	133,351	254,224
Disposals	(16,484)		(418,616)	(194,464)	(629,564)
At 31 March 2024	11,515	44,775	93,392	316,107	465,789
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2024	6,174	55,968	99,830	238,215	400,187
At 31 March 2023	16,388	78,356	167,317	353,429	615,490

14. Intangible Fixed Assets

Group and Charity			
	Website	Software	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	312,614	126,367	438,981
Additions	26,523	-	26,523
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2024	339,137	126,367	465,504
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2023	165,659	126,367	292,026
Charge for the year	72,637		72,637
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2024	238,296	126,367	364,663
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2024	100,841	-	100,841
At 31 March 2023	146,955	-	146,955

Intangible assets held at the year end comprise the National Domestic Abuse Helpline website in addition to costs of software with long term use across the organisation for specific purposes such as fundraising CRM, rent register and accounting software.

15. Investments

a) Financial investments - Group and Charity

	2024	2023
	£	£
Investments at market value at beginning of the year	605,365	674,589
Additions at cost	117,810	98,220
Disposal proceeds	(88,676)	(103,809)
Unrealised/ Realised (losses)/gains	59,301	(63,635)
	693,800	605,365
Cash held with investment managers	7,284	36,372
Market value at end of the year	701,084	641,737
Historic cost at end of the year	570,711	558,580
Comprising:		
Global fixed interest	147,210	97,403
UK equities and funds	120,578	149,757
Overseas equities and funds	334,850	300,885
Property	11,306	9,956
Alternatives	52,890	47,364
Cash	34,250	36,372
	701,084	641,738

All investments are listed on a recognised stock exchange.

There were no individual holdings the market value of which is considered to be material in the context of the portfolio as a whole.

b) Charity Investment in Trading Subsidiary

	2024	2023
	£	£
Issued share capital	1	1

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

16. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	Group	2024	Charity
	2023	2023	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Trade Debtors	3,469,540	1,990,002	3,458,220	1,971,252
Bad debt provision	(49,184)	(49,184)	(49,184)	(49,184)
Prepayments	468,851	507,085	468,851	507,085
Rent deposit	36,058	42,860	36,058	42,860
Other Debtors	2,170,420	1,061,717	2,158,420	1,061,717
Intercompany Debtors	-	-	164,704	55,390
	6,095,685	3,552,480	6,237,069	3,589,120

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	Group	2024	Charity
	2023	2023	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Trade Creditors	2,596,428	2,495,228	2,596,428	2,495,228
Accruals	798,646	1,178,399	791,647	1,172,459
Deferred income (note 18)	1,249,268	679,861	1,238,691	679,861
Other taxes and social security	405,297	391,879	403,716	391,879
Other Creditors	218,032	61,472	218,032	60,473
	5,267,671	4,806,839	5,248,514	4,799,900

18. Deferred Income

	2024	Group	2024	Charity
	2023	2023	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Balance as at 1 April	679,861	695,161	679,861	695,161
Created in the year	1,275,902	1,016,882	1,265,385	1,016,882
Released in the year	(706,494)	(1,032,182)	(706,554)	(1,032,182)
Balance as at 31 March	1,249,268	679,861	1,238,692	679,861

19. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2024	2023
	£	£
Group and Charity		
Provision at beginning of the year	120,000	120,000
Created during the year	530,886	
Released during year	-	
Balance at the end of the year	650,886	120,000

The total provision comprises: i) amounts calculated to realise the exit from the current Head Office premises including amounts in accordance with the provisions of the lease such as dilapidations, the lease break premium and assets that will be written off totalling £415k; ii) £70k in relation to to estimated future deficits concerning Refuge’s Admitted Body Status of Hertfordshire LGPS scheme, a final salary scheme for one ex-employee; and iii) £165k in relation to potential VAT liabilities.



Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

20. Unrestricted Funds

Group and Charity - Current Year	1 April	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	At
	2023				31 March
	£	£	£	£	2024
					£
General	8,403,794	19,315,543	(21,361,154)	261,417	6,619,601
Fixed Asset Fund	762,445	-	-	(261,417)	501,028
	9,166,239	19,315,543	(21,361,154)	-	7,120,629

Group and Charity - Prior Year	1 April	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	At
	2022				31 March
	£	£	£	£	2023
					£
General	10,420,140	18,695,739	(22,954,009)	2,241,924	8,403,794
Designated					-
Property Fund	360,000			(360,000)	-
Quality Assurance Fund	112,000			(112,000)	-
Automation Fund	50,000			(50,000)	-
Performance Improvement Fund	2,482,369			(2,482,369)	-
Fixed Asset Fund				762,445	762,445
	13,424,509	18,695,739	(22,954,009)	-	9,166,239

General funds
These funds are available for Refuge’s general purposes.

Designated funds
The Board has created a designated Fixed Asset Fund to hold the balance of all tangible and intangible fixed assets separately from general funds. This reflects the fact that these assets are not available to be expended in the same way general funds are, as they are utilised in Refuge’s day-to-day operations and are not readily realisable as cash.

21. Restricted Funds

Group and Charity - Current Year	1 April	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	31 March
	2023				2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Refuge provision	150,456	1,037,910	(1,053,576)	(89,804)	44,986
Outreach and Floating Support	106,628	2,095,997	(2,076,817)	(29,625)	96,183
Integrated Services		847,400	(793,493)	-	53,907
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	73,094	2,535,731	(2,570,891)	-	37,934
Advocacy	218,436	1,409,170	(1,513,768)	119,429	233,267
Others		572,242	(323,240)	-	249,002
	548,614	8,498,450	(8,331,785)	-	715,279

Group and Charity - Prior Year	1 April	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	31 March
	2022				2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Refuge provision	504,184	1,002,964	(1,356,692)	-	150,456
Outreach and Floating Support	31,833	2,113,648	(2,038,853)	-	106,628
Integrated Services	15,191	722,559	(737,750)	-	-
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	327,815	1,765,787	(2,020,508)	-	73,094
Advocacy	142,858	1,041,235	(965,657)	-	218,436
Others		46,099	(46,099)	-	-
	1,021,881	6,692,292	(7,165,559)	-	548,614

Refuge provision
Housing benefit and Supporting People funding used in an emergency accommodation setting to provide critical support services to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. Relevant support activities range from support to set up and maintain a home making links with community groups and organizations; assistance in developing independent living skills (finance, social and domestic/life); signposting to specialist services to help maintain health and well being; signposting to culturally specific legal services, health services, counselling and advocacy.

Outreach and Floating Support
Used in the local community setting to provide critical support services to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. Relevant support activities range from support to maintain a home; making links with community groups and organizations; assistance in developing independent living skills (finance, social and domestic/life); signposting to specialist services to help maintain health and well being; signposting to culturally specific legal services, health services, counselling and advocacy.

Integrated services
Refuge runs a number of integrated services, which act as the first point of contact for any victim of gender-based violence. This service supports those who have experienced domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, prostitution, stalking, trafficking, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and so-called ‘honour’ based violence. Our clients are able to come to one place to access a range of specialist support, including safety, alongside emotional and practical support.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline
Used to fund the National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Advocacy
Used to fund intensive short to medium support to women at high risk of domestic violence as they pursue legal remedies and protection through the criminal and civil justice systems.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

22. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Group and Charity - Current Year	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	400,187	-	400,187
Intangible fixed assets	100,841	-	100,841
Financial Investments	701,085	-	701,085
Net current assets	6,569,403	715,279	7,284,682
Provisions	(650,886)	-	(650,886)
	7,120,629	715,279	7,835,908

Group and Charity - Prior Year	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	615,490	-	615,490
Intangible fixed assets	74,007	72,948	146,955
Financial Investments	641,738	-	641,738
Net current assets	7,955,004	475,666	8,430,670
Provisions	(120,000)	-	(120,000)
	9,166,239	548,614	9,714,853

23. Commitments

At the year-end the company had future minimum lease commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below:

	2024 Land and Buildings £	2024 Other £	2023 Land and Buildings £	2023 Other £
Up to one year	394,745	1,404	457,445	1,404
Between one and five years	587,246	702	231,316	2,106
Later than five years	45,236	-	-	-
	1,027,227	2,106	688,761	3,510

Operating lease costs in the year amounted to £368,767 (2023: £510,281) in respect of land and buildings and £20,684 (2023: £25,610) in respect of other leases.

The figures for 2023 have been revised to reflect the minimum commitment due in line with the break clause in the Head Office agreement.

24. Related Party Transactions

During the year 5 (2023: 3) trustees received reimbursement of expenses totaling £1,232 (2023: £984). Donations from trustees during the year were £NIL (2023: £NIL).

During the year the charity received income from its trading subsidiary for the use of charity staff, data and facilities and for the use of the charity logo. At the year end the trading company owed the charity £164,704 (2023: £66,812).

25. Net Income for the year is stated after charging:	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation (see Note 13)	254,224	208,717
Amortisation (see Note 14)	72,637	78,678
Auditors’ remuneration		
- external audit	30,600	30,950
Auditors’ remuneration (net) prior year	-	1,264
Auditors’ remuneration non-audit (net)	-	1,035
Tax review	1,105	984
Non recoverable VAT	6,120	6,650
Operating leases – property	368,767	510,281
Operating leases – other	20,684	25,610

26. Subsisiary Undertakings

Refuge has a wholly owned subsidiary, Refuge Trading Ltd, incorporated in the UK and registered in England with its registered office at Fora, 92 Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7TY The company registration number is 13799550.

The purpose of Refuge Trading Ltd is to manage the corporate partnerships of the charity, including the use of the charity logo, and the sale of Refuge merchandise. Each year the distributable profits of Refuge Trading Ltd will be donated to Refuge under Deed of Covenant.

(a) Investment in Subsidiary

	2024 £	2023 £
Investment in Subsidiary Undertaking	1	1

Refuge’s investment in Refuge Trading Ltd is £1 , being the whole of the issued share capital of that company.

(b) Refuge Trading Ltd	2024 £	2023 £
Total Income	125,602	17,327
Cost of Sales	(56,055)	(6,883)
	69,547	10,444
Admin Costs	(6,809)	(5,940)
Net Profit gifted to Refuge	(62,738)	(4,504)
Retained Profit for the year	-	-

At 31 March 2024 Refuge Trading Ltd had net assets and called up share capital of £1 (2023: £1).

Refuge, For a,
92 Albert Embankment,
London SE1 7TY

020 7395 7700

Refuge is the largest specialist provider of gender-based violence services in the country, supporting many thousands of women and children on any given day. Refuge opened the world's first refuge in 1971 in Chiswick and now provides: a national network of refuges, community outreach programmes, child support services, and independent advocacy services for those experiencing domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence.

We also run specialist services for survivors of tech abuse, economic abuse, modern slavery and female genital mutilation.

Refuge runs the 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline which receives hundreds of calls and contacts from women experiencing domestic abuse every day and can be reached on 0808 2000 247.

Company Number: 1412276. Charity Number: 277424. Homes England Number: 4730

www.refuge.org.uk

www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

www.refugetechsafety.org

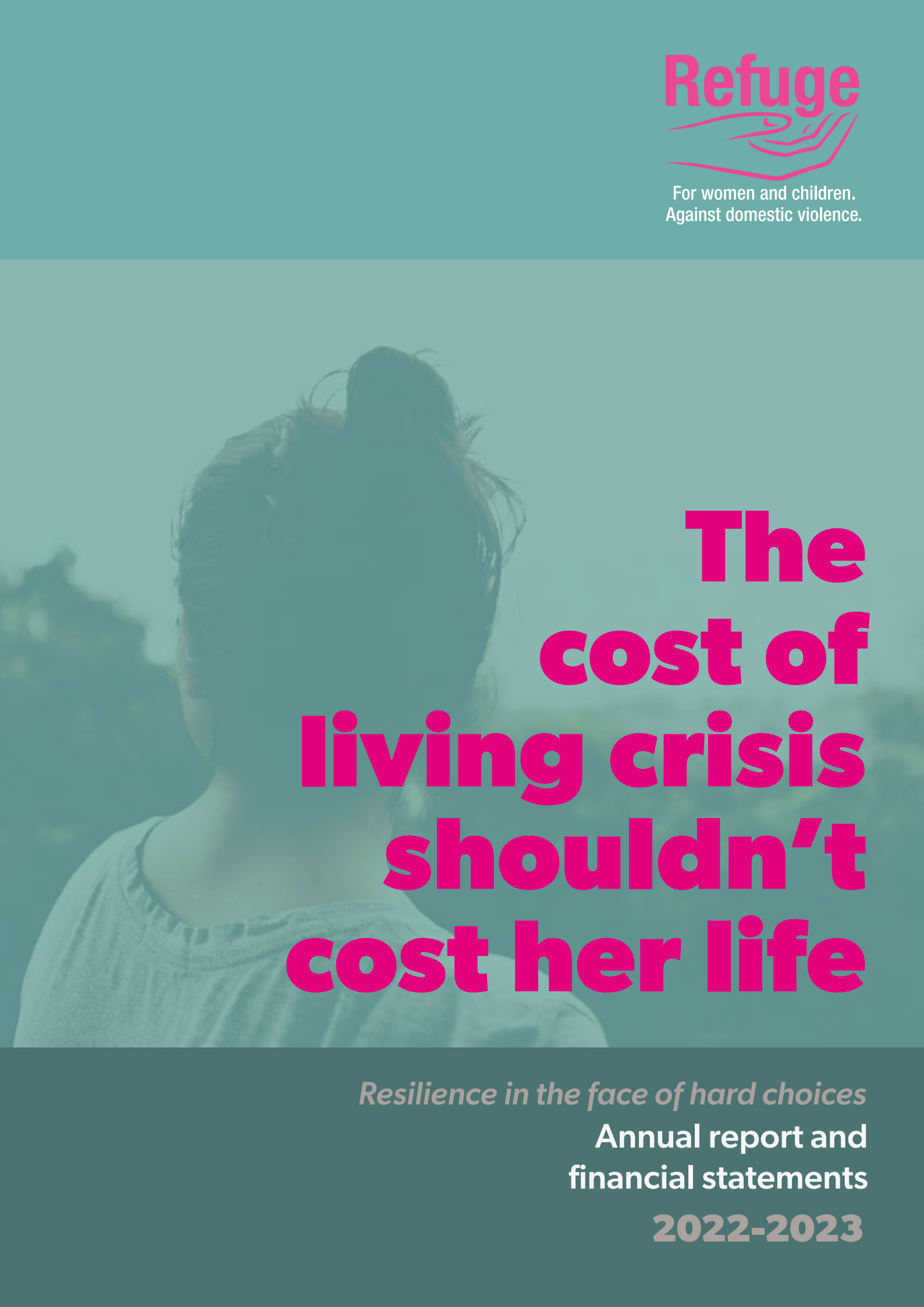
REFUGE

England & Wales - Charity number 277424

Accounts



For women and children.
Against domestic violence.



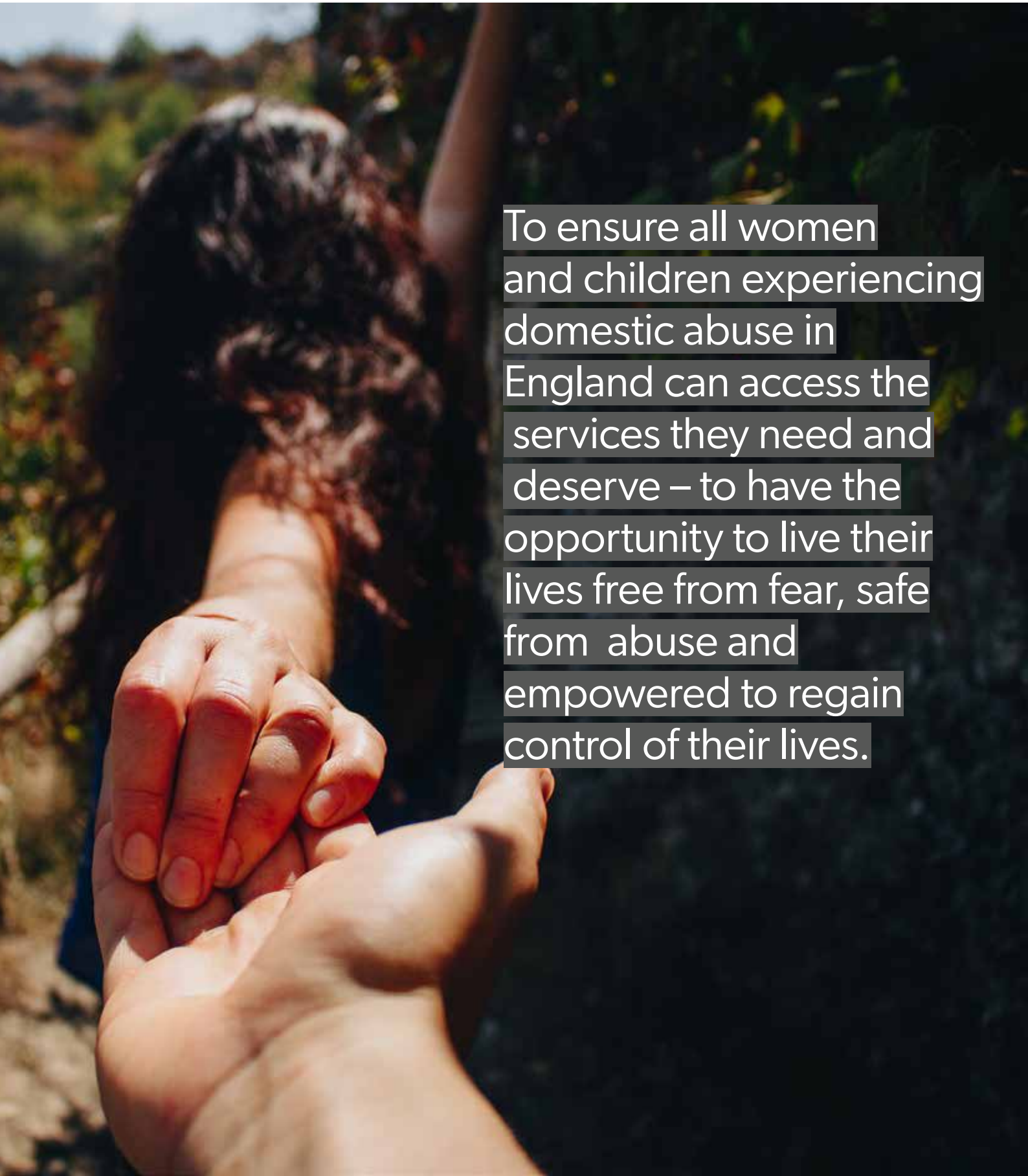
The cost of living crisis shouldn't cost her life

Resilience in the face of hard choices

**Annual report and
financial statements**

2022-2023

Our work this year



To ensure all women and children experiencing domestic abuse in England can access the services they need and deserve – to have the opportunity to live their lives free from fear, safe from abuse and empowered to regain control of their lives.

In this report

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What we've delivered this year

This wasn't the year we'd hoped for. It has been a huge test of resilience – for survivors, for Refuge and for our sector. The cost of living crisis, on the back of the COVID-19 pandemic, has brought additional pressures for everyone.

Women's options have diminished, with greater economic barriers making it even harder to leave an abuser.

We're tackling the triple impact of greater demand, increased costs and lower income. And, after years of economic and political turbulence, the wider support infrastructure that survivors depend on is diminishing.

Our staff and volunteers have a deep desire to be there for survivors. But they've been exhausted since the pandemic. The work of supporting more survivors to escape more complex abuse is straining our resources beyond their limits.

Looking ahead

We're now facing hard choices. Despite the growing demand, we will have to consolidate in the year ahead. But we remain persistently impatient. We will continue to provide the best quality services we can. That's what women need and deserve.

But we can't do it alone. Domestic abuse demands a response from the whole of society, not just services like ours. Until domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is no longer tolerated, Refuge will keep campaigning, collaborating and delivering the high-quality services that survivors should expect.

Why we're here

On average two women a week in England and Wales are killed by a current or former partner

Nearly 30% of women have experienced domestic abuse during their lifetime

Women and children approach us with different and often concurrent disadvantages

- 70% experienced psychological violence
- 51% experienced physical abuse
- 33% experienced economic abuse
- 32% experienced technology-facilitated abuse
- 28% had their lives threatened by their abuser
- 25% were injured when they accessed our services
- 22% experienced sexual violence
- 19% had mental health difficulties
- 13% said they were feeling suicidal by the time they approached us
- 11% disclosed needs related to prescription medication, 10% to drugs and 3% to alcohol
- 6% had no recourse to public funds
- 144 were victims of modern slavery

Every two minutes someone turns to Refuge for help

We supported 26,095 women and children
1,423 (5%) accessed our refuge provision
24,672 (95%) accessed our community-based services

51,952 people were supported by our National Domestic Abuse Helpline via phone, live chat, email and our British Sign Language interpretation service

75% were survivors of domestic abuse
10% were concerned friends, family members, neighbours or colleagues
8% were police, social workers, healthcare staff or other professionals

We maintained 314 units of safe accommodation within 44 refuges across 14 local authorities

We received 18,226 community-based referrals and 1,004 accommodation referrals
We supported survivors through the returning of 145 guilty verdicts for their perpetrators

We continued to improve women's safety and wellbeing at the point of leaving our service

99% felt confident they knew how to access help in future
97% said they were no longer living in fear
96% said they felt safer when they left our services
94% achieved the changes they wanted in their lives
94% said their quality of life had improved
76% were supported to find a safe new home (where this was a requested need)
49% reported an end to all abuse and controlling behaviour

Our supporters campaigned alongside us

180,669 actions were taken by our supporters
81 companies collaborated with us
10 celebrity ambassadors, 4 champions and 37 other celebrities and influencers raised awareness and support
7 survivor ambassadors and 8 members of our survivor panel campaigned for change alongside Refuge and many other survivors worked with us behind the scenes

Our social media content was seen 106 million times with:

96.4 million Twitter post impressions
4.5 million Facebook post impressions
2.3 million TikTok views
1.9 million Instagram post impressions
818,000 LinkedIn post impressions

Our funders helped us deliver more than we can with limited statutory funding alone. 18,934 people signed up to a fundraising event. We raised £8,475,881 in voluntary income. £111,072 of gifts in kind and pro bono services were donated by partners. We spent 85p in every £1 on our life-changing frontline services and surrounding costs.



Why we're here



Message from our chair Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

This wasn't the year we'd hoped for

Supporting survivors of domestic abuse is difficult and traumatic work. In recent years it has become more challenging and more complex. Perpetrators are using economic and technology-facilitated abuse to control women in more pervasive ways. Commissioners and other service providers are trying to meet local need in a context of ongoing austerity. Women are facing domestic abuse alongside housing, health, mental health and immigration disadvantages. Our frontline workers are trying to support women in the absence of adequate wrap-around services.

Our work has become even harder

The cost of living crisis has brought additional pressures for survivors, our sector and our services. Women's options have diminished, with greater economic barriers making it even harder to leave an abuser. We're responding to many more complex cases.

And this increased demand coincides with our own cost challenges, with funding pressures for those who commission our services, and with real constraints on the generosity of our donors.

The year of recovery, stability and growth we needed didn't happen

In the face of these challenges, our staff and volunteers continue to show a passionate and authentic determination to be there for women and children who need our help. Our supporters continue to show incredible commitment to raising funds and boosting public awareness. Our work stands out because of this deeply ingrained, shared desire to listen to, believe and empower survivors as they rebuild their lives.

I'm immensely proud of the whole Refuge team

This year our staff and volunteers have grown the scale and quality of our services. They've amplified our voice with more active, impactful campaigns. They've engaged and secured the commitment of our amazing donors and supporters. And they've transformed how we work, focusing on our culture, values and behaviours to get closer to the diverse and inclusive organisation we need to be. While we know we're learning, and we won't always get it right, I am proud to see people in our teams stepping up, speaking up, and supporting each other.

We are better together

Our partnerships are strengthening us and the wider sector. This year, more than ever, it's rare that we campaign, influence or shape our services without collaborating. By learning together, we've found ways to innovate and raise quality

across our services. Our work with organisations created by and for the communities of survivors they serve, many of which struggle to secure statutory funding, has extended our reach. Together, despite the economic and political turbulence our sector is facing, we're maintaining momentum in our collective call for policies designed to prevent domestic abuse and for legislation that gives survivors greater protection.

Survivors are our inspiration

This year has been a huge test of resilience – for survivors, for Refuge, and for our sector. But we remain persistently impatient. Until domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is no longer tolerated, Refuge will keep campaigning, collaborating and delivering the high-quality services that survivors deserve

“ This year has been a huge test of resilience – for survivors, for Refuge and for our sector. But we remain persistently impatient.

Until domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is no longer tolerated, Refuge will keep campaigning, collaborating and delivering the high-quality services that survivors deserve.



Why we're here



Message from our chief executive Ruth Davison

The cost of living crisis is costing lives

This year, the cost of living crisis is having a catastrophic impact on survivors. And it's affecting our teams as well as the women and children we serve. Our staff and volunteers are tired. They've been exhausted since the pandemic. The work of supporting more survivors to escape more complex abuse is straining our resources beyond their limits.

Refuge is working within a broken ecosystem

We're tackling the triple impact of greater demand, increased costs and lower income. And the vital support that survivors depend on – decent mental health services, a functioning NHS, consistent social services, a trustworthy police service, accessible family courts – are just not working.

When women and children are fleeing domestic abuse, they need high-quality services. They need to feel immediately safe. They require expert support with the multiple forms of abuse that survivors are increasingly subjected to by perpetrators. Refuge does difficult work and we're used to working in crisis. But we're trying to function in a broken ecosystem, we're overstretched, and we've never been needed more.

Despite how busy and traumatic our employees' job are, we are hopeful that we're seeing the positive impact of investment we've been able to make in recent years. In our recent employee survey, our staff reported levels of engagement higher than typical for not-for-profit organisations, with 90% proud to work at Refuge.

We know there is more to do. A critical priority is helping our colleagues reach a better work-life balance, especially when their values and commitment drive them to fill the gaps left by the failings in other services.

We continue to be there for survivors

We've raised the quality of our services, opening a new, trauma-informed refuge in London and developing new ways of providing safe accommodation in Warwickshire. And we're working in partnership with 'by and for' organisations across London to co-ordinate services that reach women within specific communities. We're setting new standards that offer choice and dignity to more women and their families.

We've maintained our focus on prevention, influencing policy and legislation. This year we joined with the young, survivor-led campaign #MakeItMandatory to urge the government to make education on domestic abuse and coercive behaviour mandatory in post-16 education. And, as the only specialist service working on technology-facilitated abuse, we've collaborated with other expert organisations to call for amendments to the Online Safety Bill, creating a Code of Practice to hold tech companies to account.

Alongside Women's Aid, we've supported Latin American Women's Aid in securing a landmark High Court ruling that a woman should not be served court papers at her refuge or be required to provide a refuge address to court. These practices disproportionately impacted migrant women and endangered families in need of safe refuge.

We've found greater strength and confidence in our voice this year, influencing debate through creative, memorable, high-impact stunts alongside our media presence and discussions with public bodies.

We're facing harder choices

In recent years we've plugged gaps, developed our expertise and delivered services in response to what women and children need. We've expanded the specialist and community-based services that 95% of survivors call upon, relying on short-term funding from cash-strapped commissioners and private donors. We're now facing hard choices. Despite the growing demand, we will have to consolidate in the year ahead.

“Refuge does difficult work. And we're used to working in crisis. But we're trying to function in a broken ecosystem, we're overstretched, and we've never been needed more.”

We will continue to provide the best quality services we can. That's what women need and deserve. But we can't do it alone. Domestic abuse demands a response from the whole of society, not just services like ours.

We need your continued support

Join us in campaigning for statutory funding for the community-based services that are a lifeline for the majority of survivors. Join us in our recommendation that local authorities, the criminal justice system and health services work together to commission specialist community-based services at a level that meets local need. Join us in calling for a strengthened legislation that prioritises survivors' needs and recognises the seriousness of the crimes committed against them.

We will continue to provide the best quality services we can. That's what women need and deserve. But we can't do it alone. Domestic abuse demands a response from the whole of society, not just services like ours. Together we need to secure the will, the resources and the commitment to eradicate domestic abuse.

R Davison



Why we're here



Message from our director of people & culture

Lornette Pemberton

People who work for Refuge go above and beyond

We know that our staff and volunteers are exceptional people. Some are survivors themselves. All have a deep desire to be there for others. And we know that the demands of their work, especially on the frontline, are difficult to balance. Our people carry the true cost in their workloads and, sometimes, in their wellbeing.

We've faced this challenge for many years. As a sector, we're one of the most underfunded and under supported. There are hard limits on what we can invest. That's why our 2022-25 strategic plan is supported by a budget that focuses on the objectives that underpin our work: leadership, behaviours and culture; infrastructure, systems and processes; survivors' voice and safeguarding; funding and support.

Our people should feel respected, valued and safe

We know our people often feel stretched beyond capacity. And we know it can be hard to raise concerns when everyone feels this way. Tackling this issue has been the focus of our work in recent years. We're doing more to listen. And we're practising different ways to enable our people to speak up about their concerns.

In Autumn 2022, we ran our employee engagement survey. Having run it previously in 2019, we looked for changes in people's experiences. And we were pleased to see some of the biggest improvements:

- Over 20% more of our staff believe we will take action on the survey, compared with 2019.
- Around 15% more observe senior leaders making an effort to listen and providing a clear vision of our direction.
- Around 90% of our staff – 10% more than 2019 – say they are proud to work for Refuge and want to do the best work they can.

We've also learned more about how our staff are experiencing the extraordinary challenges we've faced since 2019:

- The number of staff who feel they can comfortably cope with their workload, or strike the right balance between work and homelife, has dropped by over 10%.
- The number who feel communications are good between different teams has dropped by 10%.
- The number who feel their manager takes time to coach and develop them has dropped by 6%.

We're learning by listening

Our employee engagement survey is just one of the ways we've been listening and gathering feedback from our staff and volunteers. What we're learning has helped us shape our action plan for ongoing improvement.

A clear concern is workload management. In response, we've initiated full reviews of our casework policies and practices, our on-call procedures and guidelines, and our recruitment and retention processes.

We are also experimenting with how we communicate across Refuge, looking for better ways to connect across teams, support managers, use our platforms, and share information without overloading people. And we're providing regular reminders of how people can voice their views and concerns.

Our managers play a vital role in setting expectations for our people and checking in on what they need, reminding staff and volunteers of the support, wellbeing and communication channels open to them. We're providing our managers with greater support, guidance, learning and development.

And we're investing in a survivor engagement team that is supporting survivors to have their voice heard, influence change and improve our services. Our journey towards the culture we want for Refuge is underway. You can learn more about our progress later in this report.

“Our people have a deep desire to be there for survivors. And this year they've often felt stretched beyond capacity. It can be hard to raise concerns when everyone feels this way.

We're doing more to listen. And we're finding new ways for people to speak up.

Abigail's* story

“Simply put – I wouldn't have been able to leave my abuser if this cost of living crisis was happening when I was trying to flee ten years ago. I felt trapped as it was. One of the elements of abuse he used against me was financial. Alongside the physical and emotional abuse, this economic abuse had a big impact when it came to leaving, he controlled everything.

When you find the courage to leave it's not easy and it's so frustrating when the system lets you down – this cost of living crisis is still impacting me. I was left in thousands of pounds of debt from my abuse after I fled, which I've finally paid off, but it took years. With the economy as it is now, I know I wouldn't ever have been able to pay that debt back. I would've been forced to stay with him.



What we've delivered this year

Our strategic priorities 2022-2025

We continue to provide the best quality services we can



That's what women need and deserve. And when we combine this with influencing policy, mobilising the public and working in partnership, we have the best chance of achieving real change for survivors.

OUR VISION

Refuge is committed to a world where domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is not tolerated and where women and children can live in safety.

Refuge believes that domestic abuse and violence against women will only end when we create gender equality.

OUR MISSION

We aim to empower women and children to rebuild their lives, free from violence and fear.

We provide a range of life saving and life changing services. We put the experiences of survivors at the heart of our work and help amplify their voices.



Our strategic priorities

1. Provide emergency specialist accommodation, community-based and specialist support services.

By 2025 we will:

- Build foundations that allow us deliver, and measure, high quality, high impact services.
- Continue to respond to emergent need, and to pioneer new services where they are required.
- Develop services that support children and young people.

2. Deliver high quality services and set quality standards for domestic abuse services.

By 2025 we will:

- Remain the leading specialist organisation addressing domestic abuse.
- Increase the quality, scale, and range of properties we are able to offer survivors.
- Continue to develop and evolve our sector-leading specialist tech and economic abuse services.
- Review and develop quality standards that allow us to improve how we measure our impact.

3. Drive policy change to ensure sustainability of domestic abuse services.

By 2025 we will:

- Amplify the voices of our survivors and use our data and expertise to advocate for changes to policy, practice, and legislation that will better address domestic abuse.
- Help prevent domestic abuse by raising awareness of the different manifestations.

4. Prevent violence against women and girls through awareness raising and changing harmful and pervasive societal attitudes.

By 2025 we will:

- Mobilise the public to raise awareness, financial resources, and create real change through public campaigns.
- Challenge and change societal norms by growing our feminist movement.
- Drive culture change which in turn leads to policy change.
- Ensure as many women as possible know how to access our specialist services.

5. Build partnerships to share and grow our expertise and expand our impact.

By 2025 we will:

- Work with local commissioners to support commissioning practice and expand our service offer.
- Form national and local partnerships and alliances to upscale our impact and provide thought leadership to develop and improve sector responses in emerging areas of work.
- Advocate for sustainable, ringfenced funding for long term service provision.

What we've delivered this year

Priority 1

Provide emergency specialist accommodation, community-based and specialist support services

Our National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Nearly 40,000 women turned to our National Domestic Abuse Helpline this year

When women contact us, they can expect expert support delivered by a dedicated team of helpline advisors and highly trained volunteers. We validate women's experiences. We empower them with information about their rights and options. We help them to plan for their next steps.

Although demand has reduced since the height of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, it remains high. We've continued to develop tailored pathways for callers, backed up with briefings, protocols and training, so we can respond to women with different needs in different ways. And we've increased our capability around complex, technology-facilitated abuse by recruiting a dedicated tech lead to provide expert support and build our team's capacity and knowledge.

Survivors and supporters have shared their valuable insights on the design of our new look website. Easy to navigate and mobile friendly, it makes it easy for survivors and supporters to get the information they need, when they need it. Features like the 'quick escape' button and browser history clearing are vital for women whose devices may be monitored by their perpetrator.

We were shortlisted for Helplines Partnership's Helpline of the Year award, recognising our commitment to best practice, our dedication to survivors, our thriving teams and our effective processes.



Contact us online ^

Chat to us live 
Open Monday – Friday, 3pm – 10pm

Support in BSL 
Open Monday – Friday, 10am – 6pm

Send us a message 



Our safe accommodation

1,423 women needed the safety of one of our refuges

Many survivors of abuse need support to leave their home to escape violence. These women, and their children, need a place of safety from which to make decisions about their futures. This year we've opened a new refuge in Lambeth, adding five units of safe accommodation and expanding our specialist services for Black, African, Caribbean and Black British women and children. And by joining an extensive network of specialist services, we're helping the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham provide discrete support and accommodation.

With local councils and our partners across the sector, we're also expanding and tailoring our support to reach survivors living in other types of safe accommodation. We're working with Warwickshire County Council to develop a best practice model of dispersed safe accommodation, providing 36 units across two years in each of the county's five districts and boroughs.

As a lead partner in the Ascent Pan-London Floating Support Service, we're collaborating with ten other specialist domestic abuse organisations, many of which are led by and for the communities they serve. Our partnership delivers trauma-informed, wrap-around, survivor-led support for those in safe accommodation for whom refuge accommodation is not suitable. This can include single-sex temporary accommodation, a property not known to a survivor's perpetrator, or one where a sanctuary scheme has been put in place to provide additional security measures and support. We're also delivering resettlement support to survivors moving on from refuge accommodation.

We welcomed the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' announcement, in December 2022, of £257 million council funding across two years for emergency accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse. However, it is estimated that £181 million per year is needed to ensure this lifesaving support can be accessed by everyone who needs it. Without long-term, ringfenced funding, many women and children remain at risk.

“ This refuge is a magic house. My refuge workers are my superheroes, they are my safeguards, angels. Without them, I never would be who I am today.

Now I am confident, happy. I know I can stay on my own with my boys. They did everything to make our life good. Without them, I never would be who I am now. Without the police who helped to make the first step I never would imagine that places like this exist.

For all this I will thank you for all my life.

Survivor of domestic abuse

What we've delivered this year



1 in 3 women

Have experienced online abuse in their lives.

Our community-based services

24,672 women chose to access our community-based support

We are widely known for opening the world's first refuge in 1971, a time when society didn't recognise the problem we were working to remove. In the decades since, our work has changed in response to the new and different methods abusers adopt to exert control and coercion. Of the thousands of women we support every day, many experience multiple forms of abuse, from physical violence to technology-facilitated abuse, economic abuse and coercive control. Not all want or need to flee to a refuge.

Around 95% of survivors decided to stay where they are and access support to recover and rebuild their lives. Our community-based services are delivered through specialist roles including outreach workers, Independent Domestic Violence Advocates, Independent Gender-based Violence Advocates, and Young Person Advocates.

Depending on survivors' needs, our community-based services help women to:

- understand the dynamics of domestic abuse, including technology-facilitated and economic abuse
- build self-confidence and independence and reconnect with their support network
- develop a safety plan or find safe accommodation
- improve the safety of child contact arrangements
- secure tech devices and protect their location
- access benefits and debt advice, budget and pay bills
- communicate with police, civil and criminal justice practitioners, and attend court
- access healthcare services or social care services for children
- access professional training, education or employment
- access immigration advice and support.



Our specialist services

In just one year, the number of new survivors supported by our community-based services has increased by 10%

Our frontline community-based workers are supporting many more survivors experiencing multiple forms of intersecting abuse alongside housing, immigration and mental health needs. And they're seeing a growing combination of economic and technology-facilitated abuse used by perpetrators to control survivors.

Economic abuse involves restricting a person's ability to acquire, use and maintain money. Experienced by one in six adults in the UK, this can include behaviour such as stopping them from working, taking their money, preventing them from accessing their own or joint bank accounts, or putting debts in their name.

Technology-facilitated abuse involves using online platforms and devices to control, coerce and abuse. Experienced by one in three UK women, it includes online harassment, location tracking, sharing and threatening to share intimate images without consent.

We're responding on a number of fronts to ensure we reach more survivors. We've enhanced our Tech Safety website, translating it into Urdu and adding support and guidance around economic abuse. And we've secured funding to deliver specialist training to our partners across our sector.

Lisa's* story

Lisa escaped an abusive partner after enduring nine months of gaslighting, controlling behaviour, rape threats, stalking, physical violence and financial and verbal abuse. The abuse continued after the end of their relationship, and Lisa's ex-partner also began to stalk her online. After staying in a refuge, Lisa now has her own home. She shared her experience as part of Refuge's campaigning work on the cost of living crisis:

“ The cost of living crisis is suffocating and extremely restrictive. I've managed to put myself in a situation where my money is mine to use. No one else is meant to have a say in how I can spend it, but I feel like I've gone back to when I wasn't allowed to buy something as a treat or go to lunch with my mum or buy new clothes without asking permission.

I feel like I'm trying so hard to keep my head above water. I can't afford to slip down the slope into debt but it's like I don't have much choice in the matter. I'm fighting for control over something that is meant to be in my control anyway.

What we've delivered this year

Priority 2

Deliver high quality services and set quality standards for domestic abuse services

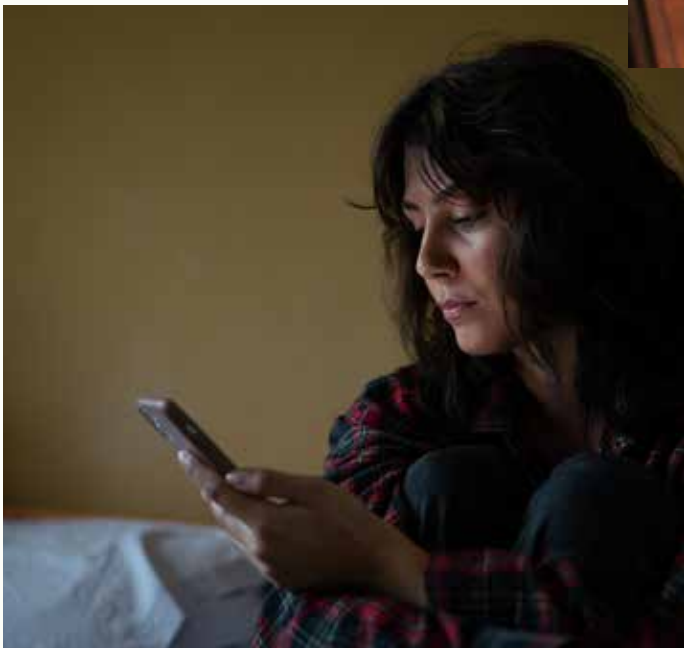
Giving survivors the service they deserve

We're here so all women and children can access the services they need and deserve

Our challenge is to deliver this, on limited resources, as demand grows in scale and complexity. And that challenge requires us to continuously review our policies, processes and measures of performance.

This year we've established accommodation standards that clarify landlords' responsibilities. We've developed a pet policy as part of our best practice model of dispersed accommodation in Warwickshire. We're revisiting our performance measures to reflect emerging operational trends post-COVID-19. And we've initiated a review of our on-call processes.

We're doing even more to deliver our services alongside others in our sector, partnering with organisations created by and for the communities they serve, including D/deaf and disabled, LGBTQ+, Black, Asian and migrant survivors. Despite their transformative reach, 'by and for' services are six times less likely to receive statutory funding than other domestic abuse services, locking minoritised women out of support¹.



Supporting children and young people

Children are now recognised as victims and survivors of domestic abuse in their own right

But there is still no statutory provision for them. We want to demonstrate what it looks like to provide children with high-quality, dedicated services. This year our newly appointed programme lead has initiated a review of our children's casework and support, data collection processes, outcomes and impact. We've set up a group to inform our change and fundraising efforts across Refuge. And, with our children support workers, we've established a peer support forum and best practice guidance.

Tackling intersecting forms of abuse

Tech abuse and economic abuse often go hand in hand

Our technology-facilitated abuse and economic empowerment service saw a 39% increase in demand between September 2022 and February 2023, compared to the same period last year. Maintaining a response to this increasing, intersectional abuse tests the resources across our sector.

As the only specialist service working on technology-facilitated abuse, our team is committed to an ongoing programme of measuring its scale and impact. And we're currently reviewing how we extend our services and generate much needed income by offering our expertise to public bodies and commissioners. With our board of trustees, we continue to develop our tech and economic strategy and map our partnership relationships, so we can do more together.

Natalie's* story

When Natalie met her ex-partner Jake, their relationship moved quickly and within six months he had moved in with her. From then, Jake subjected Natalie to physical and economic abuse and coercive control.

He isolated Natalie from her friends and family, cutting her off from her support network. He racked up thousands of pounds of debt in Natalie's name by coercing her to be a guarantor for a loan he took out and getting multiple pay day loans in her name. He also forced Natalie to be the sole provider by refusing to work. Natalie was once forced to sell some jewellery so they had enough to eat.

Following a violent incident Natalie was pointed in the direction of Refuge, where she was supported by our Advocacy service and had fantastic support from her Independent Gender Violence Advocate, Jenny*.

“Jenny was without a doubt the reason I was able to get help with all aspects of my abusive relationship. She gave me medical, economic and physical support and I wouldn't have gotten any of these without her – she pointed me in the direction of every single one of them. She came with me to court and without her I would have been totally alone.

What we've delivered this year

Priority 3

Drive policy change to ensure sustainability of domestic abuse services

The rising cost of living

The cost of living shouldn't cost her life

Finances often act as a barrier to leaving an abuser. Survivors can find themselves facing the choice between homelessness and poverty or staying with a perpetrator. Throughout this year we've sounded the alarm on the increased impact the cost of living crisis is having on survivors fleeing abuse.

With new data from our frontline staff revealing the full impact of the crises, in November 2022 we called on the government to make critical interventions within its budget statement: to urgently reform the benefit system and to create a specialist fund.

Relieved that the Chancellor decided to raise Universal Credit and other benefits in line with inflation, we were disappointed that women had to wait until April 2023 to receive this vital financial support. And the Home Office's pilot emergency fund of £300,000 to support one-off payments ran out in only a few days.

In our survey of our frontline workers:

77% reported that many women could not afford to leave their abusers
58% said survivors could not afford enough food for themselves and their children
50% reported that the cost of living crisis is leading survivors to return to their abusers

Victims and Prisoners Bill

Our response to vital and long-overdue legislation

This year we've called relentlessly for a strengthening of the Victims and Prisoners Bill. We influenced the Justice Committee's recommendations for radical changes to reflect and resource the needs of survivors of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG). Our number one call is for the prioritising and funding of the community-based services that best reflect 95% of survivors' needs.

We are also calling for mandatory, trauma-informed training for police officers, judges and court staff around the dynamics of domestic abuse and VAWG. And we are also supporting 'by and for' organisations in their campaign for a firewall between the police and Immigration Enforcement for migrant survivors – insecure immigration status should never be a barrier to accessing support.



Technology-facilitated abuse

Online spaces continue to fail women and girls

Last year, in our Unsocial Spaces research, we reported that one in three UK women have experienced online abuse or harassment, perpetrated on social media. 14% of survivors reported non-consensual sharing of intimate images and 13% had experienced threats to share images, a criminal offence in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. This year, our freedom of information request to 43 police forces in England and Wales showed that charging rates remain woefully low at 4% of offences recorded. With police forces and technology platforms failing to respond to this crisis, we've kept our focus on the Online Safety Bill, calling for amendments that protect women and girls.

Our report Marked As Unsafe held the spotlight on online content reporting and moderation. With the insights of our pioneering tech-facilitated abuse team and detailed evidence from seventeen survivors, we revealed that the majority of women reporting abusive content do not receive a response from the most commonly used platforms, let alone the support and protection they need.

In partnership with other VAWG charities, campaigners and academics, in May 2022 we published the draft Code of Practice that we believe should be mandated within the Bill. Our Code shows technology companies how they can prioritise, invest in and design for women's and girls' safety. In November we urged the government's use of the Code to give VAWG the same level of priority reflected in the mandatory Codes on terrorism and on child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Throughout the year we've called on the government to make two simple changes to ensure the Bill delivers for survivors of domestic abuse. We are pleased that the Secretary of State listened to our recommendation to include controlling or coercive behaviour in the list of priority offences in the Bill, requiring technology companies to both address and prevent coercive control from occurring on their platforms. We remain concerned that the government is still overlooking the urgent need for a specific VAWG Code of Practice, and we continue our call that its regulator Ofcom should take ownership of the guidance that technology companies clearly need.



What we've delivered this year



Economic abuse

Vulnerable customers need better support

Given the rise in online banking methods over recent years, economic abuse and tech abuse are becoming increasingly intertwined. Our specialist team saw a 39% increase in demand between September 2022 and February 2023, compared to the same period last year. In partnership with The Co-operative Bank, we've shared with the banking sector what we've learned from survivors and from our work with the Online Banking Commission. Most banks subsequently opted to raise public awareness of economic abuse and improve the support they offer to customers who are survivors by adopting our two key recommendations:

1. Introduce a safe online tool so survivors can contact their bank to request support from their vulnerable customer support team in relation to economic abuse.
2. Ensure that this tool is accompanied by appropriate signposting to tech abuse advice and support from specialist domestic abuse organisations, given the high coincidence of tech and economic abuse.



“Despite me earning more than twice his monthly salary, my partner refused to put my name on a utility bill which prevented me from acquiring my own bank account. As a result, my wages were deposited into his account for which he did not provide me with the passwords. I would later discover that he spent the majority of my earnings without my knowledge or consent.
Rachel*



Responses and evidence

Sharing our insights and expertise

We've submitted 29 consultation responses and evidence submissions this year on a wide range of policy areas including children's social care, the legal aid means test, the social housing rent cap and police VAWG action plans. And we've won the case for changes to statutory guidance, codes of practice and sentence guidelines.

Police accountability

Calling for a police service women can trust

A significant proportion of our consultation responses this year have related to issues across the police service. We've influenced the College of Policing guidance on misconduct and violence against women and girls. We've reported on the woefully low charging rates for intimate image offences. And we've boldly challenged police perpetrated abuse and misogyny following the crimes of David Carrick and other police officers.

The findings of the Baroness Casey Review, that the Metropolitan Police is institutionally misogynistic, racist and homophobic, resonated with our own insights on the number of times women disclosed that their perpetrators were police officers. We welcomed her findings and continue to campaign for their full implementation.

Our survivor panel

Amplifying survivors' voices

This year we've strengthened our policy and campaigning work by forming a panel of survivors and former Refuge service users. Passionate about improving policy responses to domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, members of our survivor panel influence our advocacy work and share their experiences directly with policymakers.



What we've delivered this year

Priority 4

Prevent violence against women and girls through awareness raising and changing harmful and pervasive societal attitudes

Shining the spotlight

Helping more women spot the signs of abuse

The media is a vital ally. Domestic abuse is becoming more complex and increasingly multidimensional. Many women endure abuse, in one or more of its forms, managing their own behaviour for fear of how their perpetrator will react. By working with media channels, we can get our message out to as many people as possible – women and men – on what abuse is and the help that's available to escape and survive it.

This year Refuge has been mentioned in almost 9,500 articles, reaching an estimated readership of just under 180 billion. Our chief executive Ruth Davison has been mentioned just under 2,000 times, getting our message across to an estimated 20 billion readers. We've proactively placed over 900 articles.



Domestic violence charity Refuge 'increasingly concerned' by 'misogynistic and abusive behaviours' on Love Island



Domestic abuse charity urges government to stop cash machine closures to protect victims



Campaign to end coercive control - 'We must teach all 16 to 19-year-olds'

A domestic abuse survivor has called on the Education Secretary to make lessons about coercive control mandatory in sixth forms and colleges. University student Faustine Petron, 22, wants to see all women and girls feel safe at home. She has joined forces with women's charity Refuge to urge officials to make lessons on domestic abuse compulsory in post-16 education.



“This is not one bad apple. This is a systemic problem across policing. Unless radical change to the way the policing system works across the country happens immediately, then women and girls will remain unsafe, and they will not have the confidence to come forward and report the violent crimes committed against them.
Ruth Davison, Refuge CEO.

How many more bad apples?

Calling out a trust-destroying culture

Police services across the country have found themselves in the media spotlight throughout this year. Scrutinised by Baroness Casey's review of the Metropolitan Police, and by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' inspection into vetting, misconduct and misogyny across the police service, a culture of misogyny, sexism and predatory behaviour towards women has been exposed. This systemic problem has been underlined with horrific accounts of gender-based crimes committed by individual officers and the collusion of their colleagues.

Alongside the underfunding and under-resourcing of public protection, which includes domestic abuse, stalking, rape and sexual offences, this culture poses a serious threat to public trust. In 2021-2022, only 14.4% of women who had experienced abuse perpetrated by a partner told the police¹. It is vital that women's trust is restored if they are to feel safe and confident to report the violent crimes they experience.

As the extent of this issue emerged, we responded frequently and forthrightly, calling for unequivocal commitment to radical reform of the culture and practices across the police and a zero-tolerance policy of violent misogyny. We were also working on our frontline, noting the number of times women disclosed that their perpetrators were police officers and providing extra support on how to report safely.

With growing confidence in staging high-impact, awareness-raising stunts, we placed 1,071 rotten apples outside New Scotland Yard, drawing the country's attention to the number of Metropolitan Police officers under investigation for allegations of domestic abuse or violence against women and girls.

We also launched an open letter to Home Secretary Suella Braverman, signed by over 20,000 supporters, demanding mandatory suspension pending investigation for all officers and staff accused of VAWG, better training and improved vetting and disciplinary procedures.



What we've delivered this year

#MakeltMandatory

Giving young people the knowledge they need to protect themselves

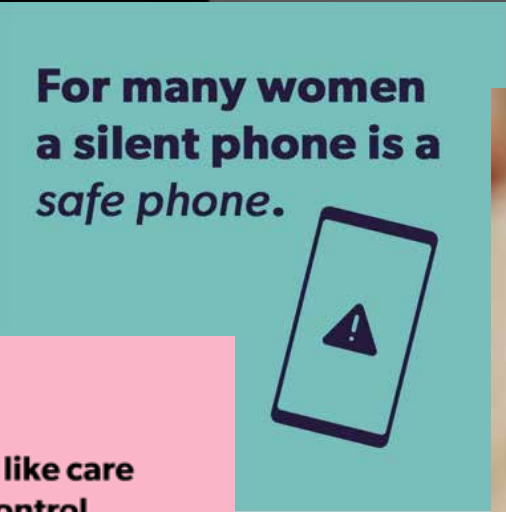
In September 2022 we joined with survivor and #MakeltMandatory campaigner Faustine Petron to urge the government to make mandatory post-16 education on domestic abuse and controlling or coercive behaviour.

In February 2023 we joined Faustine and her campaigners in delivering 90,000 petition signatures to Number 10 Downing Street. And we launched an email campaign, urging the Secretary of State to join us in discussing how the government can plug the legislative gap that leaves young people in sixth form and education colleges vulnerable.

The cost of living crisis shouldn't cost her life

Calling for crisis funding

Throughout this year we've alerted the government to the increased impact the cost of living crisis is having on survivors fleeing abuse. We engaged the public in this call, asking them to urge the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to increase Universal Credit and other benefits. And we asked our supporters for financial help to cope with our rising costs at a time of greater need for our services.



The national Emergency Alerts test

Alerting women to secure their hidden phones

We knew that the national test of the Emergency Alerts service, at 3pm on Sunday 23 April, might place many women in greater danger. Secret phones could receive warning alerts, even if set to silent, revealing a survivor's hidden lifeline. In preparation, we shared step-by-step guidance on our website showing how to opt out of the emergency alert and secure a hidden phone. We raised awareness through our social channels and the media, reaching 15.6 billion viewers with 1,788 online and print articles via 476 outlets. And our practical video was viewed over 200,000 times and shared across multiple media outlets.



Campaign video launch with Georgia Harrison

Holding tech companies to account

As the Online Safety Bill appeared before Parliament for its second reading, TV personality and campaigner Georgia Harrison joined us in outlining the scale of intimate image abuse. Her video outlined the urgent change needed within the Bill to make social media companies bear more responsibility for protecting women and girls from online abuse by reacting quicker to reports of intimate image abuse.

“Having your intimate images shared without your consent is one of the most terrifying and violating things that can happen to you. Social media companies need to understand how scary it is, and they need to act faster to take images down.”

Georgia Harrison, TV personality and campaigner



What we've delivered this year

Priority 5

Build partnerships to share and grow our expertise and expand our impact

Stronger together

Forging alliances and partnerships

Our partnerships strengthen us and the wider sector. It's rare that we campaign, influence or shape our services without working with others. So, this year, we've recruited a head of sector alliances and partnerships to develop our strong, supportive relationships across the VAWG sector and beyond. This role will help us continue to collaborate to ensure women and children receive the specialist support they need, where they need it and when they need it most.

Learning together

Sharing insights and expertise

The work of our new head of sector alliances and partnerships enables us to do more by sharing complementary skills across our sector. The drafting of the VAWG Code of Practice for technology companies, published with other VAWG charities, campaigners and academics. The landmark High Court ruling against the servicing of court papers to women in refuges achieved by Latin American Women's Aid. Raising public awareness, in support of the #MakeltMandatory campaign, of the need for mandatory post-16 education on domestic abuse and coercive behaviour. Forging a partnership with Equation, a Nottingham based charity that specialises in supporting male victims of abuse. As a network, we're growing in expertise and influence.

Better together

Lifting standards and extending our reach

By working in partnership with other domestic abuse services we can offer choice and dignity to more women and children. As a lead partner in the Ascent Pan-London Floating Support Service, we're collaborating with ten other specialist domestic abuse organisations, many of whom are rooted in the communities they serve. Together we're delivering trauma-informed, wrap-around, survivor-led support for those in safe accommodation. This service is being run in addition to and alongside existing local services, to supplement and support current domestic abuse service provision.

Many of the partner organisations are already established in their communities and have links and referral pathways. In working together, we can help survivors of domestic abuse to create a life for themselves, free from fear and abuse.

Louder together

Raising long-term awareness and support

We marked International Women's Day by announcing our new, year-long partnership with The Independent. The news brand's rich history of campaigning makes them the perfect media partner at a time when awareness of domestic abuse, in its different forms, has never been needed more.



What we've delivered this year

Our supporting priorities

Leadership, behaviours and culture

Creating a high performing and diverse workforce

Our staff and volunteers go above and beyond. And we know they've faced another extremely tough year. Our employee engagement survey revealed the pride our people feel working for Refuge. It also refocused our attention on the cost they carry in striking the right balance between work and homelife.

We want to engage our people without overloading them even more. And we're still trying to find the right balance. We focus our monthly all-staff meetings on topics that concern everyone: our employee assistance programme, our employment engagement survey results, and our invitation to employees to speak up and share their views and experiences.

We also run 'Latte and learn' sessions, focusing on equality issues with input from other organisations representing the experiences and insights of a wide range of communities. Our chief executive Ruth Davison provides a weekly, Refuge-wide update. And we share progress in our monthly People & Culture newsletter.



We're learning from listening to our staff and volunteers. Our seven Equality Network Groups provide a safe space for staff to share their lived experiences and to challenge our organisation to do better. And our Staff Forum, with fifteen representatives, directly contributes to our policies around employee issues.

This year we reviewed our values, creating opportunities for everyone to contribute to make sure that our new values represent where Refuge stands today.

We've developed an organisation-wide performance management framework to encourage regular feedback and development conversations between managers and team members. And we've signed up to the VAWG sector anti-racism charter, adding our voice to the call for an end to the systemic marginalisation of Black and minoritised women.

We're making progress on our journey towards becoming a culture where everyone at Refuge feels respected, valued and safe. Our Respect, Inclusion and Belonging strategy and action plan will help us maintain a diverse team of incredible people and an inclusive culture that celebrates our diversity.



Good governance, impact and transparency

Improving our infrastructure, processes and systems

What we're learning from our people is helping us review and update our employment policies. Our pay and reward review has looked at grading, pay policy, salary benchmarking, and pay and non-pay rewards, including flexible working, enhanced family leave and other employee benefits.

We've refreshed our approach to induction and training, implementing a learning management system and an e-learning platform to make learning accessible to all, whatever their role or working pattern. And we now offer clinical supervision to all our people – staff and volunteers.

Like other organisations across our sector, we find that some of our roles are difficult to recruit to. The resulting challenge on service delivery and workload can negatively impact retention. We've initiated a review of our on-call arrangements across Refuge, piloting alternative service models to identify best-practice caseloads and working practices. We want Refuge to become an employer of choice.



What we've delivered this year

Survivors at the heart of our work

Engaging survivors and strengthening our safeguarding

This year we've created the role of survivor engagement lead. The team is tasked with developing new opportunities for survivors to raise awareness and influence policy and practice. However, we know many survivors face barriers to being directly involved in this work. We're tackling them by helping with expenses, holding hybrid meetings and using interpreters and accessible venues. We've also appointed a head of safeguarding to embed informed consent throughout our work.

We are grateful to every survivor who has partnered with us to bring about change.



Bryony's* story

Bryony shared her experience with officials at the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) to inform their work to recommission domestic abuse services:

“ When talking with MOPAC I felt at ease and felt that I was able to share my story and views whilst being listened to. They were compassionate and I would happily work with them again in the future.

Influencing, collaborating, mobilising

Secure statutory funding

Organisations like ours need to be able to access secure, long-term funding to provide the high-quality safe accommodation and community-based services that domestic abuse survivors deserve. This year we secured £3.9 million of additional funding from our statutory partners. This enabled us to extend our services and provide better support by recruiting additional posts to reduce high caseloads for our frontline staff. Statutory Safe Accommodation Framework funding from the Greater London Authority and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime helped us deliver across London in a year when women faced increased financial challenges. It meant we could achieve best-practice caseloads of four clients per refuge worker across our London refuges. It gave us the resources we needed to recruit Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs), housing IDVAs and community engagement workers to help survivors access greater security in their own homes, as well as education, volunteering and employment opportunities. It enabled us to open a new refuge as part of our specialist service for Black African and Caribbean women in Lambeth. And it powered our partnership with ten other specialist domestic abuse organisations to deliver the trauma-informed, wrap-around, survivor-led Ascent Pan-London Floating Support Service.

Ministry of Justice funding for our services in Warwickshire, Derby and Hertfordshire equipped us to resource specialist roles to support our community-based services. This funding, committed to March 2025, means we can support women going through family courts or those facing multiple disadvantages.

Enthusiastic, dedicated supporters

From individuals to communities, we depend on the goodwill of thousands of supporters to maintain our services. We grew our email list to over 200,000 this year and recruited 1,627 new monthly givers with a projected four-year value of over £733,000. With two London Marathons this year, two incredible teams of runners raised £121,000. In our first-ever overseas challenge, fifteen people trekked the Himalayas, raising £54,000. All over the UK, supporters ran, walked, cycled, swam and skydived. Others signed up in their thousands to join our programme of virtual challenges, raising an amazing £1 million through everything from sporting events to crochet. And communities raised over £515,000 through yoga challenges, head shaves, live streams, 90s fancy dress discos and many more creative events.



What we've delivered this year

Avon

2023 marks fifteen years of our partnership with Avon and we are incredibly grateful for their longstanding commitment. Together we've collaborated on campaigns, set up volunteering opportunities, educated others on the signs of domestic abuse and raised funds. Since January 2022, Avon has donated £110,000 through grants, employee fundraising and product sales profits, boosted by £26,000 gift-in-kind donations.

Barclays

Barclays continued to provide vital support for our technology-facilitated abuse and economic empowerment team, as well as providing advertising space in 312 of their branches and on 2,150 ATMs to help publicise our Helpline. We are proud that our work together this year led to us to win a 'Highly Commended' in the Banks and Financial Services category of the Business Charity Awards in May 2023. We are excited to continue our partnership together.

The Co-operative Bank

The Co-operative Bank's tireless fundraising continues to support our specialist technology-facilitated abuse and economic abuse services. As part of their 150th anniversary celebrations, they donated an additional £23,000 at a time when Refuge and survivors were heavily impacted by the cost of living crisis. We are proud to deepen this partnership, year on year, and to tackle economic abuse together.



The Tech Lending Community Fund

Supported and administered by Hubbub, Virgin Media and O2, the Tech Lending Community Fund has generously donated a number of tablets to help Refuge residents use technology safely. This makes a real difference to the women and children we serve, enabling them to stay connected and access the resources they need to rebuild their lives.

The Brook Trust

We are proud to have the steadfast support of The Brook Trust whose unwavering commitment has helped save the lives of women and their children who have experienced domestic abuse. As we approach our fifteenth year of working together we want to thank them for their kindness and transformational support that has been critical to the success of Refuge so far.

Lily Safra

We are deeply saddened by the passing of Lily Safra, an extraordinary philanthropist whose support of Refuge for nearly twenty years has left an indelible mark on our organisation and the survivors of domestic abuse we serve. Our deepest condolences go out to Lily's family and everyone at the Edmond J Safra Philanthropic Foundation. Her contributions to our organisation and our mission will never be forgotten, and we will honour her memory by continuing to work tirelessly to advocate for and support survivors of domestic abuse.

The Queen

Her Majesty The Queen continues to be a strong and passionate advocate for survivors of domestic abuse. Through her involvement across the sector, with numerous domestic abuse charities and organisations, she has undoubtedly made a significant difference to many individuals and families who have experienced abuse. By lending her voice, time, and resources, she has shown a deep commitment to ending domestic abuse and helping survivors to rebuild their lives. Her advocacy and efforts have been incredibly inspiring, and we are thankful for the leadership that she has demonstrated.

Legacy support

This year we emailed all our supporters to offer our free online will service, many of whom responded by pledging a gift to Refuge or letting us know they had already done so. With this encouragement, we've worked with creative agency Consider to create a new online guide to leaving a gift in your will.



What we've delivered this year

Our ambassadors

This year saw a huge change in the reach and diversity of our portfolio of celebrity ambassadors. Ranvir Singh, Saffron Hocking, Sharon Gaffka and Billie Piper joined us, bringing their unique experiences, skills and passions. They've contributed to our events, highlighted our campaigns, shared our messages on social media, opened up their networks and raised funds. We are hugely grateful for the support of all our ambassadors.

We have been privileged this year to work with seven survivor ambassadors who have generously shared their experience, commitment and support to help us raise awareness and influence change. As part of our review and development of survivor engagement, we made the decision to end our survivor ambassador programme and continue to work with many of them as survivor advocates in their own right.



Everything I Ever Wanted to Tell My Daughter About Men

Starring Jason Isaacs, Nathan Fillion, Lorian Haynes and Issy Knopfler, this powerful film traces the impacts of sexual assault on a woman's choices and her relationship experiences from teen pregnancy to infidelity and addiction.

Directed by Lorian Haynes, Everything I Ever Wanted to Tell My Daughter About Men was screened at Clapham and Marylebone Picturehouse cinemas in November 2022 and February 2023, with all proceeds donated to Refuge.

Reflections on our 50-year history

Hosted by our new ambassador Ranvir Singh, we held a celebration dinner for our community of philanthropists and advocates to reflect on our 50-years of service and to share our priorities and ambitions. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who gives their time, money and voice to support our mission and empower women to rebuild their lives, and we were delighted that over £60,000 was raised on the night.

“I wanted to partner with Refuge for Everything... as a survivor myself, encouraging women to tell their own stories. This is mine. And I know from experience how painful it is to speak out. Women's voices and survivors' stories are often side-lined. In telling my own I wanted to put my heart on my sleeve, jump and encourage other women to do the same.

Lorien Haynes, director and lead actress

What we've delivered this year

Our thanks

To all our loyal supporters and generous partners. To the families of those who left a gift in their will. To our ambassadors and donors. Your commitment to our cause is truly phenomenal. And, in this challenging year, the hard work carried out by our dedicated Refuge team could not have been achieved without your help.

Thank you.

Alex Scott
AMVBBDO
Avon Cosmetics
Barclays
Battersea Dogs and Cats
BBC Children in Need
BBH
Benefit Cosmetics
Billie Piper
Brian Woolf Trust
Catriona Cannon
Cecil Gee Charitable Trust
Charles Russell Speechlys
Cherie Blair
Christopher A. Holder
CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP
Colt Technology Services
Credit Suisse
David Morrissey
EasyJet (via Business in the Community)
Evan Cornish Foundation
Fiona Bruce
Firebird Foundation
Fleishman Hillard
Fox Williams
Garfield Weston Foundation
Google (via Business in the Community)
Harrison-Frank Family Foundation
Helen Mirren

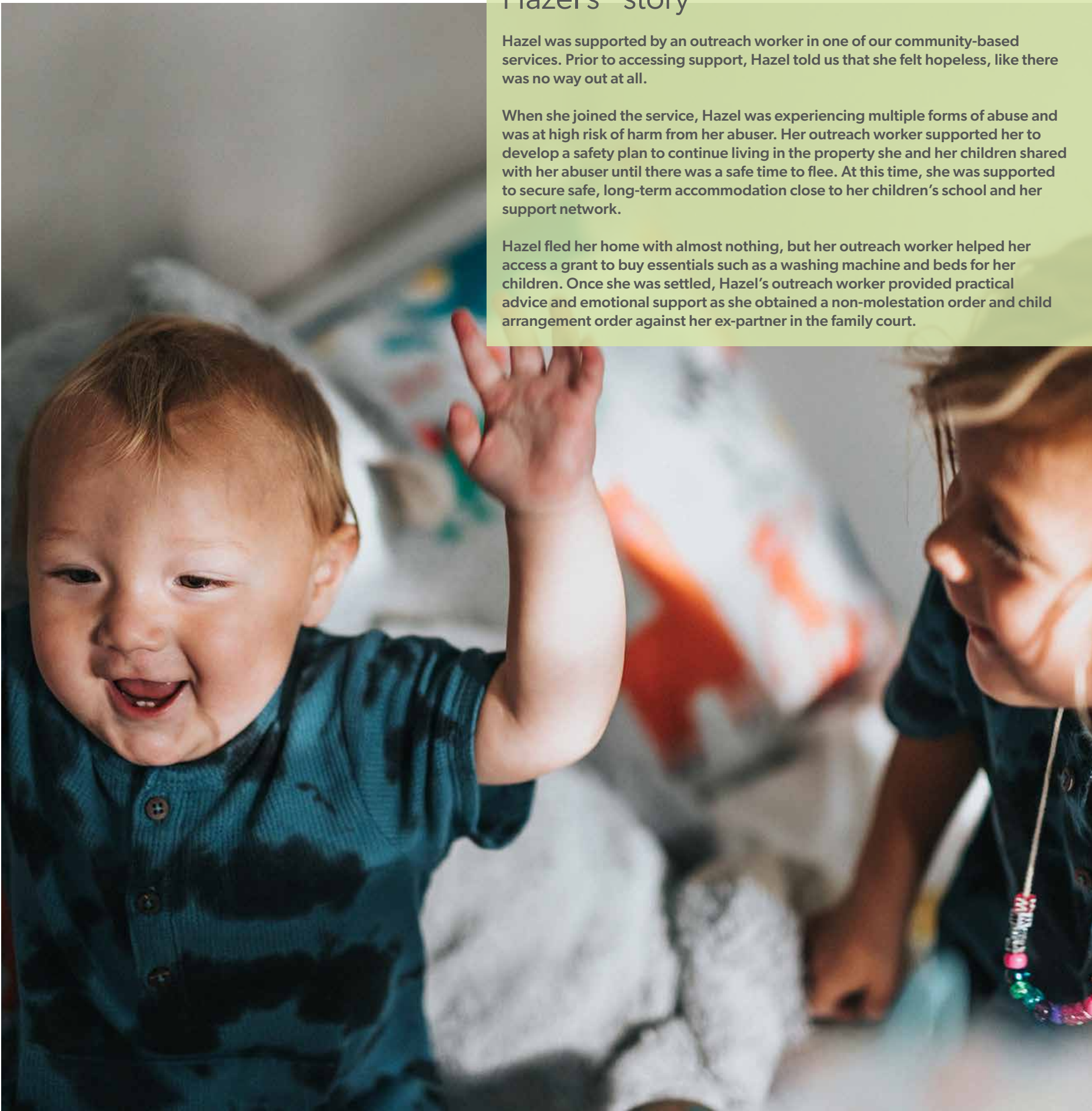
Helena Kennedy
Hubbub
TP ICAP via ICAP Charity Day
Index Ventures
Izzy and Alexander Leslie
Jennifer Payne
Kew Women's Institute
Lorien Haynes
McCann
Morson Group
Neil Amos
Olivia Colman
One Hundred Shoreditch
PA Consulting
Patrick Stewart
PayPlan
Picturehouse Cinemas
Pilkington Charities' Fund
Ranvir Singh
Saffron Hocking
Sharon Gaffka
Squarepoint Foundation
Stratford Town Trust
The Alan Edward Higgs Charity
The Alchemy Foundation
The Barratt Foundation
The Brook Trust
The Buchanan Programme
The Co-operative Bank
The Dahan Family Foundation
The John Coates Charitable Trust
The National Lottery Community Fund
The Olwyn Foundation
The Pye Foundation
The Randal Charitable Foundation
Travers Smith
Turn2Us
Two Magpies Fund
Vanguard
Weightmans LLP
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP
Wendy Turner-Webster

Hazel's* story

Hazel was supported by an outreach worker in one of our community-based services. Prior to accessing support, Hazel told us that she felt hopeless, like there was no way out at all.

When she joined the service, Hazel was experiencing multiple forms of abuse and was at high risk of harm from her abuser. Her outreach worker supported her to develop a safety plan to continue living in the property she and her children shared with her abuser until there was a safe time to flee. At this time, she was supported to secure safe, long-term accommodation close to her children's school and her support network.

Hazel fled her home with almost nothing, but her outreach worker helped her access a grant to buy essentials such as a washing machine and beds for her children. Once she was settled, Hazel's outreach worker provided practical advice and emotional support as she obtained a non-molestation order and child arrangement order against her ex-partner in the family court.



Looking ahead

Every two minutes, someone turns to Refuge for help

Domestic abuse is at epidemic levels. In England and Wales, one in four women will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lifetime. Many will experience multiple forms of abuse, from physical violence to tech abuse, economic abuse, and coercive control. As perpetrators find new ways to abuse, our job gets harder.

That’s why our focus, looking ahead, must be on what women and children need, and on how their needs are changing. Not all are able or want to flee to a refuge. This is why community-based services are so vital.

We support survivors to make their own decisions about their next steps

Our experience aligns with research by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales ¹. Most survivors seek practical advice and emotional support. And most want both from a community-based service rather than an accommodation-based service. Frontline workers draw on their broad expertise – including safety planning, legal remedies, housing, the welfare benefits system and the dynamics of domestic abuse – to tailor support to a survivor’s individual needs. Whatever their situation, survivors are supported to make their own decisions about the next steps in their journey.



We’re also tackling the barriers women face all around them

Just one in five of the women we support will report to the police. For those who do, community-based services provide vital emotional and practical support, helping them to understand their rights, navigate the criminal justice system and access legal support. For Black, Asian and minoritised survivors, and migrant women, these barriers are yet more pronounced as institutional racism and poor police practice around data-sharing with Immigration Enforcement create further fears around reporting.

The biggest barrier is insecure, insufficient funding

The government has made progress in creating a legal duty to fund emergency safe accommodation. But there is no similar commitment for community-based services. Most are funded by local authorities through competitive commissioning, with contract values often less than the cost of running a safe and effective service. And while the Ministry of Justice has committed some funding to community-based services within the Victims Funding strategy, it simply isn’t enough to meet the demand across the



“You’re not forgotten. You’re not just another woman they’ve got on their caseload. It feels like you’re important, and it matters.”

country. Specialist providers are forced to rely on insecure, fundraised income to provide lifesaving services. Last year, more than half of Refuge’s income was generated from fundraised sources.

Relying on the good will of donors is fundamentally unsustainable for us. It’s even harder for specialist ‘by and for’ organisations. There needs to be greater consistency in funding for the entire network of community-based support. This is particularly needed for mental health support, early intervention, and support for children and young people.

Research by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner ¹ found that less than half of survivors who wanted to access community-based services in 2022 were able to. D/deaf and disabled, LGBTQ+, Black, Asian and minoritised survivors, and migrant women face even greater barriers to accessing support.

When we invest in survivors, everyone benefits

An economic analysis published by Women’s Aid ² in February 2023 shows that every pound invested in domestic abuse support services will make at least £9 savings to the public purse. When survivors are not able to access domestic abuse services in their community, they are often forced to turn to statutory services such as the police, NHS, and social care. This comes at a huge cost to society. In 2022, the estimated economic and social costs of domestic abuse in England was a staggering £78 billion per year. Community-based services make savings by preventing further abuse, relieving pressure on public services, and managing the far higher costs incurred when a survivor moves into refuge accommodation.

Survivors seek specialist support from community-based services because they are effective. Of all the survivors who left Refuge’s community-based services between April 2021 and March 2022, 97% said they felt safer, 96% said they felt less frightened, 95% said their quality of life had improved, and 99% said they felt confident knowing how to access help.

We will continue to campaign and influence for a national network of community-based services

But we – and our sector – can’t do it alone. Join us in urging government to provide adequate, secure and sustainable funding for community-based services to ensure that all survivors and their children can access the range of support they so desperately need.



Legal, administrative and governance

Administrative details

Charity number: 277424
Company number: 1412276
Regulator of Social Housing number: 4730

Principal office:

3rd Floor
One America Square
17 Crosswall London
EC3N 2LB

Auditors:

Moore Kingston Smith LLP, 9 Appold Street, London, EC2A 2AP

Bankers:

HSBC Bank Plc, 281 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4HJ
Barclays Bank Plc, 1 Churchill Place, London E14 5HP

Investment Managers:

Charles Stanley & Co, 70-72 Chertsey Street, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4HL

Solicitors:

Bindmans LLP, 236 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1X 8HB
Bates Wells, 10 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BE
Mishcon de Reya, Africa House, 70 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6AH
Radar Limited, 6 Beacon Way, Hull, HU3 4AE
Cooley (UK) LLP, 69 Old Broad Street, London, EC2M 1QS

Trustees, officers and advisers

Under its Memorandum and Articles of Association, Refuge was originally incorporated as Chiswick Family Rescue on 30th January 1979 as a company limited by guarantee not for profit and not having share capital. The name was subsequently changed to Refuge on 5 March 1993.

It is a charity with a registered office at 3rd Floor, One America, Square, 17 Crosswall, London, EC3N 2LB. On 13 August 2012 Refuge became a Registered Provider of Social Housing regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency. A Board of Trustees (whose members are also directors of the charitable company) oversees Refuge’s policies and the execution of its activities. Members are elected upon a resolution of the Board and may resign their membership by notice in writing to the company.

The members of the Board who held office during the year were:

Board of Trustees:

Hetti Barkworth–Nanton (Chair)
Dheepa Balasundaram
Andrea Daniels
Elizabeth Edwards
Ayanna Nelson
Jon Rowney
Selina Sagayam
Ruth Smith
Kirsten Walkom (to 12.10.2022)

Ambassadors:

Cherie Booth CBE KC
Fiona Bruce (to 13.03.2023)
Olivia Colman CBE
Sharon Gaffka (from 31.10.2022)
Saffron Hocking (from 27.05.2022)
Baroness Helena Kennedy KC
Dame Helen Mirren
Billie Piper (from 29.09.2022)
Ranvir Singh (from 27.05.2022)
Sir Patrick Stewart OBE

Chief Executive

Ruth Davison

Company Secretary

Sally Oglesby (to 16.05.2023)
Lornette Pemberton (17.05.2023 - 04.06.2023)
Michaela Chamberlain (from 05.06.2023)

Principal Officers

Abigail Ampofo, Director of Service Delivery
Tracy Blackwell, Director of Strategic Insights and Partnerships
Gabi Field, Director of Fundraising and Communications (Maternity Cover to 14.03.2023)
Louise Firth, Director of Fundraising and Communications
Lornette Pemberton, Director of People and Culture
Shameem Sadiq-Tang, Interim Director of Operational Change (to 28.04.2023)
Jameela Khan, Director of Corporate Services (to 7.10.2022)
Trevor Richards, Interim Director of Corporate Services (from 28.11.2022 to 31.05.2023)
Cathryn Symons, Director of Technology (from 30.1.2023)
Michaela Chamberlain, Director of Corporate Services (from 05.06.2023)

Governing document

Refuge is a charitable company limited by guarantee, originally incorporated as Chiswick Family Rescue on 30 January 1979 and registered as a charity on 31 March 1979. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and appointment of The Board

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law. There shall be a minimum of five and a maximum of twelve Trustees who are appointed by a decision of the Trustees. Appointments are made on an initial three-year term of office. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association each Trustee shall retire from office at the third Annual Retirement Meeting following the commencement of his or her term of office, this being the meeting of the Trustees at which the accounts of the Charity are adopted. Retiring Trustees may be a reappointed for a maximum of three consecutive terms of office.

Periodic skills audits are undertaken to ensure that the skills/ experience of the Board of trustees align with those necessary for the management of the Charity’s business. Where necessary Trustees are recruited and appointed to meet any skills gaps.

The Board of Trustees induction and training

All new members of the Board receive an induction pack containing detailed information about Refuge, its organisation and its work. They also spend time with the Chief Executive, Chair and senior staff to familiarise themselves with Refuge’s activities and their role and responsibilities as a charity trustee. Training is provided to introduce trustees to their legal and governance duties, including mandatory dynamics of domestic abuse, data protection/GDPR, safeguarding, cybersecurity and EDI training. There are regular visits to services, opportunities for specific training and presentations by staff at board meetings. All trustees have received a copy of the Charity Commission publication ‘The Essential Trustee’.

Organisation

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the overall governance of Refuge. The charity’s Board of Trustees meets regularly to agree and monitor the strategic direction of the organisation. Refuge’s chief executive Ruth Davison, is responsible for the day to day management of the charity and the implementation of policy, supported by a highly dedicated and professional team of staff and volunteers.

Partnerships

In pursuit of its charitable aim of providing safe accommodation for women and children escaping domestic abuse Refuge works in partnership with a number of different housing associations and local authorities.

Housing associations:

BPHA, Central and Cecil, Clarion Housing Group, Derby Homes, Peabody, Gateway, Hexagon, London and Quadrant, Metropolitan Thames Valley, Notting Hill Genesis, Orbit, Paragon, Sanctuary Housing, Home Group, Southern Housing and Tuntum.

Statutory partners:

The London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hillingdon, Kingston upon Thames, Lewisham, Lewisham CCG, Lambeth, Merton, Redbridge, Southwark, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth and Westminster. The counties of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Warwickshire. The city of Derby, Derby Homes and the borough of Warrington. The Greater London Authority. London Councils.

Police Crime Commissioners (PCC):

Derbyshire, Hertfordshire, MOPAC, Warwickshire
IRISi, Violence Reduction Unit, Home Office, National Children’s Bureau, Ministry of Justice, Young Londoners’ Fund, Commonweal

Objectives

The objects of the company are:

- To provide for the relief of women and their children or other victims who have been subject to:

(i) physical, sexual, emotional and/or mental abuse within an intimate or “family” relationship (“domestic abuse”); or
(ii) other gender-based abuse, which term, for the purposes of these Articles, shall include but not be limited to rape, prostitution, gang abuse, sex-trafficking or female genital mutilation, in either of cases or (ii) above, throughout the United Kingdom and abroad

- To provide specialist supported housing and social housing and any associated amenities in England, designed to meet the needs of women and children who are the victims of domestic abuse and/or other gender-based abuse, and other services designed to facilitate their onward progression; and

- To advance public education, research and training on understanding of the issues of domestic abuse and gender-based abuse throughout the United Kingdom and abroad.

Refuge’s mission continues to be that of providing

emergency accommodation and support to women and children escaping domestic abuse whilst raising awareness and understanding of the issue. Its principal aims and objectives are to:

- Provide a range of high quality specialist services to women and children escaping domestic abuse including a Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline, a growing number of safe houses with additional specialist support services for women and children, outreach and floating support services, refuges and outreach for black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee (BAMER) women, independent domestic abuse advocates and specialist support.
- Raise public awareness of the issues surrounding domestic abuse and campaign to ensure the voices of survivors are heard.

Public benefit statement

Refuge operates for public benefit. The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission’s general guidance on public benefit, “Charities and Public Benefit”.

Respect, Inclusion and Belonging

Respect, inclusion, and belonging are fundamental to what we want to achieve in all that we do at Refuge. We aim to build a culture where our staff, volunteers, trustees, service users, survivors, partners, and all who work with or alongside us are valued and respected. As an intersectional feminist organisation committed to challenging inequality across society; equality and equity remain at the forefront in helping us to achieve our strategic priorities. To this end, this year we created a Respect, Inclusion and Belonging strategy (2022-26) and action plan. These will help us to develop a diverse team of incredible people and an inclusive culture that celebrates diversity and support us in having a workplace of allies where all forms of discrimination and less favourable treatment is challenged.

Fundraising

At Refuge, we are conscious of the trust that supporters place in us when they donate towards our work. We are members of the Fundraising Regulator and abide by their Fundraising Promise and the Code of Fundraising Practice. We are deeply committed to protecting the data and privacy of our supporters and adhere to all relevant legislation and best practice in the sector.

We are committed to providing the highest levels of supporter care and value any feedback we receive regarding our fundraising activities.

In 2022/23 we received 191 complaints, which were resolved without any being escalated to the Fundraising Regulator. We responded to all complaints within three working days.

In 2022/23, we worked with three professional fundraising organisations for payroll giving recruitment. We aim to ensure any agencies we employ also observe the highest standards in terms of fundraising practice, and we ensure that the work of the suppliers is regularly monitored.

We work with companies across a variety of sectors to build mutually beneficial partnerships. We encourage our Corporate Partners to commit to raising a minimum level of £25,000 of funds. This can be raised through a range of mechanisms including commercial participation, staff or customer fundraising, events and company donations. We are also grateful for the support of a number of corporate supporters and donors which fund us through one off or regular donations or gifts in kind at a level that suits them best

We conduct due diligence as part of our research process in relation to both proactive and reactive fundraising from businesses, trusts, foundations and high net worth individuals. This is to ensure alignment with our ethical policy as well as assess potential risks by association.

Whilst we generally seek unrestricted funding, we do work with some partners and philanthropists who prefer to restrict their support to particular areas of our work.

Financial review

Like much of the charitable sector, Refuge is experiencing significant financial challenges as a result of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. As noted on page 8 of this report, we are tackling the triple impact of greater demand, increased costs and lower income. Inflation is increasing our expenditure while restricting donors’ ability to give. Two thirds of our income is from central and local government, and government funding to the sector has been declining in recent years.

It is in this context that Refuge generated a deficit of £4.7m in 2022/23, of which £4.3m was unrestricted. This is significantly higher than the deficit generated in 2021/22 (just under £1m, or £0.8m unrestricted). The reason for this is that while income grew year-on- year, expenditure grew more considerably (see ‘Income’ and ‘Expenditure’ below). Refuge’s reserves are sufficient to cover this deficit this year (see ‘Reserves and other funds’ below), and in the longer term we are implementing plans to move to a break even position (see ‘Looking ahead’).

Income

Income totalled £25.4m in 2022/23, which is £1.1m (4%) higher than 2021/22. Income from operating activities, including grants, contracts and housing management income, has increased by £2.7m (19%) as a result of new contracts secured and uplifts on existing contracts. Partly offsetting this is a £1.6m (16%) decline in donations and legacies. Much of this movement is due to an exceptional legacy of just under £1m received in 2021/22. The remainder is driven by a decline in local fundraising and events income, which are trends seen across the sector due to a combination of the cost-of-living crisis and a volatile events market post-COVID-19.

Expenditure

Expenditure totalled £30.1m, which is £4.8m (19%) higher than the prior year. This is primarily driven by increased spend on people. Payroll costs are up £2.6m (18%) year-on- year, while spend on temporary staff and consultants is up £1.6m (120%).

As noted on page 31, our three-year strategy includes measures to improve our infrastructure, processes and systems, improving our long-term sustainability as an organisation by investing in our people and building efficiency. This has required increased headcount and short-term support in some enabling teams, alongside the implementation of a new, sector- benchmarked pay structure for the whole organisation following our pay and reward review.

Headcount has also increased in service delivery teams as a result of new contracts.

In addition to increased staff and consultancy spend, high inflation has pushed up non-staff costs across the board in 2022/23.

Looking ahead

Refuge entered 2022/23 with healthy reserves which are more than sufficient to cover the deficit generated in the year while remaining well above Reserves Policy levels (please see ‘Reserves and other funds’ below). However, it would not be sustainable to continue generating deficits of this magnitude in the long term.

We have therefore implemented a financial sustainability plan which includes income growth and reductions to expenditure. As a result of this, we expect to generate a smaller deficit in 2023/24 (covered by reserves) and reach a break-even position in 2024/25.

Reserves and other funds

Refuge’s reserves, shown on the balance sheet as ‘general funds’, are its unrestricted funds not designated by the Board for any other purpose. They provide resilience in the event of financial shocks, such as an unexpected decline in income.

The Reserves Policy determines the target level for reserves. At the end of 2022/23, the Board have set the policy at a minimum of three months’ unrestricted expenditure (per the budget for 2023/24), or £6.2m.

The reserves balance of £8.4m is currently £2.2m higher than the policy minimum. However, as noted under ‘Looking ahead’ above, this headroom will be utilised to cover a further expected deficit in 23/24, driven by the cost-of-living crisis. Refuge expects to reach a breakeven position in 24/25 through the implementation of a financial sustainability plan.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside for a specific purpose by the Board. As at 31st March 2023, Refuge has one designated fund. The Fixed Asset Fund has been created this year to hold the balance of all tangible and intangible fixed assets. This reflects the fact that these assets are not available to be expended in the same way reserves are, as they are utilised in Refuge’s day-to-day operations and are not readily realisable as cash.

In 2021/22, four designated funds were created to set aside funds for innovation in service delivery, the strengthening of support infrastructure, diversification of income streams and repairs of leased and owned properties. During 2022/23, the decision was taken to manage this ongoing spend through general funds. This will enable Refuge to continue these closely interlinked activities under a broader umbrella, thus reducing the administration around tracking separate and often overlapping funds.

Restricted funds relate to income which must be used for a specific purpose, as stipulated by the donor, and which has not yet been expended.

Further information on Refuge’s funds can be found in notes 20-22 of the accounts.

Principal risks

The Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing and monitoring internal control systems within Refuge. The Board reviews the major risks which may impact on the operations of Refuge on a regular basis and are satisfied that the system of internal control currently in place is sound and effective, whilst recognising that it is designed to manage rather than eliminate risk. This year, the Board and staff have worked to improve and refine our risk register, ensuring it is clear, informative and reviewed each quarter. The Board of Trustees agree that the following are the principal risks that Refuge faces:

- **Safeguarding.** The nature of Refuge's work leads to a high risk of safeguarding issues. We have improved and strengthened our policies, processes and ways of working to meet our high safeguarding standards including comprehensive external reviews of services where issues have been raised. Due to the nature of our work, this will always remain high risk for us and an area of ongoing governance focus.
- **Financial Health and Sustainability.** As noted in the 'Financial review' above, Refuge continues to draw on reserves to fund our vital work and invest in longer term efficiencies, in line with our 3 year strategy. This is not sustainable indefinitely and moving forward consolidation will be essential alongside income maximisation, ensuring we have a viable business model.
- **Staff capacity, continuity and capability.** We have invested heavily into our workforce and will continue to focus on this, recognising the challenges we have with recruitment and retention in our sector. This is due to the high pressured and traumatic nature of our work, the lack of multi-year funding or contracts as well as our desire to be an employer of choice.
- **Effective and efficient systems.** Refuge continues to strengthen our robust data security measures and to invest into our IT team, policies and procedures to mitigate risks. Financial plans for future years include capital investment to improve our systems.
- **Continuity of services.** There are a number of significant contracts due for recommissioning during 2023. In order to maintain and extend contracts a local engagement and 'win' strategy is prepared for each service. Maintaining good relations with commissioners, negotiating contract extensions where possible and tight budgeting and control of costs are priorities.

Investment powers

The Articles of Association contain powers for the Board of Trustees to invest funds in any investments, securities and properties. As at 31st March 2023, Refuge holds £642k of investments. This is £67k lower than the prior year holding. Losses on the portfolio have been driven by economic downturn, resulting from inflationary pressures and the ongoing war in Ukraine. The portfolio is managed by Charles Stanley. Further information is provided in note 15 to the accounts.

Statement of the Board of Trustees responsibilities

The Board of Trustees (whose members are also directors of Refuge for the purposes of company law) is responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Board of Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the outgoing resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Board of Trustees is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Housing and Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business

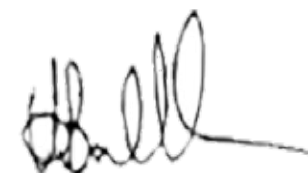
The Board of Trustees is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding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

As far as the Board of Trustees is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- The Board of Trustees has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the pay and remuneration of key management personnel is reasonable and appropriate. Director salaries are determined annually by the People, Nominations and Remuneration Committee (PNRC). A separate policy outlines the approach to CEO pay which is capped relative to other salaries.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair

This report acts as a directors' report for the charitable company as required by s415 of the Companies Act 2006 and includes the Strategic Report which has been approved by the Board of Trustees in their capacity as company directors.



Independent auditors report to the members of Refuge

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Refuge (‘the parent charitable company’) for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Group and Parent Charitable Company Balance Sheets, the Consolidated Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 ‘The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland’ (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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 FRS102 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, and the Accounting Direction for Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019; and
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

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 Auditor’s 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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. 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.

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 course of 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 themselves. 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.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the strategic report and the trustees’ annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the trustees’ annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the trustees’ annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- The parent company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The parent charitable company’s financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees’ remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees’ responsibilities statement set out in the Statement of The Board’s 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.

Auditor’s 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 an auditor’s report 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 aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company’s internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor’s report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

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.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, the Accounting Direction for Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019, the Housing SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council]

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.

- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.

- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company’s members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company’s members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor’s report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company and charitable company’s members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor
Date: 28 September 2023

9 Appold Street

London

EC2A 2AP



Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2023
(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Note		2023	2023	2023	2022
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	4	6,726,086	1,749,795	8,475,881	10,110,107
Operating activities					
Contracts for Support Services	5	7,074,400	-	7,074,400	6,405,717
Housing Management		4,546,451	-	4,546,451	4,412,821
Grants	6	-	4,942,497	4,942,497	3,174,699
Other trading activities	8	118,526	-	118,526	169,239
Investments	7	141,676	-	141,676	26,889
Other income		88,600	-	88,600	-
Total income and endowments	3	18,695,739	6,692,292	25,388,031	24,299,472
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	9	4,392,144	-	4,392,144	3,322,184
Operating activities					
Refuge provision		7,688,394	1,356,692	9,045,086	8,826,545
Advocacy		4,414,203	965,657	5,379,860	4,003,811
Integrated services		4,538,107	737,750	5,275,857	3,995,444
Outreach and Floating Support		428,717	2,038,853	2,467,570	1,493,407
National Domestic Abuse Helpline		1,101,980	2,020,508	3,122,488	2,281,707
Public information		326,664	46,099	372,763	1,347,356
Specialist support services		165	-	165	27,783
Total Expenditure	3,11	22,890,374	7,165,559	30,055,933	25,298,237
Net (losses)/ gains on investments	15	(63,635)	-	(63,635)	20,515
Net (expenditure)/income		(4,258,270)	(473,267)	(4,731,537)	(978,250)
Net movement in funds		(4,258,270)	(473,267)	(4,731,537)	(978,250)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward		13,424,509	1,021,881	14,446,390	15,424,640
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2023	20, 21,22	9,166,239	548,614	9,714,853	14,446,390

Approved by the Board on 27th September 2023


Hetti Barkworth-Nanton


Jon Rowney

The notes on pages 55-75 form part of these financial statements
All the activities of the charitable company related to continuing operations. There were no recognised gains and losses other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Balance sheet as of 31 March 2023

	Note	Group 2023 £	2022 £	Charity 2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	13	615,490	759,614	615,490	759,614
Intangible assets	14	146,955	225,633	146,955	225,633
Investments	15	641,737	709,022	641,738	709,023
		1,404,182	1,694,269	1,404,183	1,694,270
Current Assets					
Debtors	16	3,552,480	4,027,942	3,600,542	4,027,942
Cash at bank and in hand		9,685,030	13,929,303	9,630,028	13,929,303
		13,237,510	17,957,245	13,230,570	17,957,245
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	(4,806,839)	(5,085,124)	(4,799,900)	(5,085,125)
Net Current Assets		8,430,671	12,872,121	8,430,670	12,872,120
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		9,834,853	14,566,390	9,834,853	14,566,390
Provisions for liabilities and charges	19	(120,000)	(120,000)	(120,000)	(120,000)
Net Assets		9,714,853	14,446,390	9,714,853	14,446,390
Represented by:					
Unrestricted Funds	20				
General		8,403,794	10,420,140	8,403,794	10,420,140
Designated Funds		762,445	3,004,369	762,445	3,004,369
		9,166,239	13,424,509	9,166,239	13,424,509
Restricted Funds	21	548,614	1,021,881	548,614	1,021,881
Total Funds	22	9,714,853	14,446,390	9,714,853	14,446,390

Approved by the Board on 27th September 2023


Hetti Barkworth-Nanton


Jon Rowney

The notes on pages 55-75 form part of these financial statements
Company number: 1412276

Cash-flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023	2022
		£	£
Statement of Cash Flows			
Net Cash (Outflow) from Operating Activities	1	(4,325,006)	(1,688,931)
			-
- Investment income received	7	141,676	26,889
Capital Expenditure and financial investment			
- Payments to acquire Tangible Fixed Assets	13	(64,593)	(764,583)
- Payments to acquire Intangible Fixed Assets	14	-	(17,712)
- Payments to acquire Financial Investments	15	(98,220)	(83,276)
- Investment disposal proceeds	15	103,809	91,156
Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	(4,242,334)	(2,436,457)
Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows			
Reconciliation of Changes in Resources to Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities			
Net movement in funds		(4,731,537)	(978,250)
Depreciation		208,717	98,099
Amortisation		78,678	69,477
Investment income		(141,676)	(26,889)
Unrealised/Realised losses/(gains)		63,635	(20,515)
Decrease/ (Increase) in trade and other Debtors		475,462	(1,326,792)
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other Creditors		(278,285)	625,776
Movement in provision		-	(129,837)
		(4,325,006)	(1,688,931)
Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movements in Net Funds			
Increase in Cash and Cash at Bank in the year		(4,242,334)	(2,436,457)
(Decrease)/Increase in net funds		(4,242,334)	(2,436,457)
Net funds at 1 April 2022		13,963,736	16,400,193
Net funds at 31 March 2023		9,721,402	13,963,736
Reconciliation of net funds to cash at bank and in hand			
Net funds		9,721,402	13,963,736
Cash held with investment managers		(36,372)	(34,433)
Cash at bank and in hand		9,685,030	13,929,303
Notes on pages 55-75 form part of these financial statements			

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements are prepared on the historical cost convention of accounting, as modified by the revaluation of Fixed asset Investments and in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and in compliance with The Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019, Housing SORP 2018, the Statement of Recommended Practice “Accounting for Registered Social Providers”, the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with “The Financial Reporting Standard Accounts applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (“FRS 102”), The Charities Act 2011 and the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. The charity is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102.

Going concern

Refuge’s financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis. Per FRS 102, an entity is a going concern unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the entity or to cease operating, or has no realistic alternative but to do so. Refuge’s Trustees have assessed Refuge’s ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months after the signing of the 2022/23 accounts, i.e. until September 2024, based on projections of Refuge’s income, expenditure and cashflow over that period.

Refuge has generated a deficit of £4.7m in 2022/23. (See the annual report’s financial review for more information.) Despite this, year end reserves of £8.4m are well above the Reserves Policy minimum of £6.2m, and the cash balance remains healthy at £9.7m.

Reserves and cash are therefore expected to be sufficient to cover a further, smaller expected deficit in 2023/24. From 2024/25 onwards, Refuge expects to break even. These financial results will be delivered through a two-year financial sustainability plan incorporating both income growth and expenditure reductions. This plan is already underway and is being closely monitored by the Board.

Should Refuge experience an unexpected short-term drop in liquidity, mitigating actions are available, including the liquidation of £642k of investments.

After considering the current level of reserves and cash, the forecast to September 2024, and the mitigation actions available, it is the opinion of the trustees that the Group has adequate financial resources to continue its activities for the foreseeable future and that there are no material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. Accordingly, these financial statements have been prepared using the going concern basis of preparation.

Basis of Consolidation

The consolidated financial statements comprise Refuge together with its wholly owned subsidiary, Refuge Trading Ltd. Refuge Trading Ltd was incorporated on 14 December 2021 and began trading in 2022/23. A summarised profit

and loss account for the subsidiary is given in note 26. The results of the subsidiary have been consolidated on a line by line basis. As permitted by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 no separate statement of financial activities is presented in respect of the parent charity. The net movement of funds attributable to the parent charity is £4,731,537.

Tangible Fixed Assets - Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000, except items of high wear and tear for refuges, have been capitalised and recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over their estimated useful lives or the length of the contract/project for which the fixed assets were acquired.

Leasehold improvements	5 years straight line
Freehold buildings	50 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	4 years straight line
Office equipment	4 years straight line

Intangible Fixed Assets - Amortisation

Intangible assets costing more than £1,000 are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets over their useful lives on the following bases:

Software	4 years straight line
Website	4 years straight line

Income

All income is accounted for when the company has entitlement to the funds, receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Donations and legacies include donations, gifts, legacies and some grants receivable.

Gifts in kind and intangible income are treated either as donations in the period the gift or intangible income is received, or as an asset, in both cases at a reasonable estimate of the gross value to the charity.

Contractual income and legacies are recognised as income where there is entitlement, probability of receipt and measurability.

Fundraising income is shown gross except for small fundraising events where the cash is received net of expenditure.

Investment income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

Grants are recognised when the entitlement to the grant is confirmed and any conditions not within the company’s control have been met.

Grants that provide core funding, or are of a general nature provided by the government and charitable foundations, are recorded as voluntary income.

1 Accounting Policies (Continued)

Costs of raising funds

Fundraising expenditure comprises costs incurred encouraging people and organisations to contribute financially to the charity’s work. This includes costs of advertising and staging of special fundraising events.

Governance costs

Governance costs comprise all expenditure not directly related to the charitable activity or fundraising ventures including audit fees. The costs are allocated over the activities on the same basis as other administrative costs.

Provisions

Provisions relate to the Board’s estimate of the present value of the cost of dilapidations work that is required to be undertaken on expiry of and in accordance with the terms of the company’s lease on the premises at Head Office and an estimate of future deficits concerning Refuge’s Admitted Body Status of Hertfordshire LGPS scheme, a final salary scheme for one former employee.

Bad debts

Bad debts are recognised when all arrears and debt collection procedures have been exhausted. Bad debts are written off on a percentage basis depending on their age and the probability of collection.

Investments

Investments are held in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Any change from market value at the previous balance sheet date or from cost if purchased during the year, is included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Stocks

No value has been ascribed to stocks of publications on the basis that the majority of these are normally given away and therefore it is considered prudent to account for the costs of all publications in the period they are incurred.



Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 ‘Basic Financial Instruments’ and Section 12 ‘Other Financial Instruments Issues’ of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company’s balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial instruments, which include trade and other receivables and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest.

Other financial assets

Other financial assets, including investments in equity instruments which are not subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures, are initially measured at fair value, which is normally the transaction price. Such assets are subsequently carried at fair value and the changes in fair value are recognised in the SOFA, except that investments in equity instruments that are not publicly traded and whose fair values cannot be measured reliably are measured at cost less impairment.

Impairment of financial assets

Financial assets, other than those held at fair value through the SOFA, are assessed for indicators of impairment at each reporting end date. Financial assets are impaired where there is objective evidence that, as a result of one or more events that occurred after the initial recognition of the financial asset, the estimated future cash flows have been affected. The impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire, or when it transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity.

Pension funds

Refuge operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all staff. The amount charged to the Income and Expenditure Account in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year.

Operating lease agreement

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the SOFA on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Research and development

Research and development costs are expensed to the SOFA in the year that they are incurred.

Fund account

Restricted funds represent monies received for specific projects undertaken by the charity. Designated funds represent monies set aside by the trustees for a specific purpose. General unrestricted funds of the charity are available for the general purposes of the charity.

Status

Refuge is a registered social landlord with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The register number is 4730.

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. It is also a registered charity (Number 277424). In the event of the company winding up, members are required to contribute a sum not exceeding £1.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the company’s accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount 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.

Critical judgements

The following judgements (apart from those involving estimates) have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

The company has an obligation to pay dilapidations on expiry of the company’s lease. The cost of these reinstatements and the present value of the obligation depend on a number of factors including the expected rise in cost of building maintenance, uncertainty over the timing of the cost of reinstatements, and the discount rate. Management estimates these factors in determining the net dilapidation provision in the balance sheet. The assumptions reflect historical experience and current trends. See note 19 for the disclosures relating to the dilapidation provision.

The company makes an estimate of the recoverable value of trade and other debtors. When assessing impairment of trade and other debtors, management considers factors including the current credit rating of the debtor, the ageing profile of debtors and historical experience. See note 16 for the net carrying amount of the debtors and associated impairment provision.

The annual depreciation charge for property, plant and equipment is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 13 for the carrying amount of the property, plant and equipment and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of asset.

Similarly the amortisation charge for intangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments and economic utilisation of the assets. See note 14 for the carrying amount of the intangible assets and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.



Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

2. Comparative statements of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2022 and 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Note		2023	2023	2023	2022	2022	2022
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	4	6,726,086	1,749,795	8,475,881	8,793,664	1,316,443	10,110,107
Operating activities		-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracts for Support Services	5	7,074,400	-	7,074,400	6,405,717	-	6,405,717
Housing Management		4,546,451	-	4,546,451	4,412,821	-	4,412,821
Grants	6	-	4,942,497	4,942,497	-	3,174,699	3,174,699
Other trading activities		118,526		118,526	169,239		169,239
Investments	7	141,676	-	141,676	26,889	-	26,889
Other income	8	88,600	-	88,600	-	-	-
Total income and endowments	3	18,695,739	6,692,292	25,388,031	19,808,330	4,491,142	24,299,472
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	9	4,392,144	-	4,392,144	3,322,184	-	3,322,184
Operating activities			-		-	-	
Refuge provision		7,688,394	1,356,692	9,045,086	8,017,376	809,169	8,826,545
Advocacy		4,414,203	965,657	5,379,860	3,388,853	614,958	4,003,811
Integrated services		4,538,107	737,750	5,275,857	3,618,450	376,994	3,995,444
Outreach and Floating Support		428,717	2,038,853	2,467,570	234,167	1,259,240	1,493,407
National Domestic Abuse Helpline		1,101,980	2,020,508	3,122,488	727,189	1,554,518	2,281,707
Public information		326,664	46,099	372,763	1,347,356	-	1,347,356
Specialist support services		165	-	165	-	27,783	27,783
Total Expenditure	3, 11	22,890,374	7,165,559	30,055,933	20,655,575	4,642,662	25,298,237
Realised (losses)/ gains on investments	15	(63,635)	-	(63,635)	20,515	-	20,515
Change to Net (expenditure) / income		(4,258,270)	(473,267)	(4,731,537)	(826,730)	(151,520)	(978,250)
Transfers between funds	20, 21	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(4,258,270)	(473,267)	(4,731,537)	(826,730)	(151,520)	(978,250)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances brought forward		13,424,509	1,021,881	14,446,390	14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,640
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2023	20,21, 22	9,166,239	548,614	9,714,853	13,424,509	1,021,881	14,446,390

3a. Particulars of turnover, cost of sales, operating costs and operating surplus

	2023	2023	2023	2022	2022	2022
	Turnover	Operating Costs	Operating Surplus/(deficit)	Turnover	Operating Costs	Operating Surplus/(deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Social housing lettings	4,546,450	5,201,068	(654,618)	4,412,821	4,978,711	(565,890)
Other social housing activities:						
Contracts for Support Services	2,130,826	2,523,931	(393,105)	2,280,289	2,252,959	27,330
Other grants and donations	744,905	744,905	-	1,152,312	1,152,312	-
	7,422,181	8,469,904	(1,047,723)	7,845,422	8,383,982	(538,560)
Non-social housing activities	17,965,850	21,586,029	(3,620,179)	16,454,050	16,914,255	(460,205)
Total:	25,388,031	30,055,933	(4,667,902)	24,299,472	25,298,237	(998,765)

3b. Particulars of income and expenditure from social housing lettings

	2023	2022
	£	£
Social housing income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charges	1,487,050	1,897,927
Service charges receivable eligible for Housing Benefit	3,196,386	2,774,150
Service charges receivable ineligible for Housing Benefit	282,582	271,720
Rent losses due to voids	(419,568)	(530,976)
Turnover from social housing lettings	4,546,450	4,412,821
Expenditure on social housing lettings		
Services	1,382,092	1,382,111
Management	1,902,556	1,687,649
Routine maintenance	245,298	351,685
Planned maintenance	250,126	124,143
Bad debts	171,314	60,840
Lease charges	1,248,315	1,371,599
Property depreciation	1,367	684
Operating costs on social housing lettings	5,201,068	4,978,711
Operating surplus/(deficit) on social lettings	(654,618)	(565,890)
Social housing units		
The number of supported housing units under management at the end of the period:	2023	2022
	£	£
Owned and managed	8	8
Not owned but managed	291	293
	299	301

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

4. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Restated Unrestricted	Restated Restricted	Restated Total
	2023	2023	2023	2022	2022	2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Trusts	491,015	604,035	1,095,050	410,853	1,037,825	1,448,678
Corporates	471,686	862,532	1,334,218	601,377	179,549	780,926
Major donors	586,361	264,338	850,699	785,927	39,113	825,040
Private donors	4,824,289	18,890	4,843,179	5,747,025	22,118	5,769,143
	6,373,351	1,749,795	8,123,146	7,545,182	1,278,605	8,823,787
Legacies	281,383	-	281,383	1,153,123	1,000	1,154,123
Donations in kind	71,352	-	71,352	95,359	36,838	132,197
	6,726,086	1,749,795	8,475,881	8,793,664	1,316,443	10,110,107

The comparative figures have been restated to reflect the correct analysis between categories.

Private donors includes: Fundraising from events of £1.2m (2022: £1.4m), Local fundraising of £0.4m (2022: £0.8m) and Individual giving of £3.2m (2022: £3.5m)

5. Contracts for Support services

	2023 £	2022 £
Refuge provision	2,112,604	2,014,702
Advocacy	2,595,385	2,350,819
Integrated services	2,366,411	2,010,073
Outreach and floating support	-	30,123
	7,074,400	6,405,717

Support services under housing related support would encompass such activities that enabled the service user to develop the appropriate skills needed for maintaining independence in their own home once outside of the support service framework i.e. building local networks for support, making links into the community, understanding benefit entitlement and how to apply, developing personal finance awareness to pay rent and other associated household bills.

6. Grants

	2023 £ Restricted	2022 £ Restricted
Bain Capital	-	14,199
BBC Children in Need	-	25,783
Big Lottery Fund	-	20,135
Cambridgeshire Community Foundation	12,338	-
Cambridgeshire County Council	77,764	52,877
Comic Relief	-	29,167
Derby City Council	39,973	58,382
Derby Homes Limited	-	100,000
East Sussex County Council	-	9,162
Greater London Authority including MOPAC	2,312,523	498,448
Hertfordshire County Council	10,995	-
Home Office	1,001,019	807,874
Hounslow MHCLG	-	19,625
Job Centre plus	4,102	-
London Borough Barking and Dagenham	268,639	267,599
London Borough of Hounslow	45,913	43,315
London Borough of Hackney	25,275	-
London Borough of Lewisham	200,774	288,589
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Wandsworth	300,713	177,786
London Councils	290,436	127,613
Masonic Charitable Foundation	-	200,000
NHS Lewisham Clincial Commissioning Group	17,153	-
Stratford-on-Avon District Council	-	10,000
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire	210,070	175,662
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire	51,374	-
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire	41,479	61,139
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire	-	187,344
Warwickshire County Council	31,250	-
Others	710	-
	4,942,497	3,174,699

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Refuge received a grant of £290,436 from London Councils in 2022/23 for the Pan-London Domestic and Sexual Abuse Helplines Project, funded under Priority 2, Service area 2.3, which Refuge runs in partnership with Women and Girls Network, Rape Crisis South London and Respect. As Lead Partner, Refuge retained £128,296 of this grant, which was spent on staff, delivery costs and overheads on the National Domestic Abuse Helpline. The following summary illustrates how money was allocated across the partnership and that it has been used for the purposes outlined in the grant agreement:

	Grant (£)	Grant Spent (£)
Lead Partner - Refuge	128,296	128,296
Delivery Partner - Women and Girls Network	80,818	80,818
Delivery Partner - Rape Crisis South London	69,704	69,704
Delivery Partner - Respect	11,618	11,618
	290,436	290,436

7. Investment income

	2023 £	2022 £
Listed investments	12,713	10,339
Interest receivable	128,963	16,550
	141,676	26,889

8. Other trading activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Logo licence	46,527	44,820
Commercial participants	71,999	120,896
Merchandise	-	3,523
	118,526	169,239

9. Costs of raising funds

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	1,726,507	1,331,811
Depreciation and amortisation	23,733	1,457
Trading activities	76,757	48,168
Advertising, campaigns and events	1,373,610	1,399,041
Support costs	800,560	343,131
Other costs	390,977	198,576
	4,392,144	3,322,184

10. Governance costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Auditors’ remuneration (net)	30,950	21,250
Auditors’ remuneration (net) prior year	1,264	-
Auditors’ remuneration non-audit (net)	1,035	850
Irrecoverable VAT	6,650	4,920
Grant audit	-	2,500
Total auditors’ remuneration inclusive of VAT	39,899	29,520
Legal advice and recruitment of trustees	1,200	16,816
Tax review	984	2,444
Total governance costs	42,083	48,780

Governance costs for the year which are included in support cost in note 11 are £42,083 (inclusive of irrecoverable VAT) (2022- £48,780) representing less than 1% of our total costs.



Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

11. Total expenditure

2023

	Cost of Raising Funds £	Refuge Provision £	Advocacy £	Integrated services £	Outreach and Floating Support £	National Domestic Abuse Helpline £	Public Information £	Specialist Support Services £	2022/23 Total £
Direct Costs including Operational Support	3,591,584	7,154,801	3,912,078	3,969,624	1,948,590	2,383,939	268,967	165	23,229,748
Support Costs*	800,560	1,890,285	1,467,782	1,306,233	518,980	738,549	103,796	-	6,826,185
	4,392,144	9,045,086	5,379,860	5,275,857	2,467,570	3,122,488	372,763	165	30,055,933

*Support Costs include governance costs of £42,083 incl. VAT

2022

	Cost of Raising Funds £	Refuge Provision £	Advocacy £	Integrated services £	Outreach and Floating Support £	National Domestic Abuse Helpline £	Public Information £	Specialist Support Services £	2021/22 Total £
Direct Costs including Operational Support	2,979,053	6,780,056	3,159,255	3,509,693	1,163,569	1,891,938	856,759	23,872	20,364,195
Support Costs	343,131	2,046,489	844,556	485,751	329,838	389,769	490,597	3,911	4,934,042
	3,322,184	8,826,545	4,003,811	3,995,444	1,493,407	2,281,707	1,347,356	27,783	25,298,237

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	16,897,547	14,341,315
Temporary staff	1,205,243	629,113
Consultants	1,665,733	673,307
Other staff costs	827,636	846,886
Property costs	2,383,028	2,645,058
Equipment costs	25,610	11,176
Telephone	532,153	545,030
Audit	44,997	29,520
Depreciation and amortisation	287,388	167,576
Other costs	6,186,598	5,409,256
	30,055,933	25,298,237

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

12. Staff Costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	14,520,247	12,388,377
Staff benefits	57,069	45,600
Social security costs	1,501,437	1,199,810
Pension costs	818,794	707,528
	16,897,547	14,341,315

These include Redundancy and termination payments of £231,075 (2022: £179,449).

The number of employees, analysed by operating activities, during the year was:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
Refuge provision	114	101
Advocacy	88	66
Integrated Services	77	70
Outreach and Floating Support	27	34
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	43	44
Public information	10	11
Specialist services	-	4
Other Refuge services	56	26
	415	356

The number of employees whose remuneration (including benefit in kind but excluding employers' National Insurance and employers' pension contributions) was in excess of £60,000.

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	9	-
£70,001 - £80,000	3	2
£80,001 - £90,000	2	2
£120,001 - £130,000	2	1
	16	5
	2023	2022
	£	£
Employers' Pension contributions in respect of employees whose remuneration was in excess of £60,000 during the year	69,243	36,057

The remuneration paid to the key management personnel of Refuge (the Chief Executive, the Director of Technology, the Director of Fundraising and Communications, the Director of Corporate Services, the Director of People and Culture, Director of Service Delivery, Director of Strategic Insights and Partnerships and Interim Director Operational Change) was:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Emoluments (including pension contributions, employers' National Insurance, benefits in kind and termination payments)	829,534	743,736
Emoluments include amounts paid to the highest paid member of key management personnel (including employers' National Insurance, benefits in kind and termination payments but excluding pension contributions):	139,960	135,486

During the year 3 (2022: 2) members of the Board of Trustees received reimbursement of expenses totalling £984 (2022 - £312). No members of the Board of Trustees received any remuneration during the year (2022 -£Nil).

Remuneration Policy

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the pay and remuneration of key management personnel is reasonable and appropriate. Director salaries are determined annually by the People, Nominations and Remuneration Committee (PNRC). A separate policy outlines the approach to CEO pay which is capped relative to other salaries.



Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

13. Tangible Fixed Assets

Group and Charity	Freehold Property £	Leasehold Improvements £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost					
At 1 April 2022	34,173	100,743	584,766	672,344	1,392,026
Additions	-	-	6,288	58,305	64,593
At 31 March 2023	34,173	100,743	591,054	730,649	1,456,619
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2022	17,102	1,199	366,667	247,444	632,412
Charge for the year	683	21,188	57,070	129,776	208,717
At 31 March 2023	17,785	22,387	423,737	377,220	841,129
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2023	16,388	78,356	167,317	353,429	615,490
At 31 March 2022	17,071	99,544	218,099	424,900	759,614

14. Intangible Fixed Assets

Group and Charity	Website £	Software £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2022	312,614	126,367	438,981
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	312,614	126,367	438,981
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2022	89,142	124,206	213,348
Charge for the year	76,517	2,161	78,678
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	165,659	126,367	292,026
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2023	146,955	-	146,955
At 31 March 2022	223,472	2,161	225,633

Intangible assets held at the year end comprise the National Domestic Abuse Helpline website in addition to costs of software with long term use across the organisation for specific purposes such as fundraising CRM, rent register and accounting software.

15. Investments

a) Financial investments - Group and Charity

	2023 £	2022 £
Investments at market value at beginning of the year	674,589	661,954
Additions at cost	98,220	83,276
Disposal proceeds	(103,809)	(91,156)
Unrealised/Realised (losses)/gains	(63,635)	20,515
	605,365	674,589
Cash held with investment managers	36,372	34,433
	641,737	709,022
Market value at end of the year	641,737	709,022
Historic cost at end of the year	558,580	563,322
Comprising:		
Global fixed interest	97,403	113,204
UK equities and funds	149,757	176,127
Overseas equities and funds	300,885	326,587
Property	9,956	14,975
Alternatives	47,364	43,696
Cash	36,372	34,433
	641,737	709,022

All investments are listed on a recognised stock exchange.

There were no individual holdings the market value of which is considered to be material in the context of the portfolio as a whole.

b) Charity Investment in Trading Subsidiary

	2023 £	2022 £
Issued share capital	1	1

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

16. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2023 £	Group 2022 £	Charity 2023 £	Charity 2022 £
Trade Debtors	1,990,002	1,372,650	1,971,252	1,372,650
Bad debt provision	(49,184)	-	(49,184)	-
Prepayments	507,085	472,698	507,085	472,698
Rent deposit	42,860	201,377	42,860	201,377
Other Debtors	1,061,717	1,981,217	1,061,717	1,981,217
Intercompany Debtors	-	-	66,812	-
	3,552,480	4,027,942	3,600,542	4,027,942

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2023 £	Group 2022 £	Charity 2023 £	Charity 2022 £
Trade Creditors	2,495,228	2,769,565	2,495,228	2,769,565
Accruals	1,178,399	1,158,539	1,172,459	1,158,539
Deferred income (note 18)	679,861	695,161	679,861	695,161
Other taxes and social security	391,879	374,205	391,879	374,205
Other Creditors	61,472	87,654	60,473	87,655
	4,806,839	5,085,124	4,799,900	5,085,125

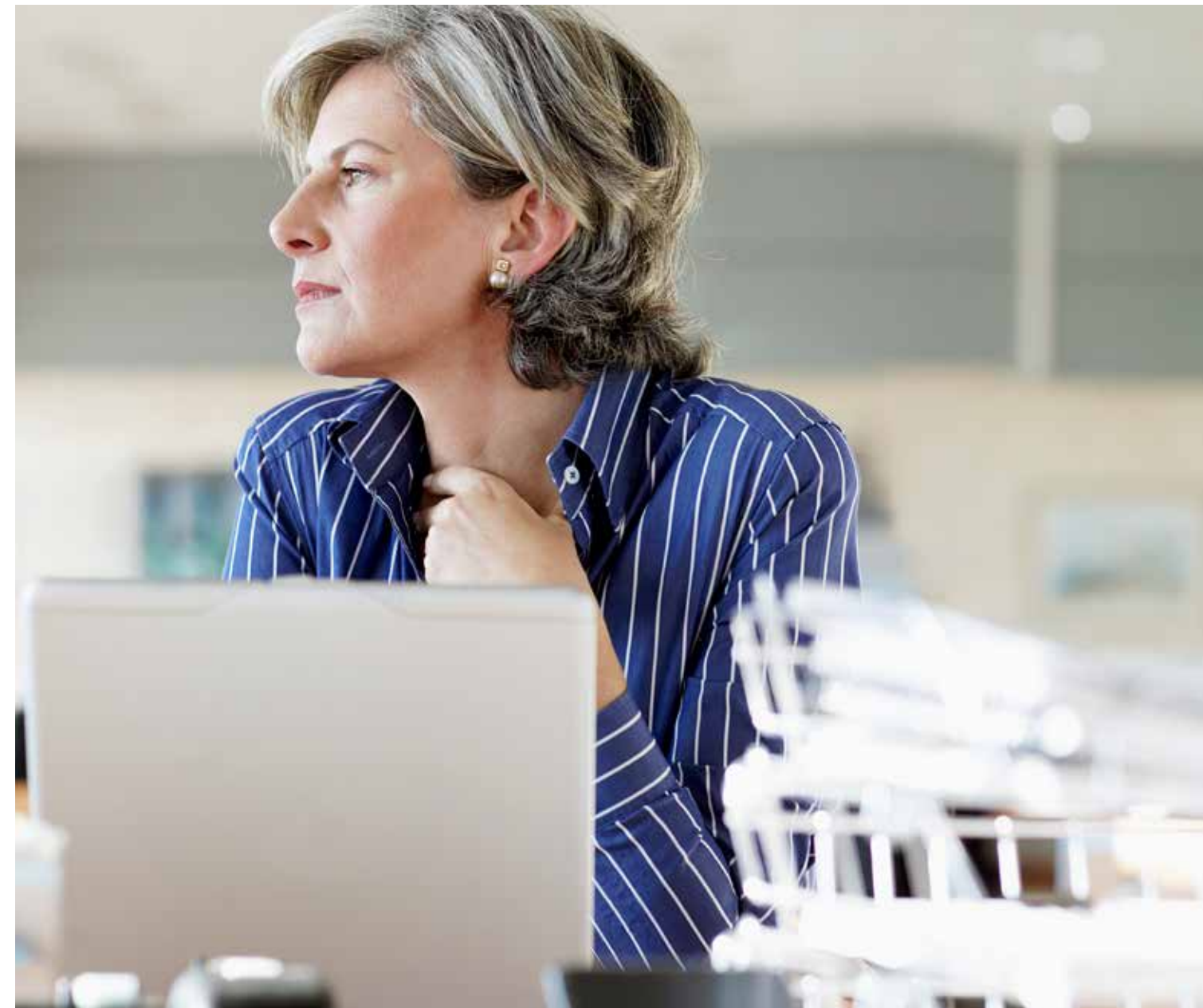
18. Deferred income

	Group 2023 £	Group 2022 £	Charity 2023 £	Charity 2022 £
Balance as at 1 April	695,161	1,056,820	695,161	1,056,820
Created in the year	1,016,882	3,666,074	1,016,882	3,666,074
Released in the year	(1,032,182)	(4,027,733)	(1,032,182)	(4,027,733)
Balance as at 31 March	679,861	695,161	679,861	695,161

19 Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2023 £	Restated 2022 £
Group and Charity		
Provision at beginning of the year	120,000	370,000
Created during the year	-	50,000
Released during year	-	(300,000)
Balance at the end of the year	120,000	120,000

The total provision brought forward of £120,000 relates to a dilapidations provision of £50,000 in accordance with the terms of the lease of the head office and a further £70,000 which relates to estimated future deficits concerning Refuge's Admitted Body Status of Hertfordshire LGPS scheme, a final salary scheme for one ex-employee. The rent creditor of £120,165 included in the comparative in last year's financial statements has been reanalysed to accruals in these financial statements.



Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

20. Unrestricted Funds

20. Unrestricted Funds										At			
		1 April								31 March			
Group and charity -		2022		Incoming		Outgoing		Transfers		2023			
Current year		£		£		£		£		£			
General		10,420,140		18,695,739		(22,954,009)		2,241,924		8,403,794			
Designated													
Property Fund		360,000		-		-		(360,000)		-			
Quality Assurance Fund		112,000		-		-		(112,000)		-			
Automation Fund		50,000		-		-		(50,000)		-			
Performance Improvement Fund		2,482,369		-				(2,482,369)		-			
Fixed Asset Fund		-		-				762,445		762,445			
		13,424,509		-		18,695,739		-		(22,954,009)	-	-	9,166,239

Group and Charity - Prior Year	1 April				At
	2021	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	31 March
	£	£	£	£	2022
					£
General	10,414,166	19,828,845	(19,822,871)	-	10,420,140
Designated	3,837,073		(832,704)	(3,004,369)	0
Property Fund		-	-	360,000	360,000
Quality Assurance Fund		-	-	112,000	112,000
Automation Fund		-	-	50,000	50,000
Performance Improvement Fund		-		2,482,369	2,482,369
	14,251,239	- 19,828,845	- (20,655,575)	- -	13,424,509

General funds

These funds are available for Refuge's general purposes

Designated funds

The Board has created a new designated Fixed Asset Fund in 2022/23 to hold the balance of all tangible and intangible fixed assets separately from general funds. This reflects the fact that these assets are not available to be expended in the same way general funds are, as they are utilised in Refuge's day-to-day operations and are not readily realisable as cash.

In 2021/22, four designated funds were created to set aside funds for innovation in service delivery, the strengthening of support infrastructure, diversification of income streams and repairs of leased and owned properties. During 2022/23, the decision was taken to manage this ongoing spend through general funds. This will enable Refuge to continue these closely interlinked activities under a broader umbrella, thus reducing the administration around tracking separate and often overlapping funds.

21. Restricted Funds

	1 April				31 March
Group and charity - Current year	2022	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Refuge provision	504,184	1,002,964	(1,356,692)	-	150,456
Outreach and Floating Support	31,833	2,113,648	(2,038,853)	-	106,628
Integrated Services	15,191	722,559	(737,750)	-	-
Big Lottery Fund	-	-		-	-
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	327,815	1,765,787	(2,020,508)	-	73,094
Specialist Services	-	-	-	-	-
Advocacy	142,858	1,041,235	(965,657)	-	218,436
Others	-	46,099	(46,099)	-	-
	1,021,881	6,692,292	(7,165,559)	-	548,614

	1 April				31 March
Group and Charity - Prior Year	2021	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Refuge provision	543,263	766,661	(805,740)	-	504,184
Outreach and Floating Support	40,335	1,250,738	(1,259,240)	-	31,833
Integrated Services	27,943	364,242	(376,994)	-	15,191
Big Lottery Fund	3,429	-	(3,429)	-	-
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	327,815	1,554,518	(1,554,518)	-	327,815
Specialist Services	-	27,783	(27,783)	-	-
Advocacy	230,616	527,200	(614,958)	-	142,858
	1,173,401	4,491,142	(4,642,662)	-	1,021,881

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

22. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Group and charity - Current year	Unrestricted	Restricted	
	Funds	Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	615,490	-	615,490
Intangible fixed assets	74,007	72,948	146,955
Financial Investments	641,738	-	641,738
Net current assets	7,955,004	475,666	8,430,670
Provisions	(120,000)	-	(120,000)
	9,166,239	548,614	9,714,853

Group and Charity - Prior year	Unrestricted	Restricted	
	Funds	Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	759,614	-	759,614
Intangible fixed assets	117,669	107,964	225,633
Financial Investments	709,022	-	709,022
Net current assets	11,958,204	913,917	12,872,121
Provisions	(120,000)	-	(120,000)
	13,424,509	1,021,881	14,446,390

23. Commitments

At the year-end the company had future minimum lease commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below:

	2023	2023	2022	2022
	Land and	Other	Land and	Other
	Buildings		Buildings	
	£		£	£
Up to one year	457,445	1,404	575,952	1,537
Between one and five years	231,316	2,106	559,371	-
Later than five years	-	-	-	-
	688,761	3,510	1,135,323	1,537

Operating lease costs in the year amounted to £510,281 (2022: £665,914) in respect of land and buildings and £25,610 (2022: £8,703) in respect of other leases.

The figures for 2022 have been revised to reflect the minimum commitment due in line with the break clause in the Head Office agreement.

24 Related Party Transactions

During the year 3 trustees (2022: 2) received reimbursement of expenses totaling £984 (2022 - £1,583). Donations from trustees during the year were £NIL (2022: £NIL).

During the year the charity received income of £12,823 from its trading subsidiary for the use of charity staff, data and facilities and for the use of the charity logo. At the year end the trading company owed the charity £66, 812 (2022: £NIL).

25. Net income for the year is stated after charging

	2023	2022
	£	£
Depreciation (see Note 13)	208,717	98,099
Amortisation (see Note 14)	78,678	69,477
Auditors' remuneration		
- external audit	30,950	21,250
- Grant audit	-	2,500
Auditors' remuneration (net) prior year	1,264	-
Auditors' remuneration non-audit (net)	1,035	850
Tax review	984	2,444
Non recoverable VAT	6,650	4,920
Operating leases – property	510,281	665,914
Operating leases – other	25,610	8,703

26. Subsidiary Undertakings

Refuge has a wholly owned subsidiary, Refuge Trading Ltd, incorporated in the UK and registered in England with its registered office at One America Square, 17 Crosswall, London EC3N 2LB. The company registration number is 13799550. The purpose of Refuge Trading Ltd is to manage the corporate partnerships of the charity, including the use of the charity logo, and the sale of Refuge merchandise. Each year the distributable profits of Refuge Trading Ltd will be donated to Refuge under Deed of Covenant.

	2023	2022
	£	£
(a) Investment in Subsidiary Undertaking	1	1

Refuge's investment in Refuge Trading Ltd is £1, being the whole of the issued share capital of that company.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Total Income	28,750	-
Cost of Sales	(6,883)	-
	21,867	-
Admin Costs	(5,940)	-
Net Profit gifted to Refuge	(15,927)	-
Retained Profit for the year	-	-

At 31 March 2023 Refuge Trading Ltd had net assets and called up share capital of £1 (2022: £1).

Refuge
One America Square,
17 Crosswall, London,
EC3N 2LB

020 7395 7700

Refuge is the largest specialist provider of gender-based violence services in the country, supporting many thousands of women and children on any given day. Refuge opened the world's first refuge in 1971 in Chiswick and now provides: a national network of 44 refuges, community outreach programmes, child support services, and independent advocacy services for those experiencing domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence.

We also run specialist services for survivors of tech abuse, economic abuse, modern slavery and female genital mutilation.

Refuge runs the 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline which receives hundreds of calls and contacts from women experiencing domestic abuse every day and can be reached on 0808 2000 247.

www.refuge.org.uk
www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
www.refugetechsafety.org

REFUGE

England & Wales - Charity number 277424

Accounts



For women and children.
Against domestic violence.

One year in fifty

from one safe house to a movement

**Annual report and
financial statements
2021-2022**

Why we're here

2021-2022

“



1 in 4
women
experience
domestic abuse
during their
lifetime. ¹



No one told me being in a relationship would be the end of my mind, my independence, my ability to think, my self-worth. That it would be like being put into an open jail that you can't get out of and then faced by people who ignorantly ask

“Why did you not just leave? ”

To those I ask if they know what it feels like to live in constant fear? To constantly be watched, monitored, and stripped of all means to escape?

Until you have walked that path, never try to understand a woman who has been disempowered, because sometimes she herself does not know that she is being abused. Women, like me, normalise the abuse to SURVIVE until you cannot distinguish between abuse and normality because to you, in that black hole...there is no way out.

Anna

”



TWO
women
a week
are killed by their
current or
former partner. ²

1.ONS (2020), 'Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2020'.
2. ONS (2020), 'Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2019'.

Why we're here



To ensure all women and children experiencing domestic abuse in England can access the services they need and deserve – to have the opportunity to live their lives free from fear, safe from abuse and empowered to regain control of their lives.

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The world's very first refuge for women and their children escaping domestic abuse, known then as Chiswick Women's Aid, opened in 1971. This was a time when women lived with domestic abuse in silence. And when they were surrounded by silence. No one spoke about it. Few tried to understand it. Policy and provision were almost non-existent.

Domestic abuse can be difficult to recognise. It's complex. And it's becoming even more so. Perpetrators are finding new ways to control, harass and intimidate women. So what we do demands expertise as well as dedication. And we've worked hard to build both over 50 years. We've developed and expanded our services, from refuges to community support to specialist guidance.

We've raised awareness, challenged attitudes and campaigned for changes in law and policy. And we continue to collaborate across our sector.

What started as one safe house has grown into a survivor-led movement.

We are proud of our part in it.

Why we're here



Message from our chair Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

A year of transformation

This year, we're seeing the pandemic's longer-term impact on women's experience of domestic abuse. We've reflected on what we've learned in our 50 years, consolidating our experience and expertise in how we work. And we've looked ahead, responding and adapting to tackle the new, complex ways that domestic abuse reveals itself. We're doing what we can to equip and resource Refuge to be effective for the next 50 years.

For the women and children who so desperately need our help, COVID-19 isn't over.

The increase in need we saw during the UK lockdowns is ongoing and demand continues to be above pre-pandemic levels. And many women are still dealing with domestic abuse while experiencing periods of isolation, at a time when friends, family and neighbours are returning to life as 'normal'.

However, more people are now talking about domestic abuse.

There is far greater awareness of its warning signs. Women are looking for help sooner. The creative ways we reached out to the public and to policy makers during COVID-19 have led to permanent, positive changes. Since 2018-19, Refuge's voluntary income has increased threefold, affording us more independence and stability as an organisation.

Government funding and support has reached levels never seen before, though it's still nowhere near where it needs to be. We're hopeful this response and investment will become the long-term, ring-fenced funding our sector badly needs.

Our partnerships with other agencies are more solid than ever. We're lobbying with one voice, collaborating on best practices, and signposting our services to survivors.

I'm deeply proud that we've welcomed seven survivor ambassadors to the Refuge family, recognising the incredible contribution that many of our survivors have made over many years. They are courageous and selfless in sharing their experiences and ensuring others are aware of the help Refuge offers. They join our committed and passionate group of high profile Ambassadors, many of whom have supported Refuge for many years

And I'm encouraged that the supporters, funders and partners who stepped up during the worst of the pandemic have stayed with us – they recognise the need is ongoing. We were thrilled to be joined by so many of them at a milestone event, hosted by Her Royal Highness, The Duchess of Cornwall in January. Together with politicians, lawyers, funders, colleagues from Refuge and across our sector – and our new survivor ambassadors – we marked the 50 years since we opened the world's first refuge and acknowledged the work we need to do together over the next 50.

COVID-19 has changed us too.

Like many other organisations, we have only recently come together as a whole – in the same room – for the first time in years. And the energy this has ignited is reflected in the transformation we're going through. Our staff are collaborating through new groups and forums. Our volunteers are contributing their insights in our training events. Everyone has been invited to share their perspectives in our strategy. We are becoming a more cohesive and inclusive organisation. The scale and pace of change we've gone through has been phenomenal. And it's all so we can ensure that survivors get high-quality help when they need it.

I'm incredibly proud of our whole team.

They continue to give their passion, drive and perspectives to our work. Our new strategy has been built from the bottom up with the involvement of survivors, supporters, volunteers and staff. It's a game changer and it's sharpening our focus. Our services haven't changed, but we are giving even greater attention to ensuring that every woman and child gets the quality of service they deserve from us. Whilst also putting partnership working, building an inclusive and empowering culture, and survivor-led campaigning at the heart of how we work.

"In 1971, when we opened the world's first refuge, society didn't recognise the problem we were working to remove.

50 years on, people are talking about domestic abuse. There is far greater awareness of its warning signs. Women are reaching out for help sooner. We're changing the debate.

But the problem is still with us. Together we have the will and commitment to stop it'."

We've continued to invest in the National Domestic Abuse Helpline with a focus on improving access, responding with more languages, and launching British Sign Language interpretation. And we are proud to have a team of almost 100 volunteers supporting the Helpline service, bringing a diversity of insight and experience that strengthens the whole of Refuge.

In 1971, when we opened the world's first refuge, society didn't recognise the problem we were working to remove. No one spoke about domestic abuse. In the 50 years since, our work has gone beyond providing services and support. Across our sector we've built and shared an understanding of the complexities of domestic abuse. This has prepared us to respond to the new ways that coercive control can manifest itself. We're better equipped to empower women to protect themselves from the evermore complex, pervasive and dark nature of technological abuse. And we're relentless in sharing our understanding with tech companies to help them build protection into their products.

We are alert and we're learning.

As we face our next 50 years, we'll continue to anticipate the different forms domestic abuse will take. We'll continue to develop the practical solutions our survivors deserve and lobby for the protection they need. And – together with our survivors, supporters and partners – we'll continue to work towards a society that believes it is unacceptable to experience domestic abuse.

Why we're here



Message from our chief executive Ruth Davison

Post-covid things still feel bleak

Women and children who need support are facing even more barriers than before. Financial barriers to leaving. Barriers to accessing services that are struggling to cope with demand. And emotional barriers triggered by ongoing reports of violence against women, failings in police responses, and government tolerance of inappropriate behaviour.

The pandemic may be easing. But this epidemic of violence against women and girls is ongoing. It is more visible now. But it's not yet fully embraced by society as something we will not tolerate. And society has yet to develop services at the scale and quality women need.

Our staff and volunteers are incredible.

Everyone continues to step up, pouring a huge amount of themselves into our work. Everyone continues to show empathy and understanding, even when the pace is exhausting.

As leaders we're trying to support our staff, volunteers and survivors as best we can. We're all in this together. And we're a survivor-led organisation – we're shaping our strategy and decisions based on what survivors tell us they need.

Our supporters are unbelievably generous.

The thin silver lining to the horror of this pandemic is that people's understanding of

domestic abuse has increased. Empathy has increased. Supporters are engaging with us in greater numbers – amplifying our campaigns, mobilising behind young survivors, calling for policy change and helping us change the law.

We're still reliant on the ongoing generosity of the public – because frontline services are not funded in the way they need to be – and we're incredibly grateful to every person who has made a donation, taken an action or shared our messaging. We couldn't do this without you.

The year's highlights and challenges.

The law change brought by Erica Osakwe, one of our survivor ambassadors, will have an enormous impact, extending the 6-month charging and sentencing limit to give women more time to report common assault. So will the Home Secretary's decision to make violence against women and girls a national policing priority, on a par with fighting terrorism, child sexual abuse and serious and organised crime. Millions of women will be better protected and have greater access to justice as a result of these changes.

We are also grateful this year for increased funding for safe accommodation. However, funding shortfalls mean there are still not enough refuge spaces. And there is still no statutory funding for community-based services. Some of the highest-risk survivors we support are women who are choosing to hold their perpetrator accountable and pursue justice through the courts without leaving their home and their community. There is still woefully inadequate funding for this very high-risk work.

Domestic abuse is changing. We are too.

Online abuse is now a part of almost every case we work with. But it's still poorly understood. Many in the police and the criminal justice system still don't understand that domestic abuse is a conscious pattern of behaviour, not a one-off incident. There's even less understanding of how abuse is perpetrated online and through the use of technology.

We are still the only specialist provider with a dedicated tech abuse team. It's an incredible service, overstretched and almost entirely funded by voluntary income. But now, so many women we support are experiencing multiple forms of tech abuse: control of their finances, stalking of their accounts, online abuse, sabotage of their social media or tracking their location. So ramping up our tech abuse services and working to influence the Online Safety Bill are both priorities.

“Ultimately, we need to work together to change society.

Our vision for the next 50 years is world where domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is not tolerated – where women and children can live in safety and free from fear”

Our other priority is children. Two thirds of the residents in our refuges are children. And they are now recognised as victims and survivors of domestic abuse in their own right. But there is little understanding of their needs. There is still no statutory provision for them and the need for child support workers is urgent.

The legacy of the last 50 years.

In 1971 the world's first refuge – a single house – was opened. Since then, we've seen the building of a movement. It's driven by specialist organisations, led by and for women, working to support the specific needs of survivors. Cross-sector work is critical. Together, we have incredible insight, experience and expertise. As we grow, in response to the need of women and children, it's our job to ensure that the movement grows with us. We will continue to collaborate. And we'll continue to work alongside survivors as they step forward and support each other.

The work ahead.

Women are dying as a result of male violence. It must stop. Women's lives are being cut short – their control, their choice, their ability to create futures for themselves and their children. Violence against women and girls is at epidemic levels and there is much work to do.

We will continue to call for the protection that women need in society: in law, in the response from police, in their experience of the criminal justice system. Ultimately, we need to work together to change attitudes. We need to continue to challenge policy and improve practice. We all need to call out unacceptable behaviour. We all need to prevent it happening.

Our vision for the next 50 years is of a world where domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is not tolerated, and where women and children can live in safety and free from fear.

Why we're here



Message from our new survivor ambassador

Erica Osakwe

“I never wanted to be seen as victim, I’m a survivor and now I’m a law changer. I’m so proud of my journey and was delighted to work with Refuge, as well so many brave survivors.

Together we are more powerful, our voices are louder , and we can bring about real change for women and girls. ”

My journey started with my own experience of abuse and assault as a teenager.

For me, as for many women, it was hard enough to process the experience, let alone come forward to report it. After about three years I went public. I spoke up. And, hearing other people’s stories, I began to understand the magnitude of what I’d been through.

The police approached me and offered their support. Despite my initial reluctance, they assured me they would do what they could to ensure I received justice. I agreed to report the abuse I’d experienced.

The process of reporting a serious crime is gruelling.

Weeks of waiting. Hours of painstakingly replaying the details of each incident of abuse – of remembering events, locations and witnesses. And then, for me, months of further waiting, only to learn that my report had been incorrectly filed and was lost. The police encouraged me to repeat my report. At first I refused to go through the gruelling process again. They persuaded me to brief them by phone.

Then the police told me there was nothing they could do.

Because the crime perpetrated against me was considered to be Common Assault, prosecution had to start within six months of the offence. I was told it was too late. I had timed out. And that was it. To this day I have never heard back from the police. No follow up. No support. No closure. No help at all.

I had to take action.

I decided to change the law. My aim was simple, to change the six-month time limit on reporting Common Assault for victims of domestic abuse.

I couldn’t understand how someone could have long, historic experiences of abuse, finally come out of it, finally escape, seek support, get guidance, come forward to report, and be too late to access justice. For most victims, working through this process can take years. Many take years even to realise that what we’ve experienced is abuse. It just didn’t make sense. It felt inhumane. And that’s what drove my campaign, **Victims Too.**

So I sent my petition to the Petitions Committee in Parliament.

It went live. I needed a following. I messaged, emailed, called, connected. And I realised, even if I didn’t change the law, my campaign was raising awareness of the six-month time limit, so that other people could make the right decision for themselves.

In the first two months I had 2,000 signatures. And my conversations with other survivors gave me the momentum to keep going. Suddenly it wasn’t only about me. It was about preventing others having the same experience I’d had.

“Just don’t give up. You deserve more. You can give yourself more.”

Then we all heard about the horrific murder of Sarah Everard. The day before, my petition had 11,000 signatures. The day after, it had 55,000. People understood what it meant to seek justice. And they came together to push the petition toward the 100,000 needed for it to be considered for debate in Parliament.

My petition concluded with over 60,000 signatures. Then MP Yvette Cooper stepped in. She understood that abuse should not be treated as a one-off incident. She saw the opportunity to address the time limit with the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. She championed it through the House of Commons. Refuge, the Centre for Women’s Justice and Women’s Aid brought their expertise and their social media audiences to propel the campaign.

The BBC reported on the number of people who had been timed out of accessing justice – and therefore the number of perpetrators who had evaded justice. And I was beyond grateful to receive the Marie Claire Future Shapers ‘Women’s Rights Defender’ award in 2021, boosting my campaign even further.

Victims now have longer to report common assault.

The Bill, which contained a change to the length of time survivors have to report within, received Royal Assent in April this year.

But this is just the first step. Domestic abuse is intricate and complex. Policy and practice should reflect this.

Charities like Refuge are for people like us. I am thrilled to be one of their survivor ambassadors – to speak out about my experience, to listen to other survivors, and to help amplify all our voices.

Why we're here

2021-2022 at a glance

We maintained our life-changing services at full pace, supporting 26,439 survivors and children.

1,777 accessed our refuge provision
24,662 were supported in our community-based services

Demand for our National Domestic Abuse Helpline continues to be above pre-pandemic levels

13,000 callers each month with:
•73% from people seeking information and support
•10% with police, social workers and healthcare staff
•10% with concerned friends, family members or neighbours
46,153+ average website visits per month
9,297 live chats
24/7 support in all languages maintained

Our specialist services helped survivors and children with complex needs

84% had experienced psychological abuse
59% had experienced physical abuse, with one third injured when they accessed our full services
40% had their lives threatened by their abuser
28% had experienced sexual violence
40% had experienced abuse involving technology
39% had experienced economic abuse
19% had mental health difficulties
14% disclosed needs related to prescription medication, 15% to drugs and 4% to alcohol
11% said they were feeling suicidal by the time they reached out to us
6% had no recourse to public funds with:
•437 dealing with complex immigration cases, up 12% from last year
•88 victims of modern slavery

We continued to make a difference to survivors' safety and wellbeing

We maintained 306 units of safe accommodation within 43 refuges across 14 local authorities
We received 18,743 community-based referrals and 1,140 accommodation referrals
We supported survivors through the charging of 226 perpetrators and 206 guilty verdicts

Our supporters campaigned alongside us

85,243 individuals took action to support our work
118 companies collaborated with us
7 survivor ambassadors shared their experiences and helped us widen our audience
Our social media content was seen 10.5 million times with:
•4.9 million Twitter post impressions
•2.7 million TikTok views
•1.4 million Instagram post impressions
•967,000 Facebook post impressions
•484,000 LinkedIn post impressions

Domestic abuse demands a response from the whole of society, not just services like ours.

How will we know this response is happening? And making a real difference?

When every woman can recognise domestic abuse sooner.

When she can access support the moment she needs it.

When her perpetrator is held to account.

When she is helped to recover and get her life back quickly.

When we, as a society, make it unacceptable to experience domestic abuse.

We need to keep the pressure on. Together.

Our funders helped us deliver more than we can with limited statutory funding

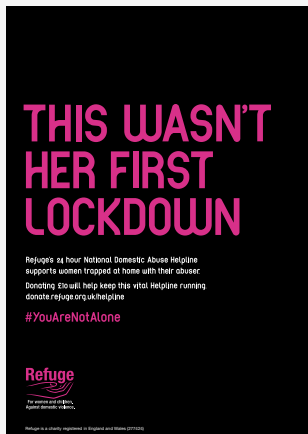
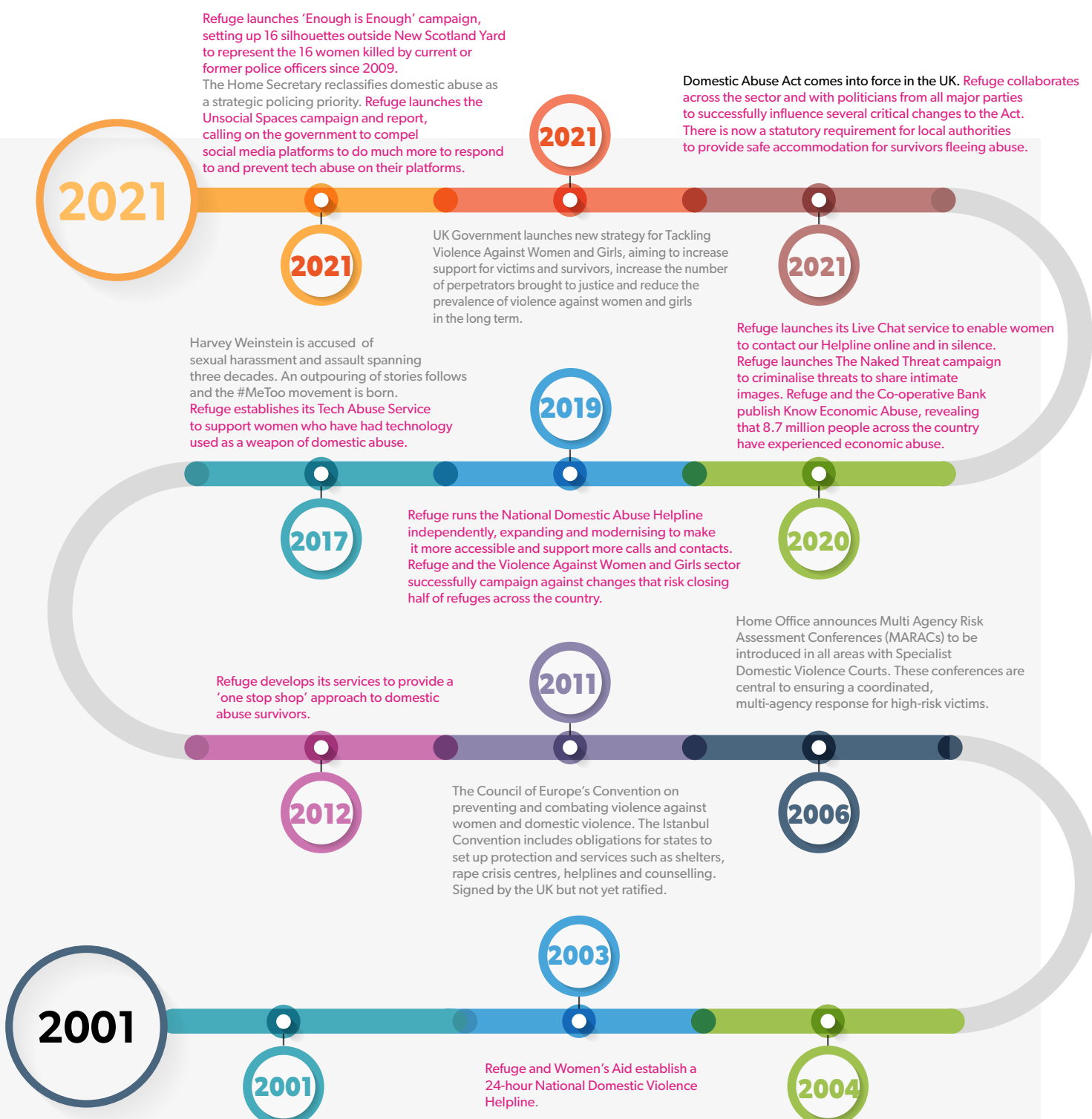
We spent 87p in every £1 on our life-changing frontline services and surrounding costs.

We raised £10,110,107 in voluntary income. £97,000 in pro bono legal time was donated by partners. 36,048 people signed up to a fundraising event.



Why we're here

50 years at a glance



Working together to end domestic abuse

Every single day, a woman takes the first step to access support, or is safer, or able to escape, or still alive, because of what we do.

We know we deliver real change for women and girls when we:

- deliver high quality services
- drive changes in policy and legislation
- raise awareness and challenge attitudes.

We don't do this alone. We can't do this alone.

Our staff and volunteers are incredible. They have phenomenal insight, expertise and empathy. But the support that women and children deserve depends on much more than our own hard work and dedication.

Our work is strengthened by the courage and selflessness of our ambassadors – survivors and celebrities. It is fuelled by the enthusiasm and persistence of our supporters. It is sustained by the commitment and generosity of our funders. And it is informed by the insight and expertise of our partners across our sector.

Here are the highlights from our work together this year.

Our priorities this year

1. Ensure we deliver high-quality services for women and children facing domestic abuse.
2. Ensure our workforce is happy and healthy.
3. Galvanise society to realise our vision by developing our engagement strategy.
4. Continue to develop our equality, diversity and inclusion work.
5. Agree a clear and ambitious focus for Refuge.
6. Continue to strengthen our governance and leadership



“

Refuge saved my life. When I called the National Domestic Abuse Helpline in January 2015, I didn't know how I was going to be able to flee my abusive partner. I'd lived in fear for years, not knowing who to turn to. Going into a refuge saved my life. It provided safety for me when I needed it most. It provided me the first step to the rest of my life.

I am forever thankful.

”

Natasha

Priority 1

Ensure we deliver high-quality services for women and children facing domestic abuse

Our 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline

We know that some women need extra help. Women with disabilities are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse and typically subject to abuse for longer than non-disabled women. So in May 2021 we launched video call access to Helpline Advisors via a British Sign Language interpreter. We also enhanced our website with screen reader compatibility, improved keyboard accessibility and three frequently needed languages. We're striving to achieve Level AAA conformance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

We're also responding to the growing number of young survivors contacting our live chat service about domestic and sexual abuse from peers. We've increased our training for our Helpline volunteers and streamlined our referral pathway to our tech and economic abuse services



Since opening our first safe house 50 years ago, our specialist refuge staff continue to give women time and space to make decisions about their futures. They are on hand to provide one-to-one emotional and practical support. And they advocate for survivors to supplement and support existing local services.

This year we're working even more closely with local partners to enhance our refuge services and deliver housing advocacy. We've joined ten other specialist sector partners to deliver trauma-informed, survivor-led support next year for women in safe accommodation across London.



Working together to end domestic abuse

Priority 1

Ensure we deliver high-quality services for women and children facing domestic abuse

Our community-based support

Many women don't need emergency refuge accommodation. They need confidential, practical and emotional support in their own home or in a safe place in their community. And they need it throughout the process of dealing with domestic abuse – from making themselves and their children safe, to navigating the legal system, to rebuilding their lives.

We continue to support women whenever and wherever they need it: in their own homes, at our offices, or at local community drop-in centres. And our outreach workers provide tailored services, drawing on expertise on safety and housing, police and legal support, the civil and criminal courts, welfare rights, grants and loans, finances and debt, access to employment or training, gender-based violence services and culturally-specific language services.

Our specialist services

We are proud to be the sector leader in combating tech abuse. Our 40 tech champions, supported by 7 specialist staff, are trained to empower women with the knowledge to protect themselves online.

In May 2021 we launched our Tech Safety website offering easy-to-follow guidance on how to secure common devices and accounts. Created with survivors, the website includes a chatbot in multiple languages offering real-time, automated guidance.

In October 2021 we followed up with our Home Tech interactive tool, developed with Avast, showing how to secure the ten connected home devices most commonly reported by women experiencing tech abuse.



1 in 6 women (16%) said that the online abuse they suffered came from an intimate partner or former partner.



“Refuge helped me so much, their tech team were brilliant, they helped me understand tech abuse and secure my devices.”

Women should not be forced offline but empowered to use our tech safely and free from abuse.

Amy

”

Working together to end domestic abuse

Priority 2

Ensure our workforce is happy and healthy

Our greatest assets – our people

Our people – staff and volunteers – are phenomenal. They are our source of energy, creativity and dedication. They live our values – day in, day out – in everything they do.

Women’s need for support remains above pre-pandemic levels. And this year our team has continued to meet that growing demand, offering support to many thousands of women and children every day. And they’ve done so with empathy and understanding.

As an organisation, we’re responding by trying to support our staff, volunteers and survivors as best we can. We’re all in this together. We’re responding by trying to listen even more to each other.

We’re shaping our strategy and decisions based on what survivors tell us they need. And we continue to review our systems and processes so that our people can deliver their best work and offer the highest quality support to the women and children who need us.

- We have supported the move to hybrid working, providing a range of homeworking, wellbeing and educational resources to staff. We’ll maintain hybrid working, wherever possible.

- We’ve delivered a range of training for employees across 154 training courses. And we’ve relaunched the RQF Level 3 Supporting Survivors of Domestic Abuse qualification, registering 13 learners, 5 new assessors and 3 new internal quality assurers.
- Thanks to a generous donation from Barclays, we’ve funded wellbeing sessions to support our staff in building resilience and learning how to self-care in the workplace and working from home. We’ve also offered knowledge-based courses run by Mental Health First Aid England.
- We’ve changed our Employee Assistance Programme to give staff and their dependents an enhanced service. From April 2022 it now includes eight counselling sessions per year, full triage and assessment, unlimited 24/7/365 confidential telephone support, legal information, debt advice and a family advice line.
- Having identified clinical supervision as a priority, we have now partnered with the British Red Cross. Monthly group sessions for all frontline staff started in February 2022, with quarterly sessions for all volunteers and non-frontline staff running from April 2022.



TRANSFORM EMPOWER FEMINIST EXPERT

Our values

Our greatest assets are our people, their dedication, energy and creativity.

Working together to end domestic abuse

Priority 3

Galvanise society to realise our vision by developing our engagement strategy

Changing policy

Domestic abuse is the context of many other crimes against women and girls, including 36% of stalking and harassment cases and 19% of sexual offences. It is the most prevalent form of violence against women and girls, relating to around one in five homicides. In England and Wales 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. Two women a week will die. Yet only 8% of recorded domestic abuse crimes were charged or summonsed in 2020-21.

The 2021 Domestic Abuse Act came into force at the start of this year, concluding years of work across the women's sector. It contained many provisions that we had campaigned for: the duty of local authorities to commission domestic abuse safe accommodation, the recognition of economic abuse, the abolition of the 'rough sex' defence, the criminalising of non-fatal strangulation and the threat to share intimate images. However, the Act failed to make provision to protect migrant women and to amend aspects of Universal Credit payment arrangements that can exacerbate economic abuse.

Our work immediately shifted to the passage of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill through parliament. Horrified by the rape and murder of Sarah Everard by a Metropolitan Police Officer, and by the ongoing epidemic of violence against women and girls, we pushed even harder for change.

We welcomed the report in September 2021 of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, identifying failings in police engagement with women and girls and demanding a whole system approach.

A month later we launched our 'Enough is Enough' campaign, in the wake of high-profile homicide cases, calling on the Home Secretary to put action behind her words on tackling violence against women and girls. Setting up 16 silhouettes outside New Scotland Yard, to represent the 16 women killed by current or former police officers since 2009, we achieved 212 press articles across 157 outlets with a potential reach of over 2 billion. Following our campaign, violence against women and girls is now a national policing priority, on a par with terrorism, child sexual abuse and serious and organised crime. The police are now required to increase their response to violence against women and girls, and actively try to prevent it.

We know that robust regulation is also needed in response to the use of technology as a tool of domestic abuse. However, the current failure of the Online Safety Bill to reference women and girls misses a huge opportunity to help women experiencing tech abuse. Our report Unsocial spaces in October 2021 formed the evidence base for our continuing work to influence this Bill.



Have experienced online abuse in their lives.



“ Women and girls across the world have increasingly voiced their concern at harmful, sexist, misogynistic and violent content and behaviour online. It is therefore important to acknowledge that the Internet is being used in a broader environment of widespread discrimination and gender-based violence against women and girls. ”

The UN Special Rapporteur on VAWG

Our partners

When we work together, we can challenge and change attitudes more easily, build our expertise and provide women with the support they need and deserve. This year we've strengthened our coalitions across our sector and formed new partnerships to do more.

Throughout the year we have worked closely with our local authority commissioners to ensure that our services meet the needs of survivors in their area. Our commissioners are vital. They help us access the additional funding we need to grow and develop our services and deliver a best practice response. And they advocate for us with elected members, bringing our work to life for them. In turn, we help local authorities strengthen their response to domestic abuse. We offer training for local professionals, advise on campaigns and contribute to strategic groups.

The launch of our Home Tech interactive tool in October 2021, in partnership with Avast, showed women how to secure the ten connected home devices most commonly reported by those experiencing tech abuse. To mark our 50th anniversary in November 2021, Fleishman Hillard partnered with us to create our Domestic abuse is getting smarter campaign.

Our tech abuse expertise contributed directly to the work of a multi-agency coalition including Carnegie UK, The End Violence Against Women Coalition, Glitch, NSPCC, Refuge, 5Rights and academics Lorna Woods and Clare McGlynn. Together we shaped and published the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Code of Practice. It sets out detailed guidance for all tech companies to help them understand and respond to the breadth of online violence against women and girls.

Written to put before the Online Safety Bill Committee in May 2022, the code will evolve as the Bill progresses through Parliament and establishes tech providers' legal obligations. If adopted, the UK would become the first country to hold tech companies to account on tackling online violence against women and girls. We will continue to lobby the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport for the implementation of a dedicated code of practice to regulate the response of tech and social media companies to online violence against women and girls.

In January 2022, our joint campaign with our survivor ambassador Erica Osakwe, Women's Aid Federation of England and the Centre for Women's Justice secured the extension of the Common Assault time limit from 6 months to 2 years, a huge win giving women and girls more time to seek justice.

Building on our earlier campaign and report, Know Economic Abuse, we fulfilled the commitment we made together with The Co-operative Bank to launch the Commission on Online Banking. With members including survivors, agencies, banks, MPs and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, we will conduct a collaborative, cross-sector review to identify and share good online banking practices and improvements.

More still needs to be done to raise awareness of violence against women, to increase survivors' confidence in reporting, to improve the police response and to speed up the criminal justice system. Until misogyny is recognised as a form of hate crime, judges are limited in their sentencing powers, and crime data cannot be recorded in a way that informs and changes practice.

Working together to end domestic abuse

Priority 3

Galvanise society to realise our vision by developing our engagement strategy

Raising awareness

During the pandemic, more of our lives moved online. Domestic abuse did too. And it's growing in its complexity and pervasiveness. We now see very few cases of domestic abuse that don't include some technological element. And we know there's a direct link between online stalking, the control of devices, and physical abuse and violence. So in November 2021, we used our 50th anniversary to put the spotlight on tech abuse.

- We created a compelling, multi-platform campaign, centred on a rug-pulling video advert.
- We shared the experiences of one of our survivor ambassadors.
- We drew attention to the importance of our work, 50 years on.
- We reached a total audience of over 62 million.

Our campaign encouraged many more calls to our National Domestic Abuse Helpline and contacts over social media. And many survivors got in touch wanting to share their experiences and support our work.



We reached an audience of 51,946,000 with 4 pieces of national coverage.

More than 25 celebrities and influencers reached out to 8,255,000 with 21 pieces of Instagram and Twitter coverage.

We reached 1,700,000 with 1 piece of broadcast coverage featuring one of our survivor ambassadors. 1 piece of regional coverage reached a further 500,000.

“ **I was so devastated. I don't even do any purchases online anymore. I used to use Amazon sometimes; I don't even do that anymore. I don't give out bank details. I'm quite cautious now. I don't bother with the dating stuff now, I've just deleted it. I don't want to do any of that.** ”

Willow



Police release CCTV after woman sexually assaulted on bus for 10 MINUTES

Avon and Somerset Police have released CCTV images of a man they want to speak to as they investigate the sexual assault of a woman on a bus in Bristol

Woman attacked with knife at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park

Thirty-nine-year-old taken to hospital after 'very distressing' incident in central London

PA Media

Mon 26 Jul 2021 07:36 BST

Challenging attitudes

Public awareness helps change public policy. And this year our celebrity supporters rallied around our ongoing efforts to influence two important pieces of government legislation.

In February 2022, famous faces including Olivia Colman, Sanjeev Bhaskar and Bronagh Waugh joined our ongoing call on the government to add misogyny to existing hate crime laws through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

The Newlove Amendment set out to give women and girls the same protections as others who are targeted solely because of who they are. Recognising misogyny as a hate crime would help identify trends, enable tougher sentences and give women more confidence in coming forward to report.

Our video highlights the everyday activities that women have to think about – and men don't – and the ways in which they are expected to change their behaviour. Our campaigning work on this issue continues.

In preparation for the second reading of the Online Safety Bill in April 2022, Georgia Harrison joined us in demanding rapid action on revenge porn.

Together we are calling for the Bill to acknowledge misogyny, misogynistic content and online abuse that specifically – and disproportionately – impacts women and girls.

We are also asking the government to include our cross-sector code of practice in the Bill, setting clear expectations for tech companies' response to online violence against women and girls.

Our dedicated supporters

We have always been fortunate in having the support of passionate, dedicated, high-profile individuals. And in recent years we've partnered with more talented celebrities and influencers. This year, many other supporters have spontaneously taken the initiative to share our campaigns on their social media.

Survivors' voices are at the heart of our work. Some bravely share their personal stories to strengthen our work. In November 2021, to mark our five decades and International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, we were proud to appoint seven survivor ambassadors: Amy Aldworth, Erica Osakwe, Hollie Woolford, Melanie Clarke, Natasha Saunders, and Melony and Hayden Slack.

“ **He'd send me voicemails - you can do that on Instagram. He made other accounts where he threatened to kill me and then he messaged my family on (social media). When I fell pregnant, that's when all his history come up. It still continued after the relationship ended, he's still trying to get in contact with me.** ”

Scarlett

Working together to end domestic abuse

Priority 3

Galvanise society to realise our vision by developing our engagement strategy

Our generous funders

We rely on the generosity of many – individuals, companies and charities. Some directly fund our work. Some partner with us and contribute their expertise. They are too many to mention, and some choose to remain anonymous. This year, the contributions of our funders and supporters include these highlights.

Barclays

Barclays has supported our tech abuse and our culturally specific services since 2020. Alongside this commitment, they’ve strengthened our IT cybersecurity infrastructure, publicised our National Domestic Abuse Helpline, and sponsored resilience and wellbeing initiatives for our staff.

Their strategic level support is transforming how our experts tackle economic abuse and support survivors. Our work together this year led to us winning the ‘Partnership with a National Charity’ category in the Better Society Awards in May 2022. We are grateful and excited to continue our partnership together.

Bonhams

To mark our 50th anniversary, in December 2021 Bonhams hosted our first ever art auction. The sale raised a total of £33,800 and featured works donated by leading contemporary artists including Maggi Hambling, Chris Levine, and The Connor Brothers.

We are incredibly grateful to Bonhams for holding the auction, to Olivia Hall who was instrumental in bringing together the collection, to all the artists who kindly donated pieces and to everyone who supported our work by making a purchase.

The National Lottery Community Fund

In February 2022, the National Lottery Community Fund committed £497,587 to our Eastern European Advocacy Service in West London from 2022 to 2025. Their generosity means that we can continue to provide specialist native-language support to Eastern European women and children who have experienced domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence including modern slavery and trafficking. 2022 marks the National Lottery Community Fund’s 10th year of support for the Eastern European Advocacy service, and we want to thank them for making the service what it is today.

Our Christmas Appeal 2021

This year we launched our first digital-only Christmas appeal. A series of holiday related emails were sent to over 100,000 of our supporters, with requests for funding and invitations to share our Helpline and complete polls. We received over 1,000 messages of support for the women in our services, raised over £120,000 and gained the momentum to launch a range of successful paid digital marketing. The appeal raised over £1.2m for our lifesaving services. And almost 900 new monthly gifts were set up, bringing in a combined yearly income of over £100,000.



Virtual challenge events

Our dedicated and passionate supporters, across the country, jumped in again this year with both feet. Taking on a variety of challenges from crochet, to runs and walks, to cold water swims, they inspired each other to raise £1.87 million for our work.

Charity of the year community programme

We continue to be grateful to those organisations that choose us to be their charity of the year, encouraging the engagement of their employees. This year, we promoted our 50th year, asking supporters to set themselves a challenge related to the number 50. These valuable partnerships raised £186,000 for our work. Lloyd’s Market Association and Savanta each raised over £10,000, with their employees taking part in a huge range of activities including photo competitions, marathons and Christmas card appeals.

Securing sustained funding

Across our sector, life-changing services continue to be funded voluntarily by charities, companies and generous individuals. Their support is needed and deeply appreciated. But it makes planning and delivery difficult and potentially precarious. We’ve continued to campaign together for statutory funding for safe accommodation and expert community services so that all women and children can access the support they need and deserve.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 cements the government’s commitment to a legal duty to fund emergency accommodation refuges. However, women’s need for support remains significantly above pre-pandemic levels and the commitment has yet to be met with adequate funding.

This commitment is needed across all the services that women approach for support and justice. In response to the launch of the Victims Bill consultation in December 2021, we called for statutory funding for vital community-based services and multi-agency partnership, the cornerstone of a victim-centred, trauma-informed response to violence against women and girls. Community support can help a woman remain in her own home safely. Robust, rapid police investigation, charging decisions and court trials can help her remain within the criminal justice system without fear.

The Home Office’s new Domestic Abuse Plan signals a welcome intention to fund specialist services. This commitment allows us to plan for growth and innovation in our National Domestic Abuse Helpline, so that all women can access support in the way they need it.

Domestic abuse is estimated to cost society at least £66 billion each year. And a decade of austerity has meant that frontline organisations are constantly facing a funding cliff edge. We continue to collaborate across our sector to campaign for funding to match need. Only when adequate, long-term, sustainable, ring-fenced funding is made available will all frontline services be able to ensure no woman or child is turned away from the specialist support they deserve.

Across our sector, life-changing services continue to be funded voluntarily, by charities, companies and generous individuals.

Working together to end domestic abuse

Priority 3

Galvanise society to realise
our vision by developing our
engagement strategy

Our thanks

To all our loyal supporters and generous partners. To the families of those who left a gift in their will. And to our ambassadors and donors. Your commitment to our cause is truly remarkable. We cannot continue to give women the high-quality support they deserve without your help.

Thank you.

A+E Networks
AMV BBDO
Avast
Avon Cosmetics Ltd
Banham Foundation
Barclays
BBC Children in Need
BBH
Benefit Cosmetics
Billie Piper
Brian Woolf Trust
Britain Thinks
Catriona Cannon
Charles Russell Speechlys
Christopher A. Holder
David Morrissey
Fiona Bruce
Fleishman Hillard
Harrison-Frank Family Foundation
Helen Mirren
Helena Kennedy
Hodge Jones & Allen
ICAP
Invesco

Izzy and Alexander Leslie
Jo Brand
Lily Safran
Lloyd’s Market Association
Mark Haddon and Sos Eltis
Marshall Wace
Masonic Charitable Foundation
McCann
Nationwide Building Society
Neil Amos
Old Possum’s Practical Trust
Olivia Colman
Patrick Stewart
PayPlan
Penny Appeal
Peter and Krystyna Holland
Picturehouse Cinemas
Ranvir Singh
Saffron Hocking
Savanta
Smt Vidyaben Patel
Stewarts Law LLP
The Alan Edward Higgs Charity
The Brook Trust
The Chillag Family Charitable Trust
The Co-Operative Bank
The Dahan Family Foundation
The Gloag Foundation
The Inner London Magistrates Courts Poor Box Charity
The John Coates Charitable Trust
The Olwyn Foundation
The Pye Foundation
Tina The Musical
Travers Smith
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP
Winella – Dr Chandra Sayal Fund
Zara McDermott



Working together to end domestic abuse

Priority 4

Continue to develop our equality, diversity and inclusion work

Every voice matters

Across our community, we have found new ways to attract a diversity of people to strengthen the whole of Refuge. And we're involving survivors, the public, volunteers and staff to ensure our work is accessible and inclusive for all the women and children we work with.

To meet the ongoing post-pandemic demand, our volunteer team has doubled, bringing an ever-wider range of experiences and insights to our National Domestic Abuse Helpline.

The work of our survivor ambassadors is broadening our reach and amplifying our messages. Their voices are helping us connect with more women and children who need our services.

Our staff forum is recruiting new members and meeting monthly to engage everyone's views on how we work. We have also established a range of employee network groups.

The unique perspectives and areas of expertise of our new trustees and independent sub-committee members are already contributing to the effectiveness of our board.

We have reviewed our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) monitoring categories to bring them in line with good practice. We've established our EDI steering group and network groups.

We have reviewed our induction process and training, introducing quarterly welcome events for new colleagues, and establishing mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training.

We aim to be a survivor-led organisation. Our plans and developments are informed by the needs of survivors. And we're transforming our approach, moving from consulting with survivors to genuine engagement with them. 50 years on, we continue to learn about the difference we make, the longer-term impact our services have on women's lives, and how we can keep improving what we do.



Working together to end domestic abuse

Priority 5

Agree a clear and ambitious focus

Sharpening our focus

This year, we’ve looked back over our five decades and responded to the pandemic’s more recent impact. We understand – better than ever – the new, complex ways that domestic abuse reveals itself and the devastating effect it has on women and their families.

These reflections strengthen our resolve to ensure that women and children receive the high-quality support they deserve. And we’ve reviewed our leadership structure to organise our experience and expertise around the services we know they need.

We have appointed a head of services to focus on delivering an excellent housing management response across our refuge accommodation. We are continuing to grow our National Domestic Abuse Helpline team to meet ongoing demand, provide consistent enhanced support, and strengthen our referral pathways to our refuge services and our tech and economic abuse teams.

A second newly appointed head of services will focus on our community-based, tech and economic abuse services. And we’re recruiting additional operational leaders into this team. We are the leading experts in supporting survivors through these increasingly prevalent forms of abuse. And we’re uniquely positioned to influence professionals, policy makers, legislators, technology and finance businesses.

A third head of services role for children and young people has been created, along with a children’s programme lead. Children are our largest client group, and now recognised as victims and survivors of domestic abuse in their own right, but there is no statutory provision for them. We want to demonstrate what it looks like to provide children with high-quality, dedicated services.

A fourth newly appointed head of services will focus on quality, measuring our performance and impact. They’ll gather the evidence we need to influence practice across our sector and policy across our society. A new services information database and reporting tools will support data-driven decision making across our services, empower our fundraising, and inform our external engagement work.



Priority 6

Continue to strengthen our governance

Setting our direction

All organisations have faced huge challenges in recent years. Our board of trustees have guided Refuge through with enthusiasm and commitment, helping to future proof us. We’re grateful to all our trustees for giving us their time, expertise and oversight.

This year, our approach to appointing trustees is part of our ongoing journey to increase diversity within Refuge. We’ve looked for unique perspectives, experiences and areas of expertise that add to the overall effectiveness of our board. All our trustees show a commitment to justice and to our feminist values that enhances our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion across Refuge.

Together we set an ambitious goal of achieving best-in-class governance and leadership. And our progress is well underway.

We’ve redesigned our organisation risk register and created a cross-Refuge risk group to update and manage the action plan arising from it.

We’ve introduced consistent reporting and a combined action tracker for our five committees and our board, set meeting dates well in advance, reviewed terms of reference, and strengthened reporting lines into our senior leadership team.

We’re sharing this transparency across our leaders, establishing clear terms of reference for our senior leadership team, extending leadership responsibilities by creating a senior management team and working groups, and deepening trust across all our leaders through active team building.

We’re introducing a new appraisal system. Currently in review, it includes 360-degree feedback and holds us to account for what we do and how we do it.

We’ve refreshed our articles of association, incorporated a Refuge trading subsidiary, successfully achieved BSI9001 reaccreditation, and ensured our alignment with all legislative and compliance requirements.

Together with survivors, staff and volunteers, our trustees and leadership team have used this significant year to take stock. We’ve adjusted to how life is, for us and the women we serve, post-pandemic. And we’ve grown and transformed as an organisation.

We’ve done this with an understanding of how domestic abuse is changing, what this means for women and children, and how society’s attitudes are shifting.

The result is our new three-year strategy.

Looking ahead

Our strategy for 2022-25

50 years ago we set up the world's first refuge – what's changed?

Domestic abuse is still the most prevalent form of violence against women and girls, relating to around one in five homicides. It is the context for many other crimes, including 36% of stalking and harassment cases and 19% of sexual offences. Yet only 8% of recorded domestic abuse crimes were charged or summonsed in 2020-21. We need even greater recognition of the extent of domestic abuse and the harm it causes.

It's time to stop thinking about domestic abuse as something that happens within the home.

Refuge has become the leader in combating tech abuse. We are the only frontline organisation with a specialist tech team. But the threat is growing. Ultimately, robust regulation is needed to ensure a strong response from tech companies and the criminal justice system. So we're working hard to maintain momentum around the Online Safety Bill. We need to grow our tech abuse services and we need to keep changing the debate.

Most of the people we support are children – they are two out of three residents in our refuges.

Recognising the huge and disproportionate impact domestic abuse has on children's lives – and doing more to respond to their needs as individuals – is a priority for us. We need to show what it looks like to support children. We need to make the case for specialist funding to provide child support workers in all refuges. We need to report the difference this can make in their lives.

Refuge is committed to a world where domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is not tolerated and where women and children can live in safety.

Refuge believes that domestic abuse and violence against women and girls will only end when we create gender equality.



Our priorities for 2022-2025

1. Provide emergency specialist accommodation, community-based and specialist support services
2. Deliver high quality services and set quality standards for domestic abuse services
3. Drive policy change to ensure sustainability of domestic abuse services.
4. Prevent violence against women and girls through awareness raising and changing harmful and pervasive societal attitudes
5. Build partnerships to share and grow our expertise and expand our impact.

Maintaining our momentum

To achieve our strategic priorities, we will:

1. Demonstrate and deliver the leadership, behaviours and culture that create a high performing and diverse workforce who are motivated and committed.
2. Deliver the strategic plan by improving infrastructure, systems and processes, and by ensuring good governance, impact and transparency.
3. Ensure survivors are at the heart of our work by strengthening our safeguarding, including in our user voice work, and delivering positive change and safe interactions for survivors accessing our services.
4. Fund our services by influencing and collaborating to enhance our service delivery, while mobilising the public to raise awareness and funds.

Expanding our movement

We are immensely proud of the way our frontline staff and volunteers support our survivors. We're deeply grateful to our ambassadors, our supporters and our funders for their courage, energy and commitment. And we're strengthened by the dedication and expertise of our partners. Together we're raising awareness and influencing policy makers. And, as a society, we're more ready to notice and call out abusive behaviours.

That's important. Public awareness helps change public policy. But, 50 years on, we're still facing a national challenge. We have to recognise violence against women and girls as one of the UK's biggest domestic crises.

We, as a society, should make it unacceptable to experience domestic abuse.

We need the will to stop it. We need a full public response.

This is the time to work together to prevent domestic abuse happening in our society.

Legal, administrative and governance matters

Administrative Details

Charity Number: 277424
Company Number: 1412276
Regulator of Social Housing Number: 4730

Principal Office:

One America Square, 17 Crosswall, London, EC3N 2LB

Auditors:

Moore Kingston Smith LLP, 9 Appold Street
London EC2A 2AP

Bankers:

HSBC Bank Plc, 281 Chiswick High Road, London, W4 4HJ
Barclays Bank Plc, 1 Churchill Place, London, E14 5HP

Investment Managers:

Charles Stanley & Co, 70-72 Chertsey Street, Guildford,
Surrey, GU1 4HL

Solicitors:

Weil Gotshal and Manges LLP, 1 South Place, EC2M 2WG
Bindmans LLP, 236 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1X 8HB
Bates Wells, 10 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BE
CMS Cameron McKenna LLP, 78 Cannon Street, EC4N 6AF
Winckwoth Sherwood LLP, Minerva House, 5 Montague
Close, London, SE1 9BB
Trowers & Hamlins LLP, The Senate, Southernhay Gardens,
Exeter, EX1 1UG
Radar Limited, Suite 4B, Platform, New Station Street,
Leeds, LS1 4JB
Family Law Matters Scotland LLP, Queens House, 19 St.
Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DT
Stewarts Law LLP, 5 New Street Square, London, EC4A 3BF

Structure, Governance and Management

Trustees, officers, and advisors

Under its Memorandum and Articles of Association, Refuge was originally incorporated as Chiswick Family Rescue on 30th January 1979 as a company limited by guarantee not for profit and not having share capital. The name was subsequently changed to Refuge on 5 March 1993.

It is a charity with a registered office at One America Square, 17 Crosswall, London, EC3N 2LB. On 13 August 2012 Refuge became a Registered Provider of Social Housing regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency. Trustees (who are also members of the charitable company) oversee Refuge’s policies and the execution of its activities. Trustees are appointed following a decision to appoint made by the Board of Trustees. Trustees may resign their membership by writing to the Chair of the Board.

The members of the Board of Trustees who held office during the year were:

Board:

Hetti Barkworth–Nanton (Chair)
Dheepa Balasundaram (Appointed 8 November 2021)
Andrea Daniels
Elizabeth Edwards
Katie Farrington (Resigned 22 March 2022)
Christine Higgins (Resigned 2 December 2021)
Ayanna Nelson (Appointed 22 March 2022)
Carolyn Pearson (Resigned 2 December 2021)
Jon Rowney (Appointed 6 July 2021)
Selina Sagayam
Ruth Smith
Kirsten Walkom
James Watson O’Neill (Appointed 6 July 2021, Resigned 22 March 2022)

Refuge has four committees with the following remit:

- **Audit and risk** (oversees risk and audit issues within the organisation and its subsidiaries)
- **Resources** (oversees corporate services, strategic insights and partnerships and fundraising and communications)
- **People, nomination and remuneration** (oversees senior leadership remuneration, Trustee and senior leader appointments and people strategies and policies)
- **Services and safeguarding** (monitors the services and safeguarding functions of the charity)

In terms of membership, each committee consists of three Trustees, one of whom acts as the committee chair. All committees except ARC have committee members who are subject matter experts.

Ambassadors:

Cherie Booth CBE QC
Jo Brand (Stepped down 4 March 2022)
Fiona Bruce
Olivia Colman CBE
Baroness Helena Kennedy QC
Dame Helen Mirren
Sir Patrick Stewart OBE

Chief Executive

Carole Easton (Appointed as Interim CEO 23 June 2020 – Resigned 21 April 2021)
Ruth Davison (Appointed 6 April 2021)

Company Secretary

Osbert Klass (Appointed 29 July 2020 – Resigned 14 July 2021)
Lornette Pemberton (Appointed 15 July 2021 – Resigned 15 October 2021)
Dr Sally Oglesby (Appointed 16 October 2021)

Governing document

Refuge is a charitable company limited by guarantee, originally incorporated as Chiswick Family Rescue on 30 January 1979 and registered as a charity on 31 March 1979. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association which were updated by Special Resolution on 2nd December 2021. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The directors of the company are also charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law. Each Trustee retires from office at the third Annual Retirement Meeting following the commencement of the term of office and can serve a maximum of three terms before taking a break and being reappointed.

Induction and training of Trustees

All new Trustees receive an induction pack containing detailed information about Refuge, its organisation and its work. They also spend time with the Chief Executive, Chair and senior staff to familiarise themselves with Refuge’s activities and their role and responsibilities as a charity Trustee. Training opportunities are offered to introduce Trustees to their legal and governance duties. There are opportunities for specific training and presentations by staff at board meetings. All Trustees have received a copy of the Charity Commission publication ‘The Essential Trustee’.

Organisation

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of Refuge and has a maximum of 12 members. Trustees have a range of skills and experience including Legal, Financial, Property, Business, Social Care and Communications that support Refuge in the delivery of its objectives. The charity’s Board of Trustees meets regularly to manage its affairs. Refuge’s Chief Executive, Ruth Davison, is responsible for the day-to-day management of the charity and the implementation of policy, supported by a highly dedicated and professional team of staff and volunteers.

Partnerships:

Housing associations:

BPHA, Central and Cecil, Clarion Housing Group, Peabody, Gateway, Hexagon, London and Quadrant, Metropolitan Thames Valley, Notting Hill Genesis, Optivo, Orbit, Paragon, Sanctuary Supported Living, Home Group, Southern Housing, Town and Country and Tuntum.

Statutory partners:

The London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Ealing, Hackney, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston on Thames, Lewisham, Lambeth, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond, Southwark, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth and Westminster. The counties of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, East Sussex and Warwickshire. The city of Derby, Derby Homes and the borough of Warrington. The Greater London Authority. London Councils. Police Crime Commissioners (PCC): Derbyshire, Warwickshire, Hertfordshire, Cheshire, Cambridgeshire; Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime.

Objectives:

Refuge exists to ensure all women and children facing domestic abuse in England can access the services they need and deserve, ensuring they are safe from abuse and empowered to regain control of their lives and futures free from fear.

We strive to

- Drive policy change (influencing policy and practice, including legislative change which ensures sustainable services) supported by strategic research;
- Prevent domestic abuse through awareness raising and attitudinal change;
- Develop, maintain and nurture partnerships that grow our expertise

The objects of the company are:-

To provide for the relief of women and their children or other victims who have been subject to: (i) physical, sexual, emotional and/or mental abuse within an intimate or “family” relationship (“domestic abuse”); or (ii) other gender-based abuse, which term, for the purposes of these Articles, shall include but not be limited to rape, prostitution, gang abuse, sex-trafficking or female genital mutilation, in either of cases or (ii) above, throughout the United Kingdom and abroad

To provide specialist supported housing and social housing and any associated amenities in England, designed to meet the needs of women and children who are the victims of domestic abuse and/or other gender-based abuse, and other services designed to facilitate their onward progression;

and to advance public education, research and training on understanding of the issues of domestic abuse and gender- based abuse throughout the United Kingdom and abroad. Refuge’s mission continues to be that of providing emergency accommodation and support to women and children escaping domestic abuse whilst raising awareness and understanding of the issue. Its principal aims and objectives are to:

Provide a range of high quality specialist services to women and children escaping domestic abuse including a Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline, a growing number of safe houses with additional specialist support services for women and children, outreach and floating support services, refuges and outreach for black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee (BAMER) women, independent domestic abuse advocates and specialist support.

Raise public awareness of the issues surrounding domestic abuse and campaign to ensure the voices of survivors are heard.

Our objectives for 21/22, as defined by our one-year business plan were:

- Ensure that we deliver high-quality services for women and children facing domestic abuse
- Focus on ensuring our workforce is happy and healthy
- Agree a clear and ambitious strategic focus for Refuge to 2027
- Continue to strengthen our governance and leadership
- Continue to develop our equality, diversity and inclusion programme of work
- Galvanise society to realise our vision by developing our external engagement strategy

Public benefit statement

Refuge operates for public benefit. The Trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission’s general guidance on public benefit, “Charities and Public Benefit”.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are central to our core principles and are reflected in our service provision, diverse workforce, Board and Partners and in the way in which we work. We aim to achieve this by advocating fairness, consistency, and transparency, in our organisational decision-making and by establishing fair policies and procedures that are consistently applied.

We respect and value people’s differences and we proactively seek to create a culture where people feel comfortable to be themselves and have a sense of belonging.

In 2021 we established an EDI steering group to help us to embed an environment where everyone feels valued. Equality and inclusion are at the heart of all our activities and discrimination is challenged. In addition, seven employee network groups (ENGs) were created to provide staff with a supportive and safe environment to share lived experiences.

The chairs of these groups are members of the steering group, ensuring staff from marginalised and minoritized groups contribute to holding us accountable for our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

These measures support us in ensuring that we create a positive, inclusive, and safe environment for all our employees, volunteers, trustees, contractors, and service users.

Fundraising

In 2021-22 we raised a total of £10m in voluntary income towards the provision of our lifesaving and life-changing services. This income is the result of generosity of our supporters and partners, and a huge amount of work across the team. Our public fundraising programme includes community-driven fundraising, individuals taking on challenges and public donations, as well as gifts supporters leave in their wills. Our philanthropy and partnerships programme includes larger donations from individuals, trusts and companies. We occasionally partner with professional fundraisers or commercial participators to help deliver this work. We worked with 4 professional fundraising organisations for payroll giving recruitment. We also work with companies across a variety of sectors to build mutually beneficial partnerships

We sometimes use professional fundraisers or commercial participators to help us carry out this work. We worked with four professional fundraising organisations for payroll giving recruitment. We also work with companies across a variety of sectors to build mutually beneficial partnerships.

Our corporate partners contractually commit to a minimum guaranteed level of £25,000 of funds (net of any VAT payable under commercial participation regulations) per partnership year; this can be raised through a range of mechanisms including commercial participation, staff or customer fundraising, events and company donations. We are also grateful for the support of a number of corporate supporters and donors who fund us through one off or regular donations. We conduct due diligence as part of our research process in relation to both proactive and reactive fundraising from businesses, trusts, foundations and high net worth individuals. This is to ensure alignment with our ethical policy as well as assess potential risks by association. Whilst we generally seek unrestricted funding, we do work with some partners and donors who prefer to restrict their support to particular areas of our work.

We are conscious of the trust supporters place in us when they donate towards our work. We are members of the Fundraising Regulator and abide by their Fundraising Promise and the Code of Fundraising Practice. We are deeply committed to protecting the data and privacy of our supporters and adhere to all relevant legislation and best practice. We proactively seek updates from the regulator that may impact on our programmes.

All fundraising staff are provided with training in our compliance policies and are active owners of the policies that relate to their work. We minimise any risk of breaches to the Code of Fundraising Practice by ensuring regular review of these policies in line with any updates from the regulator or learnings from our work. We ensure these policies are available to and understood by all fundraisers and supporting functions.

We recognise that work with third parties can support our fundraising activities and improve the efficiency of our programmes. We aim to ensure any agencies we employ observe the highest standards in terms of fundraising practice, and we ensure that the work of the suppliers is regularly monitored. We expect any third party to comply with data protection legislation as set out in the Code of Fundraising Practice, including the requirements of the Telephone, Mailing and Fundraising Preference Services. We follow a robust procurement procedure when recruiting third parties to work on our behalf. We apply a proportionate level of due diligence to the size of the contract and work with them to ensure they are delivering the standards we expect for our supporters. Refuge ensures that all suppliers have a Supporters in Vulnerable Circumstances policy that puts safeguards in place for those in a vulnerable situation. We are committed to providing the highest levels of supporter care and value feedback we receive regarding our fundraising activities. In 2021/22 we received 21 complaints, which were resolved without any being escalated to the Fundraising Regulator. We responded to all complaints within three working days, in line with our Complaints Policy. The theme of these complaints included not receiving fundraising materials, issues with processing e-cards from donations and concerns on our position supporting all people experiencing domestic abuse.

Refuge has a robust Supporters in Vulnerable Circumstances Policy in place to protect supporters, whether those circumstances be permanent or temporary. We have a duty and obligation to ensure that we make reasonable adjustments and put in place appropriate additional support mechanisms to take account of these needs and to ensure supporters and members of the public are not at risk of undue detriment. We have protocol on what vulnerability may look like, including guidance on age of the supporter. How we engage with supporters is set out in an 8 point Supporter Promise published on our website. All our emails set out clear instructions for how supporters can opt out of future communications should they wish to.

We did not engage in face-to-face or telephone activity in 2021-22.

Refuge is signed up to the Fundraising Preference Service and has received and actioned 3 requests between 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022.

Principal risks

The Board is responsible for establishing and monitoring internal control systems within Refuge.

The Board reviews the major risks which may impact on the operations of Refuge on a regular basis and are satisfied that the system of internal control currently in place is sound and effective, whilst recognising that it is designed to manage rather than eliminate risk.

The Board agree that the following are the principal risks that Refuge faces:

Safeguarding. The high-risk nature of Refuge’s work supporting women and children experiencing domestic abuse means that we navigate complex safeguarding issues on a regular basis. There are appropriate policies, processes, and ways of working to meet our high safeguarding standards including comprehensive external reviews of services where issues have been raised. We have invested funds in a new department which works closely with other directorates and staff across the charity to further embed and strengthen an informed safeguarding culture for survivors and staff/ volunteers.

Pressure on services – The increased level of demand we saw during Covid for specialist services continues and is remaining significantly above pre-covid levels. This will increase pressure on our specialist services and place more demand on our frontline staff. We are working to mitigate the very real risk of burnout for frontline staff.

Cost of living crisis. The current economic situation presents a risk to Refuge for two reasons: Firstly, we can expect more women to need support from our economic abuse teams, increasing demand on our specialist services, and secondly because it could impact our fundraising efforts. Supporter fundraising is a significant part of our income, and this may be reduced as the cost of living crisis increases. In addition to these key risks, rising interest rates and inflation are likely to significantly increase the running costs of our accommodation-based services

Our IT systems have been significantly overhauled and our move into new office premises has been completed. This has enabled us to migrate databases, strengthen our networks and improve our communications infrastructure but we continue to work to enhance our cyber security and build the resilience of our IT infrastructure.

Risk management

The trustees bear overall responsibility for ensuring Refuge operates appropriate controls, financial and otherwise, to provide reasonable assurance that:

- The charity is operating efficiently and effectively;
- Proper records are maintained, and financial information is reliable and accurate;
- The charity has an appropriate framework for safeguarding all who come into contact with the organisation and
- The charity complies with relevant laws and regulations.

The Audit & Risk Committee has delegated responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of Refuge’s risk framework and reports the results of this monitoring to the Board.

Over the past 18 months, Refuge has strengthened its risk framework, by:

- Training staff across the organisation on the recognition, recording, monitoring and scoring of risks;
- Updating the methodology used in scoring risks to consider current guidance from the Charity Commission and the Institute of Risk Management;
- Creation of a Risk Management & Escalation Policy.

Furthermore, the Board has categorised the key risks of the organisation into the following areas and has assigned committees who will retain detailed oversight of these risk areas, with these then ultimately feeding back to the organisational Risk register which is reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee:

Category	Responsibility
People & Culture	People, Nomination & Remuneration Committee
Safeguarding	Services & Safeguarding Committee
Health & Safety	Services & Safeguarding Committee
Property maintenance	Audit & Risk Committee
Financial controls	Resources Committee
Governance & Oversight	Chair
Resourcing (non-staff)	Resources Committee
Stakeholder engagement/ reputational risk	Resources Committee

Investment powers and policy

The Articles of Association contains powers for the Board to invest funds in any investments, securities and properties

Financial review

The results for the year to March 2022 was a total income of £24m (2021:£34m). The income was 28% lower than 2021; which had been an unprecedented year, showing a fantastic response to Refuge’s appeal for funds through various methods, Virtual Challenges, Christmas appeals, general appeals and came from all types of funders, individuals, groups and corporates during COVID-19. Grants to March 2022 were also lower by £3m at £3m (2021: £6m). Previous year included one off additional income of £1.4m, National Emergencies funding a partnership between Refuge and partners in the devolved nations, both COVID-19 and lockdowns related with the remaining funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Total expenditure increased by 13% to £25m (2021: £22m) this reflects the start of the investment to enable Refuge to maintain and enhance the increased capacity of services delivered during the lockdown.

The closing Fund balances amounted to £14.5 m (2021: £15.4m) of which £13.4m was held as general unrestricted reserves and £1m as restricted reserves. The cash balances at the end of the year were £13.9m (2021: £16.3m) with net assets of £14.5m (2021: £15.4m)

Reserves policy

At 31 March 2022, Refuge had total funds of £14.4m, of which £1m were Restricted and thus not available for the general purposes of the charity. Of the balance of £13.4m arising from Unrestricted activities:

- £1m relates to tangible and intangible fixed assets which cannot be easily realised.
- £3m relates to designated funds detailed in note 20 of the Financial Statements.
- This leaves free reserves of £9.4m (2021: £10.4m), which is within the desired range specified in Refuge’s Reserves Policy. This provides for a range of between £6.4m and £10m. The 2022-23 forecast is a deficit of £3.2m

The impact of Covid-19 and going concern

The increased demand we saw for our services, which remained open throughout sustained lockdowns, has not abated, and the strategies we brought forward to help meet this, continue to provide a means of meeting some of this increase.

We were fortunate to receive significantly higher levels of income during the pandemic, meaning that our reserves are now at the upper end of our target. This combined with a three year financial plan have been reviewed by the Board who, on the basis of this information, have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements. Accordingly, the financial statements continue to be prepared on a going concern basis.

Statement of the Board of Trustees’ responsibilities

The Board of Trustees (who are also members of the Charity for the purposes of company law) is responsible for preparing the Trustees’ report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Board of Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the outgoing resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Board of Trustees is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Housing and Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business

The Board of Trustees is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and 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.

As far as the Board of Trustees is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company’s auditor is unaware; and
- The Board of Trustees has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information
- The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring the pay and remuneration of key management personnel and any benchmarks, parameters or criteria used in setting pay. Director salaries are determined by the People, Nominations and Remuneration Committee (PNRC) annually in April of each year. A separate policy outlines the approach to CEO pay which is capped relative to other salaries and may be reviewed every 3 years by the Board. The policy is published and can be found on our website: CEO pay policy statement.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Hetti Barkworth-Nanton (Chair) confirms:

This report acts as a directors’ report for the charitable company as required by s415 of the Companies Act 2006 and includes the Strategic Report which has been approved by the Board of Trustees in their capacity as company directors.



Independent auditors report to the members of Refuge

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Refuge (‘the company’) for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 ‘The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland’ (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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 2022 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 FRS102 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, and the Accounting Direction for Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019; and
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

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 Auditor’s 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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. 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.

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 course of 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 themselves. 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.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the strategic report and the trustees’ annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the trustees’ annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the trustees’ annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees’ remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees’ responsibilities statement set out in the Statement of The Board’s 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.

Auditor’s 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 an auditor’s report 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 aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company’s internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor’s report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

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.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, the Accounting Direction for Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019, the Housing SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council]

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.

- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.

- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company’s members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company’s members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor’s report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company and charitable company’s members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor
Date:

9 Appold Street

London

EC2A 2AP

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2022
(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Note		2022	2022	2022	2021
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	4	8,793,664	1,316,443	10,110,107	16,607,559
Operating activities					
Contracts for Support Services	5	6,405,717	-	6,405,717	6,349,475
Housing Management		4,412,821	-	4,412,821	4,949,086
Grants	6	-	3,174,699	3,174,699	6,057,003
Other trading activities	8	169,239		169,239	2,708
Investments	7	26,889		26,889	17,749
Other income					-
Total income and endowments	3	19,808,330	4,491,142	24,299,472	33,983,581
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	9	3,322,184	-	3,322,184	2,374,009
Operating activities					
Refuge provision		8,017,376	809,169	8,826,545	7,879,692
Advocacy		3,388,853	614,958	4,003,811	4,087,329
Integrated services		3,618,450	376,994	3,995,444	3,557,774
Outreach and Floating Support		234,167	1,259,240	1,493,407	1,105,847
Freephone 24 Hour National					
Domestic Violence Helpline		727,189	1,554,518	2,281,707	2,467,902
Public information		1,347,356	-	1,347,356	803,301
Specialist support services		-	27,783	27,783	30,805
Total Expenditure	3,11	20,655,575	4,642,662	25,298,237	22,306,658
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	15	2,086		2,086	(2,202)
Unrealised (losses)/gains on investments	15	18,429	-	18,429	136,109
Net income/(expenditure)		(826,730)	(151,520)	(978,250)	11,810,830
Transfers between funds	20,21			-	-
Net movement in funds		(826,730)	(151,520)	(978,250)	11,810,830
Reconciliation of funds:		-	-	-	
Fund balances brought forward		14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,640	3,613,810
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2022	20, 21,22	13,424,509	1,021,881	14,446,390	15,424,640

Approved by the Board on 27th September 2022

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Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

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Jon Rowney

Notes 1 to 24 form part of these financial statements.

All of the activities of the charitable company related to continuing operations. There were no recognised gains and losses other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities

Balance sheet as of 31 March 2022

	Note	2022	2022	2021	2021
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	13		759,614		93,130
Intangible assets	14		225,633		277,398
Financial Investments	15		709,022		694,667
			1,694,269		1,065,195
Current Assets					
Debtors	16	4,027,942		2,701,150	
Cash at bank and in hand		13,929,303		16,367,480	
		17,957,246		19,068,630	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	(4,964,959)		(4,339,185)	
Net Current Assets			12,992,286		14,729,445
Total Assets less Current Liabilities			13,706,555		15,794,640
Provisions for liabilities and charges	19		(240,165)		(370,000)
Net Assets			14,446,390		15,424,640
Represented by:					
Unrestricted Funds					
20					
General			10,420,140		10,414,166
Designated			3,004,369		3,837,073
			13,424,509		14,251,239
Restricted Funds					
21			1,021,881		1,173,401
Total Funds					
22			14,446,390		15,424,640

Approved by the Board on 27th September 2022

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Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

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Jon Rowney

Company Number:1412276

Cash-flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	2022	2021
		£	£
Statement of Cash Flows			
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities	1	(1,688,931)	12,384,516
			-
- Investment income	7	26,889	17,749
Capital Expenditure and financial investment			
- Payments to acquire Tangible Fixed Assets	13	(764,583)	(128,619)
- Payments to acquire Intangible Fixed Assets	14	(17,712)	(272,842)
- Payments to acquire Financial Investments	15	(83,276)	(107,095)
- Investment disposal proceeds		91,156	104,600
Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	(2,436,457)	11,998,309
Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows			
Reconciliation of Changes in Resources to Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities			
Net movement in funds		(978,250)	11,810,830
Depreciation		98,099	168,155
Amortisation		69,477	7,570
Investment income		(26,889)	(17,749)
Unrealised/Realised losses/(gains)		(20,515)	(133,907)
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other Debtors		(1,326,792)	(602,709)
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other Creditors		625,776	1,152,326
Movement in provision		(129,837)	
		(1,688,931)	12,384,516
2 Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movements in Net Funds			
Increase in Cash and Cash at Bank in the year		(2,436,457)	11,998,309
(Decrease)/Increase in net funds		(2,436,457)	11,998,309
Net funds at 1 April 2021		16,400,193	4,401,884
Net funds at 31 March 2022		13,963,736	16,400,193
Reconciliation of net funds to cash at bank and in hand			
Net funds		13,963,736	16,400,193
Cash held with investment managers		(34,433)	(32,713)
Cash at bank and in hand		13,929,303	16,367,480
Notes 1 to 24 form part of these accounts.			

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The accounts are prepared on the historical cost convention of accounting, as modified by the revaluation of Fixed Asset Investments and in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and in compliance with The Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019, Housing SORP 2018, the Statement of Recommended Practice “Accounting for Registered Social Providers”, the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with “The Financial Reporting Standard Accounts applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (“FRS 102”). The Charities Act 2011 and the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. The charity is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102.

Going concern

These financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis. The funding received by the company has increased significantly during and following lockdown following increased awareness of the effects of domestic abuse. The Board therefore have a reasonable expectation that the company will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future based on budgets, forecasts and projections for the following year and up to 12 months from the date the financial statements are approved. The Board are not aware of any material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt upon the charity’s ability to continue as a going concern.

Tangible Fixed Assets - Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £500, except items of high wear and tear for refuges, have been capitalised and recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over their estimated useful lives or the length of the contract/project for which the fixed assets were acquired.

Leasehold improvements	5 years straight line
Freehold buildings	50 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	1 - 4 years straight line
Office equipment	1 - 4 years straight line

Intangible Fixed Assets - Amortisation

Intangible assets costing more than £500 are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets over their useful lives on the following bases:

Software	1 - 4 years straight line
Website	1 - 4 years straight line

Income

All income is accounted for when the company has entitlement to the funds, receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Donations and legacies include donations, gifts, legacies and some grants receivable.

Gifts in kind and intangible income are treated either as donations in the period the gift or intangible income is received, or as an asset, in both cases at a reasonable estimate of the gross value to the charity.

Contractual income and legacies are recognised as income where there is entitlement, probability of receipt and measurability.

Fundraising income is shown gross except for small fundraising events where the cash is received net of expenditure.

Investment income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

Grants are recognised when the entitlement to the grant is confirmed and any conditions not within the company’s control have been met..

Grants that provide core funding, or are of a general nature provided by the government and charitable foundations, are recorded as voluntary income.

Costs of raising funds

Fundraising expenditure comprises costs incurred encouraging people and organisations to contribute financially to the charity’s work. This includes costs of advertising and staging of special fundraising events.

Governance costs

Governance costs comprise all expenditure not directly related to the charitable activity or fundraising ventures including audit fees. The costs are allocated over the activities on the same basis as other administrative costs.

Provisions

Provision relates to the Board’s estimate of the present value cost of dilapidations work that is required to be undertaken on expiry of and in accordance with the terms of the company’s lease, on the premises at Head Office.

This includes an estimate to future deficits concerning Refuge’s Admitted Body Status of Hertfordshire LGPS scheme.

Bad debts

Bad debts are recognised when all arrears and debt collection procedures have been exhausted. Bad debts are written off on a percentage basis depending on their age and the probability of collection.

Investments

Investments are held in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Any change from market value at the previous balance sheet date or from cost if purchased during the year, is included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Stocks

No value has been ascribed to stocks of publications on the basis that the majority of these are normally given away and therefore it is considered prudent to account for the costs of all publications in the period they are incurred.

1 Accounting Policies (Continued)

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities. These financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis.

Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 ‘Basic Financial Instruments’ and Section 12 ‘Other Financial Instruments Issues’ of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company’s balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when they legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial instruments, which include trade and other receivables and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest.

Other financial assets

Other financial assets, including investments in equity instruments which are not subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures, are initially measured at fair value, which is normally the transaction price. Such assets are subsequently carried at fair value and the changes in fair value are recognised in profit or loss, except that investments in equity instruments that are not publicly traded and whose fair values cannot be measured reliably are measured at cost less impairment.

Trade debtors, loans and other receivables that have fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market are classified as ‘loans and receivables’. Loans and receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

Interest is recognised by applying the effective interest rate, except for short-term receivables when the recognition of interest would be immaterial. The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a debt instrument and of allocating the interest income over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the debt instrument to the net carrying amount on initial recognition.

Impairment of financial assets

Financial assets, other than those held at fair value through profit and loss, are assessed for indicators of impairment at each reporting end date.

Financial assets are impaired where there is objective evidence that, as a result of one or more events that occurred after the initial recognition of the financial asset, the estimated future cash flows have been affected. The impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire, or when it transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity.



Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

1 Accounting Policies (Continued)

Pension funds
Refuge operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all staff. The amount charged to the Income and Expenditure Account in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year.

Operating lease agreement
Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged against profits on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Research and development
Research and development costs are expensed to the SOFA in the year that they are incurred.

Fund account
Restricted funds represent monies received for specific projects undertaken by the charity. Designated funds represent monies set aside by the trustees for a specific purpose. General unrestricted funds of the charity are available for the general purposes of the charity.

Status
Refuge is a registered social landlord with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The register number is 4730.

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. It is also a registered charity (Number 277424). In the event of the company winding up, members are required to contribute a sum not exceeding £1.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty
In the application of the company’s accounting policies, the directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount 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 estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

Critical judgements
The following judgements (apart from those involving estimates) have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

The company has an obligation to pay dilapidations on expiry of the company’s lease. The cost of these reinstatements and the present value of the obligation depend on a number of factors including the expected rise in cost of building maintenance, uncertainty over the timing of the cost of reinstatements, and the discount rate. Management estimates these factors in determining the net dilapidation provision in the balance sheet. The assumptions reflect historical experience and current trends. See note 19 for the disclosures relating to the dilapidation provision.

The company makes an estimate of the recoverable value of trade and other debtors. When assessing impairment of trade and other debtors, management considers factors including the current credit rating of the debtor, the ageing profile of debtors and historical experience. See note 16 for the net carrying amount of the debtors and associated impairment provision.

The annual depreciation charge for property, plant and equipment is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 13 for the carrying amount of the property, plant and equipment and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of asset.

Similarly the amortisation charge for intangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments and economic utilisation of the assets. See note 14 for the carrying amount of the intangible assets and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

2. Comparative statements of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2022

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	Note	2022	2022	2022	2021	2021	2021
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	4	8,793,664	1,316,443	10,110,107	15,621,590	985,970	16,607,559
Operating activities		-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracts for Support Services	5	6,405,717	-	6,405,717	6,349,475	-	6,349,475
Housing Management		4,412,821	-	4,412,821	4,949,086	-	4,949,086
Grants	6	-	3,174,699	3,174,699	-	6,057,003	6,057,003
Other trading activities		169,239		169,239	2,708		2,708
Investments	7	26,889	-	26,889	17,749	-	17,749
Other income	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total income and endowments	3	19,808,330	4,491,142	24,299,472	26,940,609	7,042,973	33,983,581
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	9	3,322,184	-	3,322,184	2,374,009	-	2,374,009
Operating activities			-		-	-	
Refuge provision		8,017,376	809,169	8,826,545	6,725,645	1,154,047	7,879,692
Advocacy		3,388,853	614,958	4,003,811	2,684,417	1,402,911	4,087,329
Integrated services		3,618,450	376,994	3,995,444	3,215,566	342,207	3,557,774
Outreach and Floating Support		234,167	1,259,240	1,493,407	129,351	976,495	1,105,847
Freephone 24 Hour National							
Domestic Violence Helpline		727,189	1,554,518	2,281,708	516	2,467,386	2,467,902
Public information		1,347,356	-	1,347,356	778,301	25,000	803,301
Specialist support services		-	27,783	27,783	3,447	27,358	30,805
Total Expenditure	3, 11	20,655,575	4,642,662	25,298,237	15,911,252	6,395,405	22,306,658
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	15	2,086	-	2,086	(2,202)		(2,202)
Unrealised gains/(losses) on investments	15	18,429	-	18,429	136,109	-	136,109
Net income/(expenditure)		(826,730)	(151,520)	(1,958,250)	11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830
Transfers between funds	20, 21	-	-				
Net movement in funds		(826,730)	(151,520)	(978,250)	11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances brought forward		14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,640	3,087,976	525,834	3,613,810
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2022	20,21, 22	13,424,509	1,021,881	14,446,390	14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,640

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

3a. Particulars of turnover, cost of sales, operating costs and operating surplus

	2022	2022	2022	2021	2021	2021
	Turnover	Operating Costs	Operating Surplus/(deficit)	Turnover	Operating Costs	Operating Surplus/(deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Social housing lettings	4,412,821	4,978,711	(565,890)	4,949,086	4,817,068	132,018
Other social housing activities:						
Contracts for Support Services	2,280,289	2,252,959	27,330	2,467,218	2,466,541	677
Other grants and donations	1,152,312	1,152,312	-	1,230,658	1,230,658	-
	7,845,422	8,383,982	(538,560)	8,646,962	8,514,267	132,695
Non-social housing activities	16,454,050	16,914,255	(460,205)	25,336,619	13,792,391	11,544,228
Total:	24,299,472	25,298,237	(998,765)	33,983,581	22,306,658	11,676,923

3b. Particulars of income and expenditure from social housing lettings

	2022	2021
	£	£
Social housing income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charges	1,897,927	2,058,139
Service charges receivable eligible for Housing Benefit	2,774,150	2,058,139
Service charges receivable ineligible for Housing Benefit	271,720	271,709
Rent losses due to voids	(530,976)	(389,090)
Turnover from social housing lettings	4,412,821	4,949,086
Expenditure on social housing lettings		
Services	1,382,111	1,304,237
Management	1,687,649	1,691,151
Routine maintenance	351,685	202,641
Planned maintenance	124,143	123,389
Bad debts	60,840	122,831
Lease charges	1,371,599	1,372,135
Property depreciation	684	684
Operating costs on social housing lettings	4,978,711	4,817,068
Operating surplus/(deficit) on social lettings	(565,890)	132,018

Social housing units

The number of supported housing units under management at the end of the period:	2022	2021
Owned and managed	8	8
Not owned but managed	293	348
	301	356

4. Donations and legacies

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trusts	347,156	379,916
Corporates	607,279	2,000,000
Major donors	663,886	12,852,143
Private donors	7,338,663	(389,090)
	8,956,984	16,337,559
Legacies	1,153,123	270,000
	10,110,107	16,607,559

5. Contracts for Support services

	2022	2021
	£	£
Refuge provision	2,014,702	2,169,894
Advocacy	2,350,819	2,266,726
Integrated services	2,010,073	1,861,216
Outreach and floating support	30,123	51,640
	6,405,717	6,349,476

Support services under housing related support would encompass such activities that enabled the service user to develop the appropriate skills needed for maintaining independence in their own home once outside of the support service framework i.e. building local networks for support, making links into the community, understanding benefit entitlement and how to apply, developing personal finance awareness to pay rent and other associated household bills.

Contracts for support services are awarded to Refuge as the Service Provider by the Administering Authority (Local Authority/Borough) with approval of the Commission Body “(a partnership of local housing, social care, health and probation statutory services)”.

6. Grants

	2022	2021
	£	£
	Restricted	Restricted
Bain Capital	14,199	19,801
BBC Children in Need	25,783	35,974
Big Lottery Fund	20,135	290,161
Cambridgeshire Community Foundation	-	5,000
Cambridgeshire County Council	52,877	135,435
Comic Relief	29,167	77,091
Department for Work and Pensions	-	972
Derby City Council	58,382	56,002
Derby Homes Limited	100,000	-
Derbyshire Community Foundation	-	4,890
East Sussex County Council	9,162	-
Greater London Authority	330,736	
HMRC Furlough	-	1,533
Home Office	807,874	803,303
Hounslow MHCLG	19,625	-
John Coates Charitable Trust	-	5,000
Kingston Council	-	17,477
London Borough Barking and Dagenham	267,599	133,155
London Borough of Hounslow	43,315	-
London Borough of Lewisham	288,589	143,278
London Borough of Redbridge	-	29,711
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Wandsworth	177,786	244,533
London Councils	127,613	127,613
London Stock Exchange Group Foundation	-	10,000
Masonic Charitable Foundation	200,000	-
Mayor's Office for Policing & Crime (MOPAC)	167,712	-
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	890,597
Ministry of Justice (London Community Foundation)	-	153,454
Morrisons Trust	-	24,724
National Emergencies Trust	-	1,443,378
NHS Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group	-	100
Permira Foundation	-	75,300
Rugby Borough Council	-	29,409
Shroder Charity Trust	-	10,000
Sir John Priestman Charitable Trust	-	2,000
Southwark Council	-	5,000
Standard Life Foundation	-	25,000
Standing Together Against Domestic Violence	-	73,843
Stratford Town Trust	-	18,333
STRATFORD-ON -AVON DISTRICT COUNCIL	10,000	-
The Alan Edward Higgs Charity	-	6,320
The Albert Hunt Trust	-	5,000
The Brian Woolf Trust	-	5,000
The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	500,000
The Mayor's Young Londoners Fund	-	49,277
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire	175,662	173,628
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire	61,139	78,214
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire	187,344	45,633
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire	-	76,085
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire	-	32,120
The Violet Melchett Children's Trust	-	5,000
Tides Foundation	-	65,000
Warwickshire County Council	-	123,659
Totals	3,174,699	6,057,003

6. Grants (continued)

In accordance with section 37 of the Local Government Act 1989 the grant from London Councils of £127,613 was used in respect of the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, as follows:

Towards general running costs and salaries of the 24 hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline. The grant was fully used.

£
127,613

7. Investment income

	2022	2021
	£	£
Listed investments	10,339	11,170
Interest receivable	16,550	6,579
	26,889	17,749

8. Other trading activities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Logo licence	44,820	-
Commercial participants	120,896	-
Merchandise	3,523	2,708

Refuge has 1 trading subsidiary which was incorporated on 14th December 2021.

9. Costs of raising funds

	169,239	2,708
	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs	1,331,811	956,184
Depreciation and amortisation	1,457	2,415
Advertising	775,719	692,238
Events expenses	483,009	236,909
Other costs	714,018	486,263
	3,306,014	2,374,009

10. Governance costs

	2022	2021
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration (net)	21,250	19,750
Auditors' remuneration non-audit (net)	850	2,350
Irrecoverable VAT/accruals	4,920	4,420
Grant audit	2,500	-
Total auditors' remuneration inclusive of VAT	29,520	26,520
Legal advice and recruitment of trustees	16,816	47,804
Tax review	2,444	-
Total governance costs	48,780	74,324

Governance costs for the year which are included in support cost in note 11 are £48,780 (inclusive of irrecoverable VAT) (2021 - £74,324 representing less than 1% of our total costs.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

11. Total expenditure

2022

	Cost of Raising	Refuge		Integrated	Floating	24-Hour National			2020/21
	Funds	Provision	Advocacy	services	Support and Outreach	Domestic Violence Helpline	Public Information	Specialist Services	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Direct Costs including Operational Support	2,979,053	6,780,056	3,159,255	3,509,693	1,163,569	1,891,938	856,759	23,872	20,364,195
Support Costs*	343,131	2,046,089	844,556	485,751	329,838,	389,769	490,597	3,911	4,934,042
	3,322,184	8,826,545	4,003,811	3,995,444	1,493,407	2,281,707	1,347,356	27,783	25,298,237

*Support costs include governance costs of £74,324 incl. VAT

2021

	Cost of Raising	Refuge		Integrated	Floating	24-Hour National			2019/20
	Funds	Provision	Advocacy	services	Support and Outreach	Domestic Violence Helpline	Public Information	Specialist Services	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Direct Costs including Operational Support	2,152,833	6,770,363	3,733,536	3,343,588	977,850	2,275,248	579,976	27,358	19,860,752
Support Costs*	221,176	1,109,329	353,793	214,185	127,997	192,654	223,325	3,447	2,445,905
	2,374,009	7,879,692	4,087,329	3,557,774	1,105,847	2,467,902	803,301	30,805	22,306,658

Expenditure Analysis

	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs	14,341,315	12,525,831
Temporary staff	629,113	371,984
Consultants	673,307	316,261
Other staff costs	846,886	376,518
Property costs	2,645,058	2,473,371
Equipment costs	11,176	15,988
Telephone	545,030	465,775
Audit	29,520	23,700
Depreciation and amortisation	167,576	175,725
Other costs	5,409,256	5,561,504
	25,298,237	22,306,658

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

12. Staff Costs

	2022	2021
	£	£
Wages and salaries	12,388,377	10,806,971
Staff benefits	45,600	46,268
Social security costs	1,199,810	1,077,403
Pension costs	707,528	595,189
	14,341,315	12,525,831

The average number of employees (full time equivalents), analysed by operating activities, during the year was:

	2022	2021
	No.	No.
Refuge provision	101	82
Advocacy	66	73
Integrated Services	70	57
Outreach and Floating Support	34	22
24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline	44	28
Public information	11	8
Specialist services	4	1
Other Refuge services	26	58
	356	329

Redundancy and termination payments

	2022	2021
	£	£
	179,449	71,827

12. Staff costs (continued)

The number of employees whose remuneration (including benefit in kind but excluding employers’ National Insurance and employers’ pension contributions was in excess of £60,000.

	2022	2021
	No.	No.
£70,001 - £80,000	2	4
£80,001 - £90,000	2	-
£90,001 - £100,000	-	1
£120,001 - £130,000*	1	-
£200,001 - £210,000*	-	1

*Includes keyman health cover and pension supplement from 2017

	2022	2021
	£	£
Pension contributions in respect of the highest paid employees above	36,057	33,834

Emoluments to key management personnel

	2022	2021
	£	£
The remuneration paid to the key management personnel of Refuge (the Chief Executive, the Director of Operations, the Director of Fundraising, the Director of Communications and External Relations, the Head of Finance and IT, the Head of HR, the Head Of People And Transformation and the Head of Development) was:		
Emoluments (including pension contributions, employers National Insurance and benefits in kind)	743,736	784,385
Emoluments (excluding pension contributions) paid to the highest paid member of key management personnel	135,486	202,439

During the year members of the Board received reimbursement of expenses totalling £312 (2020 - £2,486). No members of the Board received any remuneration during the year (2020 -£Nil).

Remuneration Policy

The remuneration of key management personnel is set by undertaking an annual review of their roles considering:

- Any change or additional scope to the role requiring a re-evaluation
- The benchmarking of similar roles within the market relevant for the professional field and /or sector
- Recruitment and retention issues or requirements

Any changes are discussed by the chief executive and the chair of the Board, before the remuneration is agreed.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

13. Tangible Fixed Assets

2021/22	Freehold Property £	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures and Fittings £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost					
At 1 April 2021	34,173	36,779	367,963	250,854	689,769
Additions	-	100,743	216,803	447,037	764,583
Written off	-	(36,779)	-	(25,547)	(62,326)
At 31 March 2022	34,173	100,743	584,766	672,344	1,392,026
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2021	16,418	36,779	350,247	193,195	596,639
Charge for the year	684	1,199	16,420	79,796	98,099
Written off	-	(36,779)	-	(25,547)	(62,326)
At 31 March 2022	17,102	1,199	366,667	247,444	632,412
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2022	17,071	99,544	218,099	424,900	759,614
At 31 March 2021	17,755	-	17,716	57,659	93,130

In the opinion of the Board, the value of the company's freehold property is considerably in excess of its book value. Due to the costs involved, it is not considered practicable to quantify the difference.

14. Intangible Fixed Assets

2020/21	Website £	Software £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2021	294,902	126,367	421,269
Additions	17,712	-	17,712
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	312,614	126,367	438,981
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2021	21,221	122,650	143,871
Charge for the year	67,921	1,556	69,477
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	89,142	124,206	213,348
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2022	223,472	2,161	225,633
At 31 March 2021	273,681	3,717	277,398

15. Financial Investments	2022 £	2021 £
Investments at market value at beginning of the year	661,954	525,552
Additions at cost	83,276	107,095
Disposal proceeds	(91,156)	(104,600)
Realised/unrealised (losses)/gains	2,086	(2,202)
Unrealised/unrealised gains (losses)	18,429	136,109
	674,589	661,954
Cash held with investment managers	34,433	32,713
Market value at end of the year	709,022	694,667
Historic cost at end of the year	563,322	561,087
Comprising:		
Global fixed interest	113,204	118,346
UK equities and funds	176,127	208,662
Overseas equities and funds	326,587	287,858
Property	14,975	5,379
Alternatives	43,696	41,709
Cash	34,433	32,713
All investments are listed on a recognised stock exchange	709,022	694,667
Trading Subsidiary	1	-

There were no individual holdings the market value of which is considered to be material in the context of the portfolio as a whole. Refuge Trading Limited was incorporated in December 2021, but did not commence trading until after the year end.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

16. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade Debtors	1,372,650	760,669
Bad debt provision	-	-
Prepayments	472,698	515,497
Rent deposit	201,377	202,977
Other Debtors	1,981,217	1,222,007
	4,027,942	2,701,150

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade Creditors	2,769,565	1,710,889
Accruals	1,038,374	975,512
Deferred income (note 18)	695,161	1,056,820
Other taxes and social security	374,205	342,741
Other Creditors	87,654	253,222
	4,964,959	4,339,185

	2022	2021
	£	£
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	3,895,593	2,939,623

18. Deferred Income	At 1 April 2021 £	Created £	Released £	At 31 March 2022 £
Deferred income	1,056,820	3,666,074	(4,027,733)	695,161

	At 1 April 2020 £	Created £	Released £	At 31 March 2020 £
Deferred income	981,106	802,219	(726,505)	1,056,820

19. Provisions for liabilities and charges	2022 £	2021 £
Provision at beginning of the year	370,000	340,000
Created during the year	170,165	30,000
Released during the year	(300,000)	-
Balance at the end of the year	240,165	370,000

The provision relates to the Board’s estimate of the present value for cost of dilapidations work that will be required to be undertaken on expiry of and in accordance with the terms of the company’s lease, on the premises at Head Office of £50,000, rent payable of £120,165 covering the rent free period. The remaining £70,000 is towards the future deficits concerning Refuge’s Admitted Body Status of Hertfordshire LGPS scheme.

20. Unrestricted Funds	1 April 2021 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	31 March 2022 £
General	10,414,166	19,828,845	(19,822,871)	-	10,420,140
Designated	3,837,073	-	(832,704)	(3,004,369)	-
Property Fund	-	-	-	360,000	360,000
Quality Assurance Fund	-	-	-	112,000	112,000
Automation Fund	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
Performance Improvement Fund	-	-	-	2,482,369	2,482,369
	14,251,239	19,828,845	(20,655,575)	-	13,424,509

	1 April 2020 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	31 March 2021 £
General	2,750,903	27,076,717	(15,913,454)	(3,500,000)	10,414,166
Designated	337,073	-	-	3,500,000	3,837,073
	3,087,976	27,076,717	(15,913,454)	-	14,251,239

General funds
These funds are available for Refuge’s general purposes.

Designated funds
Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that the Board have set aside to support innovations in service delivery, the strengthening of support infrastructure, diversification of income streams and to provide for sinking fund repairs of leased and owned properties.

Property fund
Is a designated fund to undertake health and safety work and other property improvement work at Refuges

Quality assurance fund
Is a designated fund to develop the quality assurance framework and improve quality standards at Refuges

Automation fund
Is a designated fund to undertake a scoping exercise to introduce, automate and improve the various IT databases across Refuge.

Performance Improvement Fund
Is a fund created to allow investment into the infrastructure of Refuge, including the strengthening of our Finance, People, Property and Technology functions.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

21. Restricted Funds

	1 April 2022 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	31 March 2022 £
Refuge provision	543,263	766,661	(805,740)	-	504,184
Outreach and Floating Support	40,335	1,250,738	(1,259,240)	-	31,833
Integrated Services	27,943	364,242	(376,994)	-	15,191
Big Lottery Fund	3,429	-	(3,429)	-	-
Freephone 24 Hour National					
Domestic Violence Helpline	327,815	1,554,518	(1,554,518)	-	327,814
Public information	-	-	-	-	-
Specialist Services	-	27,783	(27,358)	-	-
Advocacy	230,616	527,200	(614,958)	-	142,860
	1,173,401	4,491,142	(4,642,662)	-	1,021,881

	1 April 2020 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	At 31 March 2021 £
Refuge provision	458,705	1,238,605	(1,154,047)	-	543,263
Outreach and Floating Support	23,424	993,406	(976,495)	-	40,335
Integrated Services	2,577	367,573	(342,207)	-	27,943
Big Lottery Fund	5,714	290,161	(292,446)	-	3,429
Freephone 24 Hour National					
Domestic Violence Helpline	-	2,795,201	(2,467,386)	-	327,815
Public information	-	25,000	(25,000)	-	-
Specialist Services	-	27,358	(27,358)	-	-
Advocacy	35,414	1,305,669	(1,110,465)	-	230,616
	525,834	7,042,974	(6,395,409)	-	1,173,401

Refuge provision
Housing benefit and Supporting People funding used in an emergency accommodation setting to provide critical support services to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. Relevant support activities range from support to set up and maintain a home making links with community groups and organizations; assistance in developing independent living skills (finance, social and domestic/life); signposting to specialist services to help maintain health and well being; signposting to culturally specific legal services, health services, counselling and advocacy.

Advocacy
Used to fund intensive short to medium support to women at high risk of domestic violence as they pursue legal remedies and protection through the criminal and civil justice systems.

Big Lottery Fund - Eastern European Independent Gender Violence Advocacy Service

Used to fund support and information to Eastern European women and children experiencing domestic violence across three London boroughs.

Big Lottery Fund - LEAP Caseworkers for Victims of Domestic Violence in Lambeth
Used to fund support and information to women and children experiencing domestic violence in Lambeth.

Integrated services
Refuge runs a number of integrated services, which act as the first point of contact for any victim of gender-based violence. This service supports those who have experienced domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, prostitution, stalking, trafficking, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and so-called ‘honour’ based violence. Our clients are able to come to one place to access a range of specialist support, including safety, alongside emotional and practical support.

Outreach & floating support
Used in the local community setting to provide critical support services to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. Relevant support activities range from support to maintain a home; making links with community groups and organizations; assistance in developing independent living skills (finance, social and domestic/life); signposting to specialist services to help maintain health and well being; signposting to culturally specific legal services, health services, counselling and advocacy.

24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline
Used to fund the 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline

Specialist services
Used to fund support workers to improve outcomes for women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

22. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Analysis of Net Assets between Funds 2022	Unrestricted	Restricted	
	Funds	Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	759,614	-	759,614
Intangible fixed assets	117,669	107,964	225,633
Financial Investments	709,022	-	709,022
Net current assets	12,078,369	913,917	12,992,286
Provisions	(240,165)	-	(240,165)
	13,424,509	1,021,881	14,446,390

Analysis of Net Assets between Funds 2020	Unrestricted	Restricted	
	Funds	Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	83,361	9,769	93,130
Intangible fixed assets	78,734	198,664	277,398
Financial Investments	694,667	-	694,667
Net current assets	13,764,477	964,968	14,729,445
Provisions	(370,000)	-	(370,000)
	14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,640

23. Commitments

At the year-end the company had future minumum lease commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below:

	2022 Land and Buildings £	2022 Other	2021 Land and Buildings £	2021 Other £
Up to one year	410,421	1,537	320,960	10,689
Between one and five years	895,773	-	587,981	2,985
	1,306,194	1,537	908,941	10,689

Operating lease costs in the year amounted to £665,914, (2021: £870,549) in respect of land and buildings, and 8,703 (2021: £ 15,362) in respect of other leases.

24. Related Party Transactions

During the year trustees received reimbursement of expenses totalling £1,583 (2021 - £312)

Donations from trustees during the year were:

	2022 £	2021 £
	-	30

One year in fifty

from one safe house to a movement

Refuge
One America Square,
17 Crosswall, London,
EC3N 2LB

020 7395 7700

REFUGE

England & Wales - Charity number 277424

Accounts

THIS WASN'T HER FIRST LOCKDOWN

Annual Report

and financial statements

2020–2021

**Our response
to a profound year**

2020-21

A profound year

There every step of the way

Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline contacts up 64%

Website visits increase sevenfold

We keep domestic abuse in the media

We campaign with our sector partners for emergency government funding

Huge support from the public and our partners

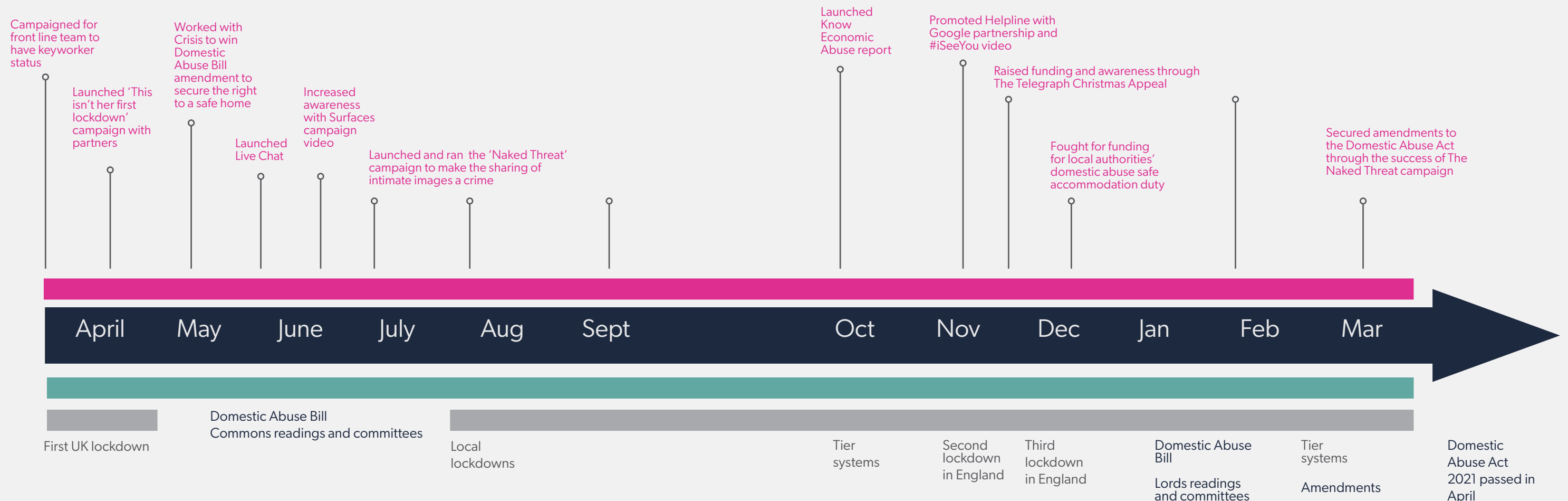
All our services remain open throughout the year



Our staff and volunteers continue to:

- run our vital services
- work with sector partners
- raise public awareness
- secure support and funding
- push for policy reform

The Naked Threat campaign anticipates each stage of the Domestic Abuse Bill's progress through parliament, raises public awareness and secures phenomenal support.

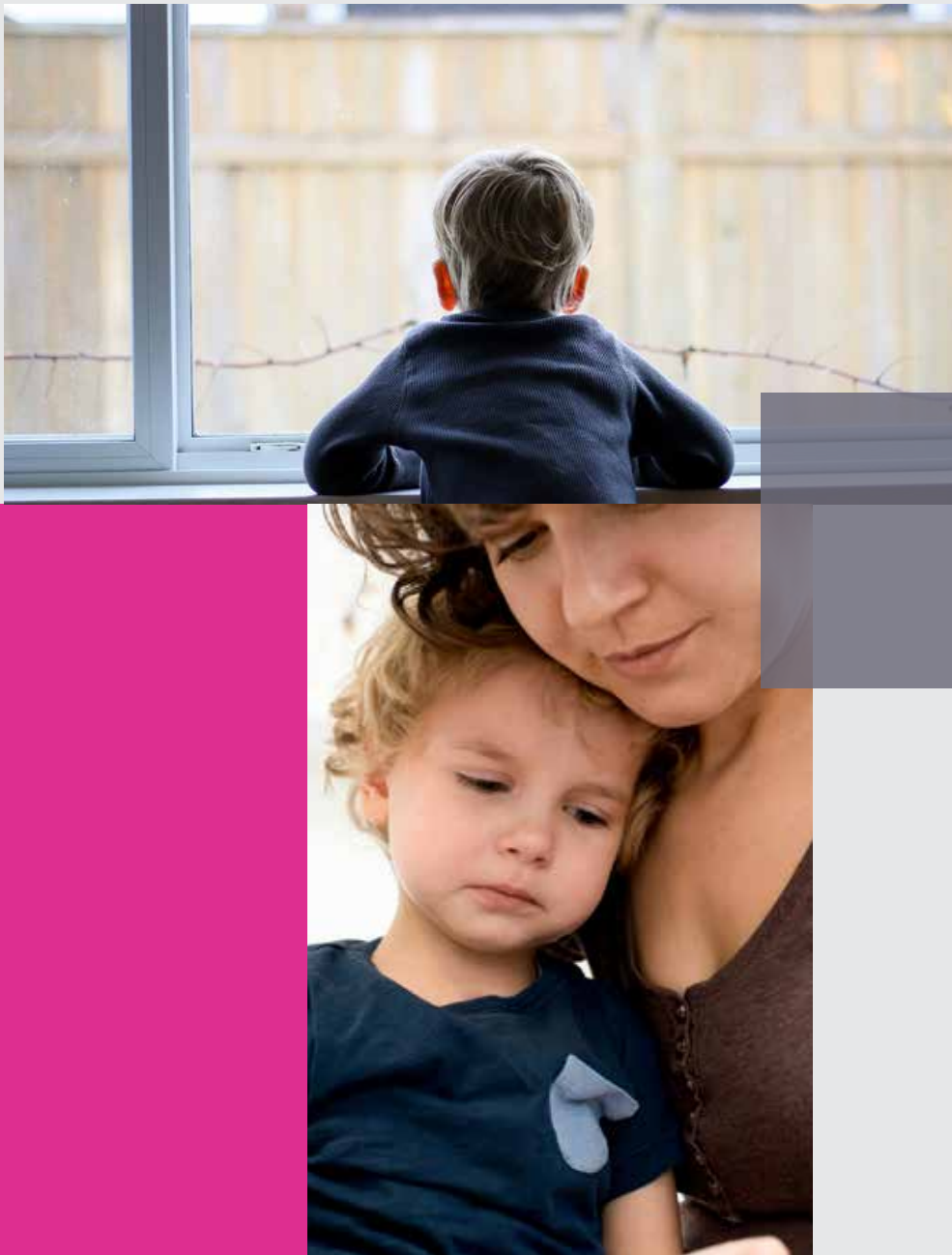


2020-21

A profound year

This annual report captures our work during a year like no other. It shows what we've experienced, learnt and influenced along the way. And it celebrates the resilience of everyone at Refuge, the commitment of our amazing supporters and partners, and the profound courage of the survivors we are privileged to work with.

Front cover graphic kindly reproduced from one of our 2020-2021 campaigns designed pro-bono by BBH



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A profound year



How we responded

For women and girls experiencing domestic and other forms of abuse, home has never been a safe place. In England and Wales, 1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse during their lifetime.¹ Two women a week are killed by a current or former partner².

During this year, as women were forced into close confinement with their abusers, their isolation was compounded and their exposure to abuse increased. From March 2020, **reports of domestic abuse rose** in what the UN called a 'shadow pandemic'. **Refuges, telephone and online support services, and community-based services all reported an increase in demand.**

Our **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** experienced a **64%** increase in calls and contacts, incoming and outgoing. Refuge worked tirelessly to secure funding to keep this vital, 24-hour lifeline running.

Visits to our Helpline website increased sevenfold.

And we knew how hard it would be for a woman trapped at home with her abuser to pick up the phone. So we launched Live Chat on **www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk**. This allows women to receive support from our Helpline advisors online and in silence.

Across our refuges and community-based services, we supported 10,724 women and their 14,709 children. When so many others had no choice but to close their doors, we kept ours open.

We acted fast and stepped up the pressure on key issues. We quickly ensured our frontline refuge workers were granted key worker status. We asked the government to let survivors know that they would not be penalised for breaking lockdown if they tried to leave. In partnership with our colleagues across our sector we successfully campaigned for tens of millions of pounds of emergency funding for domestic abuse and sexual violence services. We campaigned for COVID-19 testing for our specialist staff, to keep them and our services safe. And we called for an urgent, joined-up strategy to protect women and girls and prevent abuse.

We worked hard to influence and shape the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Alongside daily COVID-19 domestic abuse awareness raising we drove three major campaigns. **The Naked Threat** highlighted the pernicious practice of perpetrators threatening to share intimate imagery and successfully campaigned for the criminalisation of this form of tech abuse. **This Isn't Her First Lockdown** went viral, raising huge public support and letting women know our services were open to them. **Know Economic Abuse** illustrated how prevalent economic abuse has become across the UK.

We worked around the clock to ensure women knew they were not alone, constantly sharing messages of support, and partnering with the government to build its #YouAreNotAlone campaign. And we've been there for women and children during each period of lockdown, knowing their isolation and the abuse experienced would be exacerbated. We've been ready for women whenever they had the chance to reach out for help.

We are an amazing team. Committed staff and volunteers have supported women day and night on our Helpline. Our expert frontline and operational staff have continued to deliver life-saving services. Our determined policy and communications staff have held our campaigns in the spotlight.

Our innovative fundraising team pulled on every resource to ensure we were able to respond to the outpouring of generosity from those who wanted to support our work at this critical time. Our people, data and finance teams have been the backbone to all our endeavours throughout the pandemic.

The generosity of our supporters, partners and funders has made it possible for us to respond in this way. They've enabled us to fill service gaps created during the last ten years of austerity. And they've positioned us to meet increases in demand as more women were able to identify as experiencing domestic abuse.

November 2021 marks 50 years since we opened the doors of our first refuge in West London – the world's first safehouse for women and children fleeing from abuse. The last twelve months have been unlike any period in our history. Women and children have faced unique challenges. And our staff, volunteers, supporters, partners and funders have worked together with extraordinary dedication throughout this profound year.



Message from our new chair Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

Collaborating through the toughest of times

Refuge never does anything by halves. Since joining last year, I've witnessed the remarkable resilience of our staff and volunteers and their unwavering support for the women and children we're here to help. During a time in which everyone was affected by COVID-19, Refuge faced significant challenges. We knew that lockdown would be catastrophic for women living with abusive partners, so we took immediate action. We prioritised delivering strong services, despite the challenges. And we shared survivor experiences with government, funders and the public to ensure they fully understood the reality for women experiencing domestic abuse and being locked in with their partners.

Our staff demonstrated steadfast leadership and excellence in the toughest of times. They campaigned to keep domestic abuse in the spotlight.

We pivoted to online working, making our services and our culture more inclusive. We stepped up fundraising efforts to enable us to keep our services operational and delivered extra support when people needed it most. Collaborating with partners, our staff worked tirelessly to drive forward vital changes which are now enshrined in the Domestic Abuse Act and led discussions with the National Emergency Trust to secure additional funding for all four national helplines across the UK.

Our own National Domestic Abuse Helpline staff and volunteers have been there throughout, supporting women in critical need. Everyone at Refuge remains committed to ensure that every woman and child who needs our help gets it and that survivors' voices are heard.

The urgency to respond rapidly, at this level and in these circumstances, happened just as our sector was trying to rebuild an infrastructure eroded by years of austerity. Together we face the challenge of working to eradicate an injustice that demands long-term solutions while dependent on short-term government decisions and investment.

I also want to recognise the amazing response of our supporters this year. Their voices have amplified our dialogue with government. Their financial help has boosted our frontline services and our National Domestic Abuse Helpline. Their emotional encouragement has lifted our staff and the women we serve.

The work we do is only possible because of the incredible people who are part of Refuge, and 2020 brought about change for the organisation's leadership. After eight years, former chair Maggie Rae stood down from the Refuge board mid-2020. We thank Maggie for her long service and continued commitment to Refuge, its people, and the women and children we seek to serve. Through Maggie's leadership we have established a board of trustees from a broad range of disciplines, dedicated to Refuge's mission, and work continues to bring much needed diversity to our board. We are embracing transparency and building trust in our governance, reflected in robust subcommittees and open dialogue with Refuge's senior leadership team. Together we are better equipped than ever to engage with our most important stakeholders – the women and children we serve and our staff.

After 37 years, Dame Sandra Horley DBE stepped down from her role as Refuge's chief executive. We are all truly grateful to Sandra for her deep commitment to helping women and children experiencing domestic abuse and for the vital role she played in building the organisation. Special thanks go to Carole Easton OBE who joined

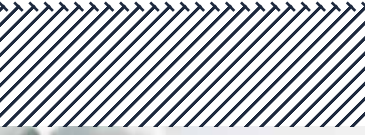
Refuge in mid-2020 as interim chief executive. Her commitment gave Refuge much needed calm and supportive leadership during a year of uncertainty caused by COVID-19 and was very much welcomed by the board and the Refuge team alike.

I am delighted to welcome Ruth Davison as Refuge's new chief executive. Ruth brings a wealth of experience from within the voluntary sector with deep expertise in building strong and strategic organisations, and a personal drive for justice, diversity and equality. Her passion, commitment, and outstanding leadership have already been noted by the staff and board and we're very excited to have her with us in this next phase of Refuge's journey.

As we step into our 50th year, we are thinking through our priorities for the years ahead. Our work on the Domestic Abuse Act is far from done. There is more to campaign for, including the lack of funding for migrant women. We need to influence the government shoulder to shoulder with the voices and experiences of the survivors we are privileged to work with. We are calling on the tech industry to recognise the prevalence of technological abuse when making their design decisions.

I end this message with a particular reference to the importance of embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in Refuge. True to our values, no one at Refuge will rest until we can, hand on heart, say that we have a truly inclusive and diverse organisation and culture, and we have stamped out overt and implicit prejudice and racism in everything we do and say.

The challenges of COVID-19 are not over. We need to remain resilient and alert to the extra pressures that women and children will continue to bear in the year ahead. But, for now, I want to celebrate the incredible progress that Refuge has made this year and thank everyone who has helped make it happen.



Message from our new chief executive

Ruth Davison

Working even harder towards justice for women

When I joined Refuge this year, I already knew I was inheriting a portfolio of high quality frontline work. But I also knew it was under resourced. 50 years since Refuge started, women's voices still go unheard. Their experiences of domestic abuse are underestimated. And adequate funding for the services they need is still not prioritised. Refuge continues to challenge this.

Women and children deserve high-quality support. When they are in danger or need help to escape abuse, they need to be able to access the services that could save – and will definitely change – their lives. I am so proud to be leading an organisation of staff and volunteers who are prepared to do the

emotionally demanding work required to make that happen.

This year, COVID-19 has added even more challenges. Like everyone else, our whole organisation had to learn to work in a different way. And we faced additional pressures, knowing that increased numbers of women were locked in with their abusers. When their personal health was at risk, when their children's schooling was suddenly their own responsibility, when they were worried about their families, our staff and volunteers continued to put women and children first. And they did more, driving the changes and innovations that women needed from us this year.

Our teams worked around the clock to keep our National Domestic Abuse Helpline running and introduced a new Live Chat service to enable us to respond to even more women. After years of lobbying, advocacy and campaigning – by Refuge and so many others across the sector – the Domestic Abuse Act passed into law, with the powers needed to criminalise forms of abuse that were previously unacknowledged, just at the time when they are becoming more possible and prevalent due to everyday digital technology.

This has been a brutally hard year for everyone. But it has also been a watershed moment. Awareness of domestic abuse – and of the need for greater support for women and children – has never been higher. In public and political circles, more people now understand that domestic abuse is serious and has to stop. There is a growing recognition that we all share the responsibility to make this happen. Many, perhaps for the first time in their lives, have imagined themselves in the shoes of a woman locked down with a perpetrator. The outpouring of public support and generosity has been amazing. We are deeply grateful for the practical and financial help from our supporters – both new and old. I want to thank each and every one of you for enabling our staff to continue to meet the needs of those facing domestic abuse and for helping us keep the needs of these brave survivors in the public and political eye.

50 years on, Refuge is needed more than ever. We have a committed board of trustees and incredible staff and volunteers who want to do even better for the women we serve. And the momentum behind our three-part mission, focused on provision, protection and prevention is stronger than ever. We will continue to provide vital frontline services, to protect women and children by raising awareness and shifting attitudes and, ultimately, to help prevent domestic abuse by challenging the structures and systems that allow it to continue.

As the largest provider of high-quality, specialist services for those facing domestic abuse, I am very aware that we carry a responsibility to set standards and to continue to fight for adequate funding for all frontline services. In the year ahead we will invest even more in our policy and advocacy work to ensure that the Domestic Abuse Act is fully implemented and to push for the protection that women need. We will build on our strengths as a campaigning organisation to raise awareness and be part of ending domestic abuse for good. Our feminist values are needed more than ever. And we will use them to forge the strongest possible links between these priorities, sharing the voices of domestic abuse survivors to change policy and challenge attitudes.

Refuge is an amazing group of people and it is my privilege to lead them. My priority in the year ahead is to make sure everyone at Refuge feels supported, engaged, valued and able to bring their whole selves to their work. Our staff and volunteers have done something exceptional in this unbelievable year. And I know they will continue to support the women and children we serve with incredible dedication.

R Davison



Refuge at a glance

This year we continued to support the women and children who need us



“ *I no longer label myself as a victim, I see myself as a survivor. I can see and feel the passion my outreach worker has in her job – this shines through her support and advice. I thank her for lifting my spirits and helping me on my journey of finding myself again.*

We maintained our life-changing services at full pace, supporting 25,433 women and children

- **2,027** women and children accessed our refuge provision
- **23,406** survivors and their children were supported in our community-based services

Calls and contacts to and from our National Domestic Abuse Helpline shot up from January – March 2020

- **13,400** average per month, up 64%
- **72%** of calls with women seeking information and support
- **9%** with police, social workers and healthcare staff
- **11%** with concerned friends, family members or neighbours
- **24/7** support in all languages

Thousands more women turned to our digital support

- **73,600** average website visits per month, a seven-fold increase from January-March 2020
- **6,331** live chats since our May launch
- **75%** of live chatters we surveyed reported accessing our Helpline for the first time
- **13%** were concerned friends, family members or neighbours

Amelia* fled to one of our refuges with her children during lockdown to escape her abusive husband.

“ *I fled an abusive relationship which had been hell on earth, but there was a normality in that abuse and it was only when it got worse and my children were obviously suffering that I had to flee. The thought of a refuge and the unknown was at times even more frightening, but I plucked up courage and left.*

I was met by warm and friendly staff who understood what we had been through. They were able to provide my children and me with support and guidance with housing and counselling, and support with my court cases. I cannot thank them enough for helping me to turn this nightmare around, giving me the confidence to start again and rebuild my children's and my life again.

*All names have been changed to protect identity



Refuge at a glance

We responded
to the complex
risks and
trauma women
and children
experience



“ Before I got to the refuge everything was dark. I couldn't see a future. I couldn't see a plan. I didn't think I was entitled to happy days. That's what abuse does. But now I know we are all entitled to have happy days because I have them now.

We supported women and children with complex needs

- 19% of survivors had mental health difficulties
- 14% disclosed needs related to prescription medication, 3% to drugs and 4% to alcohol
- 10% said they were feeling suicidal by the time they reached out to us
- 7% had no recourse to public funds

The types of abuse women disclose remained similar to previous years

- One third were injured when they accessed our services
- More than 40% had their lives threatened by their abuser
- 64% had experienced physical abuse
- 27% sexual violence
- 86% psychological violence
- 39% economic abuse

And many faced increasingly challenging situations

- 59% also experienced abuse involving technology
- 392 women were dealing with complex immigration cases, up 30% from last year
- 112 were victims of modern slavery, up 75%, of whom 94 had experienced multiple forms of abuse

Helen* left her abusive husband during the first lockdown and moved into refuge accommodation. She has since found a new home and is rebuilding her life.

“ Refuge was life-saving for me when I had nowhere to go. I felt safe in the refuge - the accommodation had everything I needed. The staff gave me the space and understanding I needed to overcome the trauma of being abused.

*All names have been changed to protect identity



Refuge at a glance

We kept going
to support
women and
children
through the
risks and
isolation of
lockdown



“ *It's so nice to have such a supportive team on my side when for ages the system has been so hard (almost impossible) to navigate, and I felt I would never get anywhere. I wish everyone had this level of support, I feel it has literally saved my life at times, so thank you.*

We continued to make a difference to women's safety and wellbeing

- **96%** of survivors said they felt safer as a result of our services
- **92%** achieved the changes they wanted in their lives
- **91%** were supported to find a safe new home
- **94%** said their quality of life had improved
- **96%** said they were no longer living in fear
- **46%** reported an end to all abuse and controlling behaviour
- **99%** felt confident they knew how to access help in future

We maintained a place of safety for women and children

- **48** refuges
- across **22** local authorities
- with **348** units of accommodation

And, despite COVID-19 restrictions, we delivered results alongside other professionals

- **109** risk assessments attended
- **519** perpetrators charged
- **157** guilty verdicts

Sue* is currently living in one of our refuges. She arrived during the second lockdown after fleeing her abusive partner. She was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder after suffering severe coercive and controlling behaviour.

“ *Finding accommodation in a refuge was a blessing in disguise. I was in a horrible situation, but I can honestly say that Refuge saved me. The staff here are so supportive and helpful. I received support to find a therapist very quickly, which is not easy during the pandemic. The staff helped me with everything from sorting my benefits and registering with a GP, to supporting me through the daily struggle of rebuilding my life.*

*All names have been changed to protect identity



Working to end domestic abuse

> PROVISION

Provide. Protect. Prevent.

We know that domestic abuse will end only when our government adopts a fully funded national strategy committed to provision, prevention and protection.

This is the approach we use in our own work. We provide high-quality services for women and children who experience domestic abuse. We protect women by advocating for a strong criminal justice response to perpetrators. And we work to prevent future violence through education, training, campaigning and awareness raising.

- > — PROVISION
- > — PROTECTION
- > — PREVENTION



Provision

This year women and children have faced challenges at a level we never imagined.

And while many other vital frontline organisations were forced to reduce the help they could offer, or close their doors altogether, the incredible response of our supporters and staff enabled us to keep ours going. We moved quickly to remote working and continued to support survivors and their children.

Despite this year's difficulties, we've delivered even greater value to society. Our frontline services not only save and change the lives of woman and children, we also save state funding, especially in the areas of health and safety. This year the New Economics Foundation (NEF) found that for every £1 Refuge spends on services, it generates an average of £8.24 of social value.

NEF estimates the total social value generated by Refuge's specialist services at £86 million per year. These powerful metrics show that we have nearly doubled the social return on investment we achieved four years ago.

“The social value generated by Refuge's services is eight times greater than the amount of money invested in them, demonstrating the vital support Refuge provides for survivors of violence. Yet violence against women remains widespread with devastating impact on survivors, their children and the wider society. This study is a clear indication of the need for long-term, sustainable funding for specialist domestic abuse services, which reflect the social value they generate.”

Beti Baraki, author of Refuge Social Return on Investment, NEF, 2021.

working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION

Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline

In the summer 2019 we won the contract to run the National Domestic Abuse

Calls and contacts to and from the Helpline shot up dramatically, from 270 per day in January-March 2020 to over 400 per day in April 2020-February 2021. We acted fast securing funding to ensure our Helpline advisers and volunteers could support more women. And we invested in IT equipment and cybersecurity to keep this vital, 24-hour lifeline running.

During this first lockdown, visits to our Helpline website increased sevenfold from an average of 10,500 to 73,600 per month. And we knew only too well how hard it would be for a woman trapped at home with her abuser to pick up the phone. So, in May 2020, we launched our Live Chat service. This allows women to communicate with our Helpline advisers, Monday to Friday from 3pm to 10pm online, in real time and – most importantly – in silence.

“Refuge has been a huge support to me. The police suggested I contact their Helpline – but I just couldn't imagine being able to pick up the phone and talk about what I was experiencing – it felt too raw and too risky. Being able to access support via Live Chat, knowing there was a quick exit button I could use if I needed to, helped me enormously and meant I could type out my words rather than speaking them, which took such an emotional burden off me. I feel like I can now talk about my experiences without fear – I know I am not alone as Refuge continues to support me.

<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en/Chat-to-us-online>



We needed to grow our response quickly. And we couldn't do it without support. So we focused our media campaigns to raise awareness of our National Domestic Abuse Helpline and drive donations to fund it.

A campaign created free of charge by ad agency BBH was run by us and our partners throughout the pandemic, in parallel with the government's 'You Are Not Alone' campaign. In one week, in May 2020, our 41 influencers reminded their audiences 'This isn't her first lockdown'. Their 58 posts achieved a reach of 62 million. The media stepped up, donating TV, print, digital and physical advertising space. We worked round the clock so women knew our services were open and we were there to support them. And we called on the public to support our work.

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women fell during the second lockdown. With the generous support and reach of Google, Denise Lewis OBE and others, we were ready with our

THIS WASN'T HER FIRST LOCKDOWN

Refuge's 24 hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline supports women trapped at home with their abuser.

Donating £10 will help keep this vital Helpline running. donate.refuge.org.uk/helpline

#YouAreNotAlone



Refuge is a charity registered in England and Wales (277424)

#iSeeYou video campaign, getting our Helpline number out just as women found themselves isolated again.

How do we support women?

The Helpline lets women know they are not alone, whatever their abuser tells them – we listen, believe, validate, and support them to plan the next best steps for them.



working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION

Our refuges and outreach

With health and safety measures in place, we kept our refuges open and safe.

We found food for families during the shortages. We worked tirelessly with local authorities and other partners to keep services accessible. And we advocated for safe housing for women and children to move to.

At the height of COVID-19, around 7,000 women and children were using our refuges and outreach services on any given day, up from around 6,500 this time last year.

“*Staff who were vulnerable were working from home and this meant that meetings and key work sessions were conducted over the phone. It was really difficult not being able to sit in the same room with a client and read their body language and comfort them.*”

“*My refuge outreach worker helped me understand I didn't have to allow my ex to still control me and manipulate me. She reminded me there was no need to carry fear. I'm free, I'm starting to find myself again, I'm starting to build my confidence, I am able to smile again. I still have bad days, when these days arrive I know I can talk with my worker who really helps me remember how far I've come today.*”



Supporting children

Our child support workers help children overcome the trauma they have experienced. Their work is much needed and greatly underfunded. But they were ready for the new difficulties that lockdown created.

“*Residents were restricted from going out, which caused more problems for the families in the refuge. This needed extra and very careful managing.*”

We were able to respond rapidly to support survivors as they cared for and taught their children for large periods of the year. We helped mothers access the school provision they needed to support their children's study and development. And we quickly developed an excellent resource guide, with suggested timetables, activities and tips on how to manage screen time and online safety.

Natasha, one of our child support workers, began supporting Lucy and her six-year-old son James*. Having witnessed domestic abuse towards his mother, James exhibited behavioural problems when he first came into the refuge. As lockdown restrictions eased, and their one-to-one sessions moved from online to face-to-face, James began to trust Natasha.*

Natasha quickly recognised that James would benefit from counselling sessions with a professional. James and Lucy have now started counselling, which runs alongside Natasha's continued one-to-one sessions with James. While James meets with Natasha, Lucy benefits from the support James receives and is able to have an hour to spend with her newborn baby, take the time to make dinner for herself and her children, or meet with her own key worker.

Thanks to Natasha's support, James' behaviour has improved, he is a lot calmer and his relationship with his mother is improving.

*All names have been changed to protect identity

working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION



Independent advocacy

Navigating the criminal justice system leaves most people feeling marginalised and disempowered.

This experience is worse for survivors of domestic abuse and was compounded further by the pandemic as the criminal courts closed and case progression saw long delays. Virtual hearings, in criminal and civil courts, have improved accessibility for some and created additional barriers for others. Access to injunctions and court orders has increased. But the number of perpetrators charged and convicted has dropped significantly.³

Our independent domestic and gender violence advocates have adapted to these changes. They've prepared survivors for virtual hearings and supported them through the process. And they've advocated on their behalf to prioritise domestic abuse cases, reduce adjournments and improve the accessibility and safety of courts.

While living with her perpetrator, Annette asked for help to escape before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the UK. One of our outreach workers provided emotional support, including discussing the myths and realities of domestic abuse. She helped Annette understand her housing options. She listened to Annette's worries about child arrangements and what to do if the perpetrator attempted to take their child away.*

When lockdown began, Annette decided to stay. She was unable to escape to her mother's house due to her mother being classed as 'high risk'. We kept in touch with Annette by text and phone to make sure she was safe.

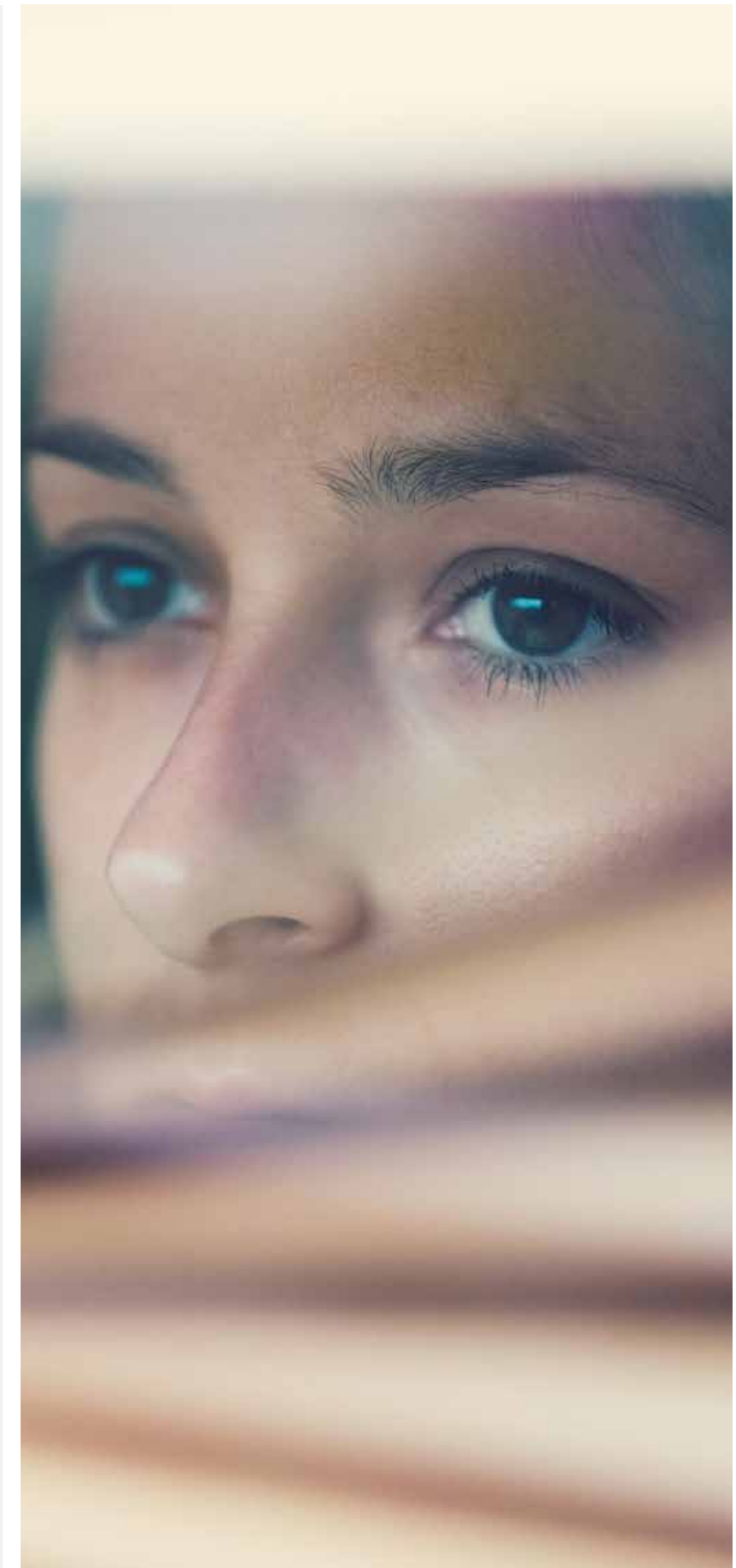
When Annette's partner was furloughed, the emotional abuse became worse and more frequent.

Annette was unable to speak to us as he was always there. She had to wait for him to go for his daily run before she could call for support.

In June, she decided that she could not remain with her perpetrator any longer. She asked for our help to identify injunctions and sever financial ties. We helped her find a solicitor who was still operating and explained the different injunctions that Annette could obtain to remove the abuser from the property.

Annette decided to pursue the injunctions, with emotional support and guidance from our outreach worker. With our support, Annette felt empowered to leave.

*All names have been changed to protect identity



working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION



Escaping economic abuse

The pandemic has compounded the barriers that survivors face on a daily basis. Many women experience their partner taking complete control of their finances.

They find themselves with no money or bank accounts in their name. When they escape, setting up a bank account is a crucial first step to gaining financial independence. Lockdown made this very difficult, with women having to travel much further to get to their nearest open branch.

In response to these challenges, our pioneering tech and economic abuse services have become even more of a priority this year. We're exploring new ways to enhance our support, collaborating with banks, credit rating agencies and government.

“Refuge was life-saving for me when I had nowhere to go and had been deeply financially and psychologically affected by domestic abuse. The staff helped me with sorting out my paperwork with financial institutions and creditors, claim for benefits and registering with a new GP.”

Blocking technological abuse

Our tech abuse service has been a priority for us this year. As the needs of survivors escalated with each lockdown, we helped women check that their devices were secure.

We launched our accessibility project and built safe digital channels to deliver our services.

We translated our Tech Safety Tool into Polish, Spanish and Urdu. And we worked to develop our tech abuse website, designed to share our expertise with survivors and professionals.

“The streets are quieter because of lockdown, but the danger to my client is greater than ever. A mother of three, she has suffered relentless psychological abuse and coercive control by her partner. He has even installed spyware on her mobile phone so he can track her movements and contacts. I've arranged to give her a second-hand 'burner' phone, along with a charger and a SIM.”

For our lines of communication to stay open, we've had to plan our secret meetings down to every last detail – from setting her phone to flight mode and lying about losing the signal, to ensuring she has something tangible to give the perpetrator as 'proof' of her whereabouts. Still, no matter how much you plan, there's always a risk that a perpetrator might show up. It's terrifying, but sadly, cases like these are not unusual.

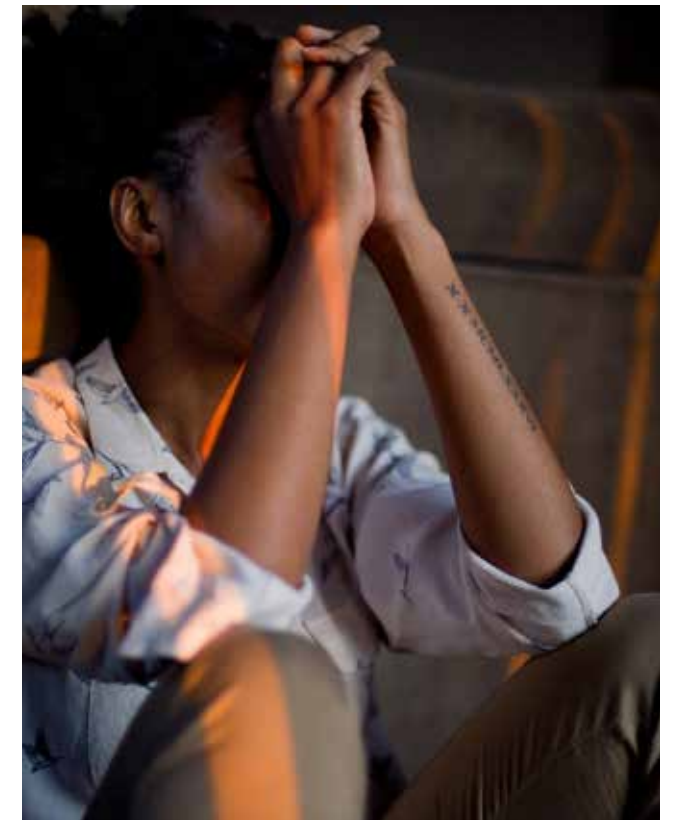
One of our independent domestic violence advocates, London.



working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION



Supporting survivors of modern slavery

Modern slavery survivors have complex and intense needs. They require expert therapeutic, trauma-informed support.

And the situation for many became more desperate during the pandemic. Abandoned during the lockdown by many legal and illegal employment sectors, women who had faced years of exploitation now experienced destitution, rough sleeping, insecure immigration status, and exacerbated mental and physical health issues, with no recourse to public funds.

Our frontline staff responded to a 75% increase in demand. They tackled language barriers and boosted technical literacy to help survivors reach services that shifted to phone and online. And they provided extensive, comprehensive support to ensure critical access to immigration advice, housing, benefits, government assistance, health care and mental health services.



When there's nowhere else to turn

We are experts in understanding the needs of women in complex situations and in finding the right support for them.

We put our expertise to work even more this year, as coercive control and violence from perpetrators escalated the needs of the most marginalised members of our society.

We delivered a 29% increase in support to survivors with no recourse to public funds, women and children whose immigration status excludes them from welfare benefits. Through our intensive, culturally specific, independent expertise we helped many of these survivors access immigration advice and safe accommodation.

Linh* left Vietnam for China in 2005. Instead of the expected factory job, she faced the choice of prostitution or having her organs removed. In 2015 she was trafficked to the UK and moved from place to place. Her captors threatened that the police would imprison her if she communicated with them. Linh believed this and was scared.

A police raid enabled her escape but left Linh unsure of where to turn. By approaching Vietnamese women in the street, she learnt about our Vietnamese and Chinese Modern Slavery Outreach Service. Linh couldn't believe that a Refuge worker would see her, all for free. We provided her with clothes, food and safe accommodation. We found a solicitor able to see her immediately. And we referred her to a specialist counselling service. Linh is now living in her own accommodation. She has been granted leave to remain under asylum and refugee status.

Meeting a support worker gave me a spark of hope. I told her about what I had been through. She believed me. Refuge's services helped me with so many things. I feel like a human and a woman again. Refuge has helped me find my own identity.

*All names have been changed to protect identity

Working to end domestic abuse



PROTECTION

Protection

Our policy and public affairs team communicates the voices of survivors to the highest levels of government.

We collaborate across the violence against women and girls (VAWG) sector.

And we share our expertise – together and with government – to influence policy and law, to fight for the needs of women and children, and to secure funding for our specialist services.



We continued to submit evidence to government. We reported the experiences of survivors to the Women and Equalities Committee and the Home Affairs Committee and attended the Prime Minister's Hidden Harms summit.

Our work with the Home Office led to:

- The launch of the government's national awareness-raising campaign #YouAreNotAlone
- Confirmation, and reassurance, that leaving the home to flee abuse was not a breach of lockdown rules
- An increase to the Universal Credit standard allowance and basic element of Working Tax Credit by £20 a week for one year
- An increase to the Local Housing Allowance so that it covers 30% of rents in the area
- An extension to the parameters of legal aid evidence to include letters provided by independent domestic abuse and sexual violence advisors

We asked survivors about their experiences during the early months of the pandemic. This shaped our priorities for October's second national lockdown: access to benefits, housing, the courts, survivors' mental and physical wellbeing, child contact arrangements and the prevalence of tech abuse.

Responding to COVID-19

As the government announced the first national lockdown in March 2020, we were already collaborating across the sector.

Our immediate priority was to ensure that the government's response centred on the protection of women and girls and the prevention of violence against them, given the highly foreseeable increased workload for organisations like ours.

We co-ordinated a joint letter to the Prime Minister calling for:

- A cross-departmental strategy to protect women and girls during the pandemic
- Strong public messaging and guidance on violence against women and girls
- The direct involvement of VAWG experts in crisis planning and coordination
- Additional resources for specialist support
- Equal protection for migrant survivors

And together we succeeded in:

- Getting our refuge workers recognised as key workers so they could continue to support women and send their children to school
- Winning £28 million in emergency funding for specialist domestic abuse and sexual violence support services across the sector
- Securing emergency funding for Refuge

working to end domestic abuse



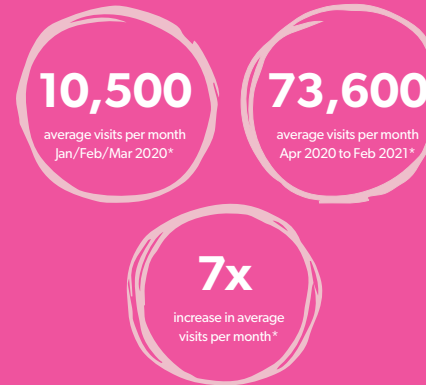
PROTECTION

Covid

Domestic abuse, a crisis within a crisis...

Since the country went into lockdown, more and more women have reached out for support from Refuge's 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline and its supporting services.

www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk



* visits to www.nationaldahelpline.co.uk



We collaborated across the sector and with politicians from all major parties, influencing successfully for several critical changes to the Bill. In partnership with Crisis, we achieved the extension of priority need for homelessness assistance to all survivors of domestic abuse. We succeeded in securing £124 million to back the new legal duty for domestic abuse safe accommodation. And we supported numerous other campaigns led by our colleagues across the VAWG sector, including making non-fatal strangulation a criminal offence, explicitly recognising children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right, and extending the ban on cross-examination to the criminal, family and civil courts. We continue to be inspired by working collaboratively with our colleagues across the VAWG sector.

Some of the amendments we pushed to be made to the Domestic Abuse Act were not accepted by government: improving the Universal Credit system for survivors of domestic abuse, ensuring equal access to support and protection for migrant survivors, and recognising the gendered impact of domestic abuse as part of the definition of domestic abuse. We will continue to progress these strands of work.

Responding to COVID-19

In January 2021, England moved out of the regional tier system and into a third national lockdown.

We worked with the Domestic Abuse Commissioner to make the case for frontline domestic abuse workers to gain priority access to vaccinations. We worked closely with government to keep our services running safely and effectively. And we continued to share the experiences of survivors going through the family and criminal courts, reporting the significant and ongoing delays during the pandemic.

The sudden increase in activity on our National Domestic Abuse Helpline at the start of the pandemic had encouraged the Home Office to give an additional £2 million to helplines and online domestic abuse services.

From March and into June, as the easing of lockdown was announced, calls and contacts remained high, yet there were no plans for an extension to the government's emergency funding. This placed the Helpline in a vulnerable position, dependent on fundraised income to continue the level of support we had managed to provide during the pandemic.

Shaping the Domestic Abuse Act

This year we grasped a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform the national response to domestic abuse.

As the Domestic Abuse Bill continued its passage through parliament, we lobbied MPs and peers on our priorities for the Bill:

- A gendered definition of domestic abuse
- Reforms to the Universal Credit system
- Equal protection and support for migrant survivors of domestic abuse
- Extending priority need for homelessness assistance to all survivors of domestic abuse, including single women
- Adequate funding to back local authorities' legal duty to assess the need for and to commission safe accommodation
- Criminalising threats to share intimate images

We successfully campaigned for the criminalisation of threats to share intimate images with the intent to cause distress by launching a Refuge-led campaign, supported by the Victims Commissioner and Domestic Abuse Commissioner.

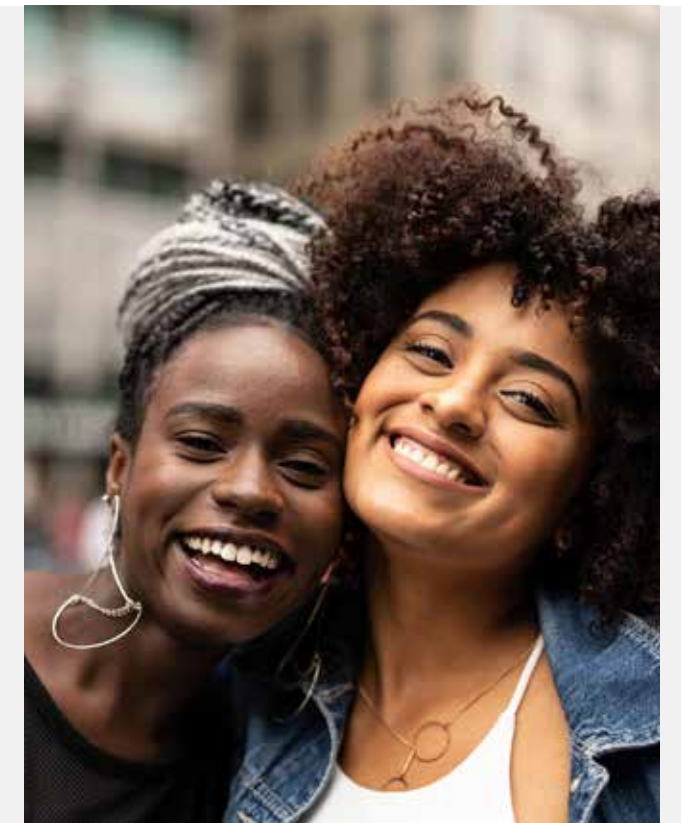
Our research showed that 1 in 7 young women (aged 18-34) in England and Wales had experienced threats to share. We won cross-party political support and secured the generous help of top London creative agency AMV BBDO. In July 2020 we launched The Naked Threat campaign, mobilising 45,000 supporters to send e-letters to government to coincide with critical Bill hearings and announcements. Our hard-hitting 'Dear Priti Patel' video appeal achieved over 180,000 Instagram views and our work became a key theme in the House of Lords.

We will monitor the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act in the coming months, particularly the roll out of the criminalisation of the threat to share intimate images, the implementation of the duty to assess need for and commission domestic abuse safe accommodation services, Domestic Abuse Protection Orders and Notices, and the extension of homelessness rights to all survivors of domestic abuse.

working to end domestic abuse



PROTECTION



Understanding economic abuse

Through our partnership with The Co-operative Bank, we learnt that 1 in 6 adults identify as having experienced economic abuse within a current or former relationship. 1.6 million experienced it for the first time during the pandemic.

When those subjected to behaviours indicating economic abuse are taken into account, this figure rises to 39%. Many are left with long-term debt, a damaged credit rating and limited access to financial products and services long after leaving their abusive partner. Economic abuse lands survivors in over £3,000 debt, on average, with one in four owing over £5,000.

So, in October 2020, we launched 'Know Economic Abuse' with The Co-operative Bank. We created a five-point plan of action for government, banks and credit ratings agencies. We partnered with Experian to review the processes in place for survivors to repair their credit reports.

And we presented the Know Economic Abuse campaign to over 100 people from the VAWG and banking sectors at a virtual event hosted by Surviving Economic Abuse.

In February 2021, we started work to establish a cross-sector Commission on Online Banking. Its work will continue throughout 2021 and into 2022 and will include recommendations to make online and digital banking safer for survivors. We continue to work with the government, advocating reforms to Universal Credit that will make the benefit system safer for survivors. And we are working on a cross-government fund for survivors who are experiencing financial hardship.

Sharing our expertise

The Domestic Abuse Act and our response to COVID-19 stand out in 2020-2021. But our policy and public affairs team briefed and consulted on many other live issues that impact the experiences of survivors.

We worked with MPs, peers and ministers to shape government policy on refuge funding, Universal Credit, economic abuse, migrant women, rape prosecutions, domestic homicide prosecution and sentencing, Domestic Abuse Protection Order/Notice guidance and polygraph testing of domestic abuse perpetrators.

We commented on the issues surrounding the death of Sarah Everard, including the lack of proportionate public attention given to the deaths and disappearances of Black and minoritised women.

We responded to government and legal consultations on the Comprehensive Spending Review, local authority funding allocation, employers' roles in responding to domestic abuse, harmful communications, making misogyny a hate crime, and the Ofsted inspections of Cafcass.

We provided evidence for the cross-government strategy on violence against women and girls, collaborated to forge joint sector principles for the strategy submission, and shared written briefings on the Domestic Abuse Bill.

working to end domestic abuse



PREVENTION



Prevention

Staying in the spotlight

Our media presence is a service in its own right. We must reach survivors so they recognise domestic abuse and know where to turn to for support.

We owe it to them to share our Helpline and frontline services everywhere. To shout the message that domestic abuse is a crime. And to show the support we're ready to give.

Every individual who understands a little more about domestic abuse is better equipped to help: to notice the hidden signs, to challenge others' attitudes, to reach out to a survivor. Every person who cares enough to donate may be willing to tell their friends, share our posts, write to their MP.

The increased public understanding of domestic abuse during lockdown led many women to identify their partner's behaviour as controlling for the first time. As awareness of the issue grows, so too does the number of women who recognise their abuse in other survivors' stories.

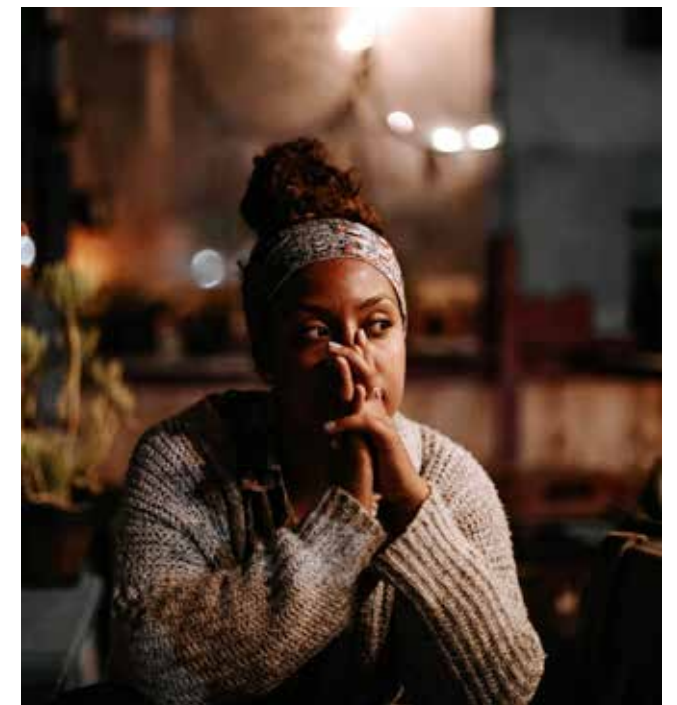
This year, we've worked incredibly hard to keep domestic abuse in the headlines, shape public opinion, bring in donations and influence government policy. With the generous support of influencers, talent and creative agencies, our media presence has been big, bold and strategic.

Extending our digital reach

Last year we put in the groundwork, fine tuning our Twitter, Facebook and Instagram presence to reach more women and secure more supporters.

This year, we extended our visual identity to grab even more attention. And it's working. The Naked Threat campaign engaged 45,000 responses and secured 30,000 new supporters. Our TikTok video on feminism went viral and achieved 47,000 views. We got out there. Just when women needed to know, more than ever, how to reach us. And our supporters were ready to help us.

- Twitter up 21% to 55,000 followers
- Facebook up 63% to 50,500 followers
- Instagram up 250% to 31,000 followers
- LinkedIn up 161% to 10,000 followers



working to end domestic abuse

> PREVENTION

Getting our message heard 'Surfaces'

Last year we began creating our own audio-visual content.

This year, in response to the rise in domestic abuse during the first UK lockdown, award winning agency McCann-Bristol generously wrote and produced Surfaces, a shocking yet hopeful 11-minute short film featuring Maxine Peake, longstanding Refuge supporter. A 30-second trailer and media campaign drove traffic to the full film, shown on multiple channels.

The results were overwhelming. The campaign reach was 65.7 million and the film received over 8.4 million views. The government took up our campaign, boosting it with 350 influencers, and using 'Surfaces' in local government educational programmes. The campaign was shortlisted for the prestigious London Shorts award.



The Naked Threat

This campaign had one clear objective, to protect women from emerging image-based abuse.

We knew this meant pushing for a change in the law, to criminalise the threat to share intimate images. And the Domestic Abuse Bill was our opportunity.

The public was right behind us. We mobilised 45,000 supporters to send e-letters to government. We grabbed attention with the generous help of top London creative agency AMV BBDO, celebrity influencers, ambassadors and survivors. And our hard-hitting 'Dear Priti Patel' video appeal achieved over 180,000 Instagram views.

By dialling the campaign up and down in line with the Bill's progress through parliament, the government could not avoid our call, and in March they announced the key amendment. This is a huge win for Refuge – our multifaceted campaign changed the law, giving millions of women and girls the protection they so desperately need.



working to end domestic abuse



PREVENTION



Know economic abuse

For decades, our sector has been supporting survivors to deal with the impacts of economic abuse.

Our research generated the evidence we needed to raise public awareness and influence banks, credit ratings agencies and government. Together with The Co-operative Bank we launched a sustained campaign, sharing our findings with the press, TV, radio, MPs, peers, officials and key stakeholders.

We reached an audience of 20.6 million. Our social media activity achieved over 6.3 million impressions with nearly 20,000 engagements. The Co-operative Bank took our work to its heart, rolling the campaign out across its branches and updating support materials to help staff with conversations around economic abuse.

We have used our findings and policy recommendations to continue advocating with the government for changes to the benefits system that survivors need to keep safe. And together with The Co-operative Bank we are planning the next phase of our campaign which will research the impact of online banking on survivors, create recommendations for change, and help educate survivors and concerned friends and family to spot the signs of economic abuse.

“I feel proud to work for a business that’s campaigning for this important cause. And I’m looking forward to supporting those suffering from this form of abuse.”

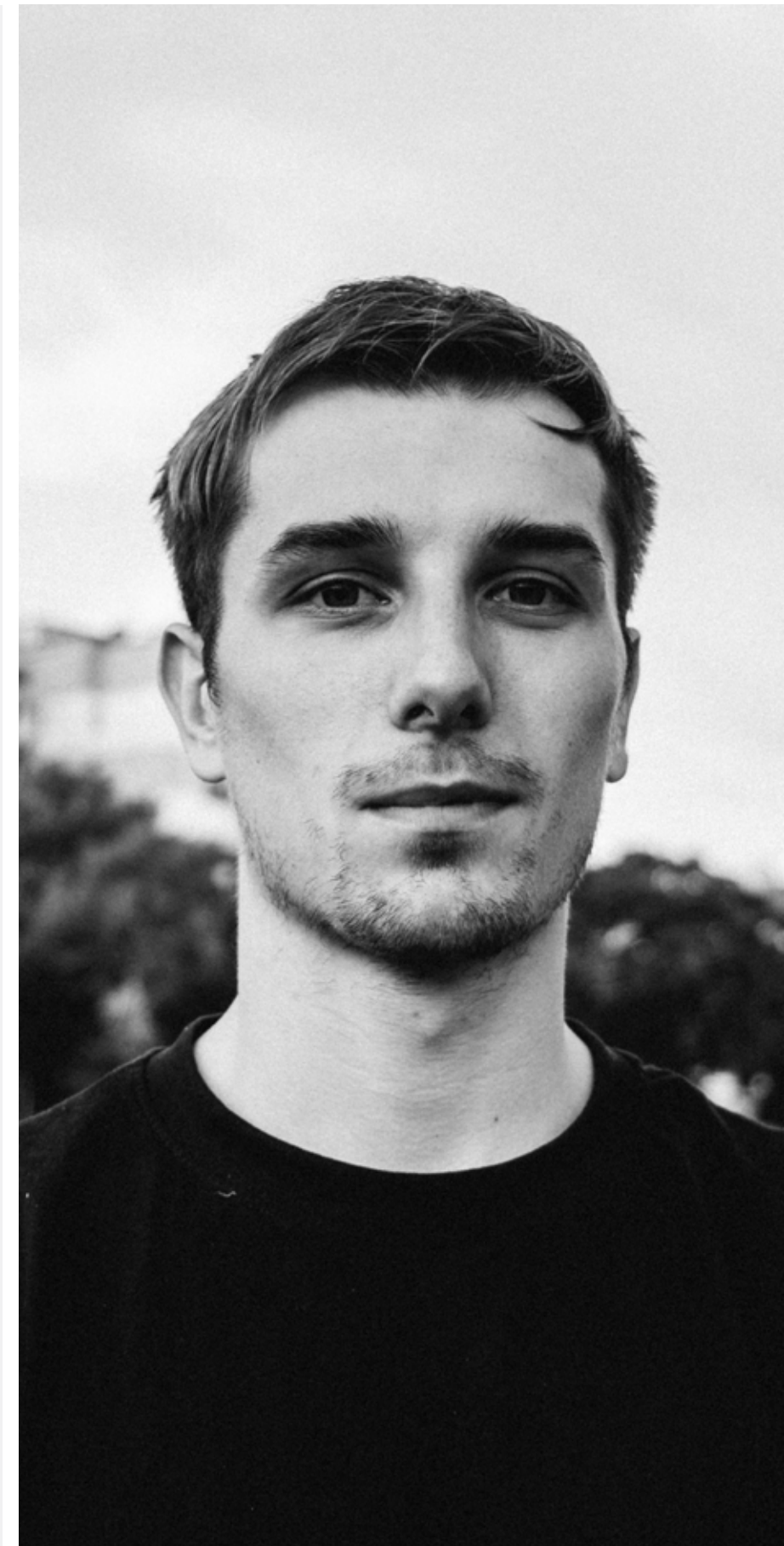
Choose to challenge

We teamed up with British GQ to reach their predominantly male audience.

Uniquely positioned to drive awareness and challenge attitudes among their audience of 10.4 million a month across print, digital and social, their 10-page feature shone a light on domestic abuse, complementing the International Women’s Day 2021 global theme.

“My aim was to make men better understand these issues. I also wanted them to think about the part they can play – in relationships, families, peer groups and society as a whole – in the effort to stop violence against women and girls, and to ask them to #ChooseToChallenge themselves about attitudes and behaviour that are prevalent across all walks of life.”

George Chesterton, British GQ political editor



working to end domestic abuse



PREVENTION

Appealing for public support

For its 2020 Christmas Appeal, The Telegraph chose four charities that needed support more than ever before.

We were one of them. With our share of the £836,692 raised, we were able to provide the equivalent of more than 3,850 nights of refuge accommodation for a family.

The financial support was just part of the picture. During the three critical appeal months, we worked with The Telegraph to publish 23 articles to an audience of around 600,000. Victoria Derbyshire, David Morrissey, Jo Brand, Baroness Nicky Morgan, Dr Nicola O'Leary and our new chair Hetti Barkworth-Nanton generously shared their experiences and insights, raised awareness around our priority messages and promoted our Helpline, Live Chat and specialist services.





Unique difficulties, extraordinary responses



Very different challenges

In May 2020, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government announced a £10 million emergency fund so that safe accommodation services in England could continue to give the most vulnerable the extra support they needed.

The £827,000 we received kept our life-saving refuges open when many had to close. Women and their children have been able to enter and exit our service in the same way they could before the pandemic.

And, after a decade of austerity, the income we generated from fundraising meant we could start to rebuild our frontline services. We could return to doing more to support women, children and our staff through the most challenging and difficult of years.

We turned our refuges into home schools, with laptops, tablets, books and a stable environment for children to learn in.

We have been a constant face for the children in refuge, so they felt safe and supported. It was really challenging to explain to the children that they could not come too close to us. Usually, they want us to play with them one to one. This was the hardest part of lockdown for us and them. ”

We overcame the extra barriers to support that many women faced, maintaining equal access to our refuge services. This meant we responded to the immediate needs of women with no recourse to public funds, those furloughed, and those in employment who could not afford high rents.

We provided a 'move on' fund for 165 survivors so that:

- 26 women were able to pay for their deposits or rent in advance
- 115 bought the furniture and white goods they needed
- 19 could organise their travel and removals
- 4 reduced their rent arrears and eliminated this barrier to their new home

Domestic abuse, a crisis within a crisis...

In England and Wales, 1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse during their lifetime and two women a week are killed by a current or former partner.

For women and girls experiencing domestic abuse and other forms of violence, home has never been a safe place.

In lockdown, as they were forced into close confinement with their abusers, women's isolation was compounded and their exposure to violence increased.



Please visit our web site www.refuge.org.uk for more information and find out how you can support or get involved.

www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

We created a new housing advocacy role to help women moving on and give our refuge staff more knowledge about housing options and greater confidence in their advocacy.

This new role also monitors demand for refuge spaces and identifies suitable and safe temporary accommodation.

During the year our new housing advocate progressed 130 referrals:

- 70% successfully moved on within 3 months of support
- 25 were women who had been in a refuge for around one year or more

Sometimes the cost of someone's safety is £150 ”

Julia, Refuge service manager





Unique difficulties, extraordinary responses



Our dedicated team

We are an amazing team. The staff in our frontline services work alongside our head office staff with outstanding dedication.

Like many organisations, we reacted very quickly to the impact of the pandemic and its lockdowns. Not only were we determined to keep our services up and running, we found new ways to respond to the extra difficulties, constraints and dangers that many women and their children faced.

And everyone rose to the challenge. Our frontline staff continued to deliver our much-needed specialist services. We put in place careful cleaning and PPE measures to make sure face-to-face work could be carried out safely. And we equipped our teams to work from home where possible.

But the year has taken its toll on everyone. So we've given special attention to the welfare of our staff, increasing supervision and providing more support sessions. We offered wellbeing courses to our staff and volunteers and extended our employee assistance programme to include all volunteers. And we set up a staff forum – our commitment to continuing the two-way communication and engagement that has been so vital during this year. We want our staff to use the forum to give us open and honest feedback and influence the things that matter to them at work.

This year has been life-changing in so many ways. In the wake of the death of George Floyd, our staff established an Anti-Racism Working Group and we undertook a review of equality, diversity and inclusion across Refuge. These critical insights have fed into a detailed action plan that we will implement in the year ahead to develop a culture of inclusivity and transparency.

I want to pay tribute to each and every member of staff and volunteer at Refuge, all of whom have stepped up in these terrible and challenging times.”

Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair of Refuge



Phenomenal support

It has been a truly transformative year for fundraising at Refuge.

Our team acted quickly in the early days of the pandemic, asking our supporters to help keep our services running. And, as we shone the spotlight on domestic abuse through each lockdown, individuals and businesses responded in huge numbers, donating over £17 million to support all areas of our vital work. After the decade of austerity Refuge has faced, their support placed us in the fortunate position of being able to grow much needed critical specialist services and invest in infrastructure that had reached breaking point.

We built on the success of the ambitious three-year fundraising strategy we started in 2020, driving income and awareness of our services. And we innovated. We were the first charity to run a Facebook fundraiser during the pandemic. And we launched a high-value and a digital appeal, both of which exceeded their targets.

Our dedicated supporters and partners are at the heart of this success. Here are just some of the ways they've helped us do even more to support women and children this year.

Our loyal supporters A growing band

As the UK went into the first national lockdown, we worked hard to mobilise all opportunities to raise funds.

The public responded with a huge surge of support for our work. And we were ready. With our new donation page and email platform, launched in 2019, we were equipped to engage our regular supporters and recruit new ones, flexibly and at low cost. So when COVID-19 hit, we immediately responded with extra digital dexterity. We let our existing supporters know about the increase in need we were seeing. And we recruited new supporters to fund this demand, working closely with our digital and media team.

Public response was incredible. We raised over £2.8 million and grew our email list from around 4,000 to over 77,000 people. Engaging this many people in our work is vital. It means we can continue to raise the funds we need to support women and children. And, just as important, it helps us amplify awareness of our services, challenge attitudes and continue to campaign for a world where domestic abuse is not tolerated.





Unique difficulties, extraordinary responses

Virtual challenge events

We introduced a new programme of virtual challenge events. Our supporters took on a month-long challenge: doing 3,000 squats, walking 62 miles or running 100 miles. Tens of thousands of our supporters took part. Connecting with each other in our Facebook community, they raised awareness and over £1.3 million for our work.

The programme came to a climax with our first ever Refuge Fest. During our weekend-long celebration of International Women's Day 2021, our celebrity

ambassadors, industry leaders and passionate supporters shared their skills, time, wisdom and insight.

Communities coming together

We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of individual and community support in the first two months of lockdown. With everything from car washes to front door photos, cycling challenges to fancy dress, individuals, company teams and university groups raised an incredible £600,000.

The London Marathon

Thank you so much for all the time and vital support you give in your roles as workers and volunteers. You are truly superstars! As a previous Refuge resident, who needed a safe refuge twice, I know how important the work you do is.

”

In April 2020, as the iconic main event was postponed, Team Refuge took on its very own virtual London Marathon relay. Each Refuge team member ran a virtual mile, completing the 26.2 miles together. Our brilliant team then completed the virtual London Marathon in October 2021, raising over £23,000.

Wow! You are truly amazing for investing your time in helping those people that are really in need. It is such a compassionate and caring thing to do, and you are so strong and selfless for choosing this path. I am really in awe of you, and want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart and also on behalf of all of those people that need someone to support and help them.

”

Our generous partners

National Emergencies Trust

In response to the increase in calls for help from women affected by domestic abuse, the National Emergencies Trust funded a pioneering £1.4 million partnership between Refuge and our partners in the devolved nations: Scottish Women's Aid, Welsh Women's Aid and NEXUS NI. Their Coronavirus Appeal helped us to expand capacity on our National Domestic Abuse Helpline and make it more accessible to women. A particular highlight was working in partnership with expert charity SignHealth to create a British Sign Language interpretation strand for Deaf women seeking support from our Helpline advisers.

We are pleased to have worked with Refuge to build a consortium of partners across the UK to respond to rising demand for domestic abuse helplines and support those in great need, wherever they are. Through creative and thoughtful planning, Refuge navigated the challenges created by the COVID-19 crisis and extended the existing expert support available to survivors through the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, ensuring that survivors' changing needs remained the highest priority at all times.

”

Mhairi Sharp, chief executive, National Emergencies Trust

Barclays

With Barclays' generous investment, we set out to meet the challenges of increasing demand, remote service provision, client safety, and staff resilience and wellbeing. With their help we've:

- Strengthened our cybersecurity IT infrastructure so our National Domestic Abuse Helpline team and office staff could work remotely and safely
- Extended our pioneering tech abuse service by launching www.refugetechsafety.org in May 2021 – a new digital platform to raise awareness of tech abuse and survivor safety
- Publicised our National Domestic Abuse Helpline nationwide through cashpoint machines and high-profile advertising space in Westminster Underground station
- Given our modern slavery service the extra funding it needed
- Started a transformative HR project to give our staff and volunteers a boost to their wellbeing and resilience

Chelsea Football Club

The Chelsea Football Foundation, the club ownership and their dedicated fans raised crucial awareness and funds during the early stages of lockdown. Their video campaign, featuring players from the men's and women's teams, raised £572,000. Special thanks go to the Women's Football Team and MHC Services.

Hitchin Belles Football Club

We are hugely grateful for our partnership with the Hitchin Belles. With players from under 5s through to adults, their teams regularly raise funds to support our work. And we are enormously proud that their Under 8 and Under 10 teams play in kits featuring the Refuge logo.

Unique difficulties, extraordinary responses

Avon Cosmetics

As soon as the crisis hit, our long-term partner Avon knew that the need for our work would become more urgent. Creating a new hand sanitiser in April 2020, Avon immediately pledged a phenomenal £150,000 from sales, going on to raise a total of almost £290,000.

The Co-operative Bank

Long-term partner The Co-operative Bank has continued its transformational

financial support, underpinning our strategic work on economic abuse with the publication of the Know Economic Abuse report. With a donation of over £88,000 through the Everyday Rewards scheme, The Co-operative Bank has made a real difference in helping us withstand the extraordinary challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

John Lewis Partnership

John Lewis Partnership stepped up in style with three great contributions: Virtual Beauty Masterclasses, Waitrose Community Matters Online, and Style with Purpose, a capsule collection available online and through their flagship stores nationwide. Together the Partnership raised more than £110,000, as well as vital awareness of our National Domestic Abuse Helpline and Live Chat.

ICAP Charity Day

We were one of the fortunate charities chosen for ICAP's legendary £3.6 million Charity Day 2021. ICAP's first ever virtual event was a huge success, supported by Refuge ambassadors including Sir Patrick Stewart, Olivia Colman, David Morrissey, Billie Piper and Julie Etchingham. ICAP's donation supported our tech advocacy service, empowering survivors to use technology positively and safely and take back control of their lives.

Alighieri

Rosh Mahtani's innovative jewellery brand, inspired by Dante Alighieri's 'Divine Comedy', partnered with us this year. After a generous initial donation, Rosh designed The Glimmer of Light necklace, the first of five pieces marking 50 years of Refuge, generously donating 100% profits. The Glimmer of Light represents the first safe house, a window of hope for women and their children experiencing domestic abuse.

Thank you

To all our loyal supporters and generous partners. To the families of those who left a gift in their will. And to our ambassadors and donors. Your ongoing commitment to Refuge is phenomenal. And, in this extraordinary year, the hard work carried out by our dedicated Refuge team could not have been achieved without your help.

Advent International
Akin Gump
Albert Hunt Trust
Alighieri Ltd
AMV BBDO
Armando Iannucci
Avon Cosmetics Ltd
Bain Capital
Barclays
Baroness Helena Kennedy QC
BBC Children in Need
BBH
Beck Fitzgerald
Bergqvist Charitable Trust
Bloomberg L. P.
Brian Woolf Family Trust
Cambridgeshire Community Foundation
Cecil and Hilda Lewis Charitable Trust
Central England Co-operative Limited
Chelsea Football Club Foundation
Cherie Blair CBE QC
CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP
Comic Relief
CVC
Dame Helen Mirren DBE
Danego Charitable Trust
David Dudding and Catherine Williams
Dr Sarah Wood
Farebrothers
Fiona Bruce
Fleishman Hilliard
Foundation Derbyshire
Fraser Muggeridge and Jeremy Deller
Ghalia and Omar Al-Qattan
Gwyneth Forrester Trust
Hazel Mackay
Jenny Smith
Jo Brand
John Coates Charitable Trust
John Lewis & Partners
John Simister
Julia and Hans Rausing

Kathleen Beryl Sleigh Charitable Trust
Latham and Watkins
Lily Safra
Lord Barnby Foundation
Lund Trust
Mark Haddon and Sos Eltis
McCaan Erickson Bristol
Morrisons Foundation
Nathan Kirsh Foundation
National Emergencies Trust
National Lottery Community Fund
Olivia Colman CBE
Olivia Hall
PA Consulting
Peter and Krystyna Holland
Picturehouse Cinemas
Procter & Gamble
Pye Foundation
Rayne Foundation
Sandy Gumm
Schroder Charity Trust
Schroders
ShareGift
Sir Patrick Stewart OBE
Stratford Town Trust
Sweaty Betty
Telegraph Christmas Appeal
TFT Consultants
The Alan Edward Higgs Charity
The Atkin Foundation
The Banham Foundation
The Barratt Foundation
The Brook Trust
The Co-Operative Bank
The David Family Foundation
The Gloag Foundation
The Permira Foundation
TP ICAP
Tracy Marshall and Sian Bonnell
Two Magpies Fund
VIC London
Weil Gotshal & Manges LLP
Winkworth Sherwood LLP

Looking ahead

Doing even better. Doing even more.

November 2021 marks 50 years since we opened the doors of our first refuge in West London – the world's first safehouse for women and children fleeing domestic abuse.

But our work is not done.

2020-2021 has been a profound year for everyone, one of extraordinary challenge, learning and change. For Refuge, the year has tested all three parts of our strategy: provide, protect, prevent. And it's put additional pressure on a sector already struggling to maintain vital services after ten years of funding cuts.

Despite these difficulties, we're more ready than ever for the work ahead, having:

- Created ways of working that are fit for the future
- Welcomed our new chief executive
- Enhanced our governance
- Moved towards best practice in our leadership
- Responded to a significant number of tenders from commissioners
- Raised funds to invest in services impacted by years of austerity
- Championed equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work

- Started the transition from our COVID-19 response towards the 'new normal'
- Engaged staff, volunteers, survivors, stakeholders and supporters as we set our course for the decade ahead

As we go into our 50th year, we are working out how we can support more women and children who are experiencing domestic abuse. Building on the increased awareness during the pandemic, we want to sustain our current provision and meet increases in demand as more women reach out for support.

To focus our resources on this vision, we have published a one-year business plan with pragmatic priorities to:

- Ensure that we deliver high-quality services for women and children facing domestic abuse
- Focus on ensuring our workforce is happy and healthy
- Agree a clear and ambitious strategic focus for Refuge to 2027
- Continue to strengthen our governance and leadership
- Continue to develop our equality, diversity and inclusion programme of work
- Galvanise society to realise our vision by developing our external engagement strategy



Refuge is committed to a world where domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is not tolerated. We start our 50th year with even greater determination, tested and strengthened by the challenges of delivering through COVID-19. We are more grateful than ever for the phenomenal work of our whole Refuge team, which could not be achieved without the commitment of our supporters, funders and partners. And we celebrate the profound courage and resilience of the women we work with.

As a survivor of domestic abuse, know you are not alone. You are so strong for making a change and getting away from it. I've done it for my children, so they did not grow up to see it happening.

25 years down the line and my children are grown up and happy, as I am too. Think of what you can achieve, not being held back, to do what you have always wanted to do. Nobody to stop you thriving. Be strong and you will get through this.

”



Administrative details

Charity number:	277424
Company number:	1412276
Regulator of Social Housing number:	4730

Principal office:

International House, 1 St Katharine's Way, London E1W 1UN

Auditors:
Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Devonshire House, 60 Goswell Road, EC1M 7AD

Bankers:
HSBC Bank Plc, 281 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4HJ
Barclays Bank Plc, 1 Churchill Place, London E14 5HP

Investment Managers:
Charles Stanley & Co, 70-72 Chertsey Street, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4HL
CCLA, Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4ET

Solicitors:
Weil Gotshal and Manges LLP, 1 South Place, EC2M 2WG
C M Murray LLP, 1 Canada Square, E14 5AA
Bindmans LLP, 236 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1X 8HB
Bates Wells, 10 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BE
CMS Cameron McKenna LLP, 78 Cannon Street, EC4N 6AF
Shearman and Sterling LLP, 9 Appold Street, EC2A 2AP
Winckwoth Sherwood LLP, Minerva House, 5 Montague Cl, London SE1 9BB

Trustees, officers and advisers

Under its Memorandum and Articles of Association, Refuge was originally incorporated as Chiswick Family Rescue on 30th January 1979 as a company limited by guarantee not for profit and not having share capital. The name was subsequently changed to Refuge on 5 March 1993.

It is a charity with a registered office at International House, 1 St Katharine's Way, London E1W 1UN.

On 13 August 2012 Refuge became a Registered Provider of Social Housing regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency. A council of management (whose members are also directors of the charitable company) oversees Refuge's policies and the execution of its activities. Members are elected upon a resolution of the council of management and may resign their membership by notice in writing to the company.

The members of the council of management who held office during the year were:

Board:

Hetti Barkworth-Nanton (Chair)
Andrea Daniels
Elizabeth Edwards
Katie Farrington
Christine Higgins
Carolyn Pearson
Jon Rowney (appointed 6 July 2021)
Selina Sagayam
Ruth Smith
Kirsten Walkolm
James Watson O'Neill (appointed 6 July 2021)

Ambassadors:

Cherie Booth CBE QC
Jo Brand
Fiona Bruce
Olivia Colman CBE
Baroness Helena Kennedy QC
Dame Helen Mirren
Dame Stella Rimington (stepped down 28th September 2020)
Sir Patrick Stewart OBE

Chief Executive

Sandra Horley CBE (retired 31 October 2020)
Carole Easton (appointed as Interim CEO 23 June 2020 – Resigned 21 April 2021)
Ruth Davison (appointed 6 April 2021)

Company Secretary

Sandra Horley CBE (resigned 9 August 2020)
Osbert Klass (appointed 9 August 2020 resigned 6 July 2021)
Lornette Pemberton (appointed 6 July 2021)

Governing document

Refuge is a charitable company limited by guarantee, originally incorporated as Chiswick Family Rescue on 30 January 1979 and registered as a charity on 31 March 1979. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and appointment of council of management

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under Refuge's Articles are known as members of council of management. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association one third of the members of council of management are required to retire at each annual general meeting. Those longest in office since co-option or election retire first and are all eligible for re-election.

Council of management induction and training

All new members of council of management receive an induction pack containing detailed information about Refuge, its organisation and its work. They also spend time with the Chief Executive, Chair and senior staff to familiarise themselves with Refuge's activities and their role and responsibilities as a charity trustee. Training opportunities are offered to introduce trustees to their legal and governance duties. There are regular visits to services, opportunities for specific training and presentations by staff at board meetings. All trustees have received a copy of the Charity Commission publication 'The Essential Trustee'.

Organisation

Council of management is responsible for the overall governance of Refuge. Council of management has a maximum of 12 members. Members of council of management have a range of skills and experience including legal, financial, property, business, social care and communications that support Refuge in the delivery of its objectives. The charity's council of management meets regularly to manage its affairs. Refuge's chief executive Ruth Davison, is responsible for the day to day management of the charity and the implementation of policy, supported by a highly dedicated and professional team of staff and volunteers.

Partnership

In pursuit of its charitable aim of providing safe accommodation for women and children escaping domestic abuse Refuge works in partnership with a number of different housing associations and local authorities.

Housing associations:

BPHA, Central and Cecil, Clarion Housing Group, Peabody, Gateway, Hexagon, London and Quadrant, Metropolitan Thames Valley, Notting Hill Genesis, Optivo, Orbit, Paragon, Sanctuary Housing, Home Group, Southern Housing, Town and Country and Tuntum.

Statutory partners:

The London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Ealing, Hackney, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston on Thames, Lewisham, Lambeth, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond, Southwark, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth and Westminster.
The counties of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, East Sussex and Warwickshire. The city of Derby and the borough of Warrington.

Police Crime Commissioners (PCC):
Derbyshire.

Objectives

The objects of the company are:-

To provide for the relief of women and their children or other victims who have been subject to:

- (i) physical, sexual, emotional and/or mental abuse within an intimate or “family” relationship (“domestic abuse”); or
- (ii) other gender-based abuse, which term, for the purposes of these Articles, shall include but not be limited to rape, prostitution, gang abuse, sex-trafficking or female genital mutilation, in either of cases or (ii) above, throughout the United Kingdom and abroad

To provide specialist supported housing and social housing and any associated amenities in England, designed to meet the needs of women and children who are the victims of domestic abuse and/or other gender-based abuse, and other services designed to facilitate their onward progression; and

To advance public education, research and training on understanding of the issues of domestic abuse and gender-based abuse throughout the United Kingdom and abroad.

Refuge’s mission continues to be that of providing emergency accommodation and support to women and children escaping domestic abuse whilst raising awareness and understanding of the issue. Its principal aims and objectives are to:

- Provide a range of high quality specialist services to women and children escaping domestic abuse including a Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline, a growing number of safe houses with additional specialist support services for women and children, outreach and floating support services, refuges and outreach for black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee (BAMER) women, independent domestic abuse advocates and specialist support. Raise public awareness of the issues surrounding domestic abuse and campaign to ensure the voices of survivors are heard.

Public benefit statement

Refuge operates for public benefit. The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission’s general guidance on public benefit, “Charities and Public Benefit”.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to Refuge’s core principles and are reflected in our service provision, our diverse workforce and in the way in which we work. Refuge seeks to achieve this by advocating fairness, consistency and equality of opportunity in its organisational decision making and by establishing fair policies and procedures that are consistently applied. Refuge respects and values people’s differences and seeks to create a culture where people feel comfortable to be themselves and have a sense of belonging. Refuge recognises its responsibilities and commitment to these principles and challenges discrimination in all its forms. To this end, Refuge is committed to creating a positive and safe working environment for all its employees, volunteers, trustees and contractors.

Fundraising

At Refuge, we are conscious of the trust that supporters place in us when they donate towards our work. We are members of the Fundraising Regulator and abide by their Fundraising Promise and the Code of Fundraising Practice, and Refuge is a member of the Institute of Fundraising. We are deeply committed to protecting the data and privacy of our supporters and adhere to all relevant legislation and best practice in the sector.

The significant upsurge in support for Refuge in the wake of the pandemic demonstrated huge generosity on the part of the public and the private sector. In order to ensure the changing circumstances did not impact on our supporters, and to keep them at the heart of our programme, this year we strengthened our procedures. This included keeping up to date with any regulatory announcements by the Fundraising Regulator and ensuring teams across the organisation were trained in our policy on Supporting People in Vulnerable Circumstances.

We are committed to providing the highest levels of supporter care and value any feedback we receive regarding our fundraising activities. In 2020/21 we received 19 complaints, which were resolved without any being escalated to the Fundraising Regulator. We responded to all complaints within three working days.

In 2020-21, we worked with three professional fundraising organisations for payroll giving recruitment. We aim to ensure any agencies we employ also observe the highest standards in terms of fundraising practice, and we ensure that the work of the suppliers is regularly monitored.

We also work with companies across a variety of sectors to build mutually beneficial partnerships. Our Corporate Partners contractually commit to a minimum guaranteed level of £25,000 of funds (net of any VAT payable under commercial participation regulations) per partnership year; this can be raised through a range of mechanisms including commercial participation, staff or customer fundraising, events and company donations. We are also grateful for the support of a number of corporate supporters and donors which fund us through one off or regular donations.

We conduct due diligence as part of our research process in relation to both proactive and reactive fundraising from businesses, trusts, foundations and high net worth individuals. This is to ensure alignment with our ethical policy as well as assess potential risks by association.

Whilst we generally seek unrestricted funding, we do work with some partners and donors who prefer to restrict their support to particular areas of our work.

Financial review

The results for the year to 31 March 2021 show an improved performance with income rising an unprecedented 93%, to £34m (2020: £17.5m). This was a combined result of increased campaigns and fundraising during COVID-19.

The increase in income was observed in two income areas Grants and Donations. The Grant income increased to £6.1m (2020: £2.5m) mainly due to £891k Emergency Fund from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and £1.4m National Emergencies funding a partnership between Refuge and partners in the devolved nations, both COVID-19 and lockdowns relate.

The Donations income increased from £3.4m in 2020 to £15.6m in unrestricted funds due to a fantastic response to Refuge’s appeal for funds through various methods, Virtual Challenges, Christmas appeals, general appeals and came from all types of funders, individuals, groups and corporates.

Total expenditure increased by 23% to £22.3m (2020: £18m) the main large increase was in the National Domestic Helpline through grant funding. Other areas showed a slight increase.

The gains on investment were due to the recovery of the market during the year after the initial downward market movement as a result of the effect of COVID-19.

The total increase in funds was £11.8m (2020: deficit £0.61m) after net gains on investments of £134k (2020: losses £75k).

The closing Fund balances amounted to £15.4m (2020: £3.6m) of which £14.3m were held as general unrestricted reserves and £1.1m as restricted reserves.

Refuge is managing the large funding increase which resulted in a large increase in free reserves in conjunction with a strategic review to ensure that the funds raised are utilised to their full.

The cash balances at the end of the year were healthy £16.4m (2020: £4.4m) with net assets of £15.4m (2020: £3.6m)

Principal risks

The Council of management is responsible for establishing and monitoring internal control systems within Refuge. The council of management reviews the major risks which may impact on the operations of Refuge on a regular basis and are satisfied that the system of internal control currently in place is sound and effective, whilst recognising that it is designed to manage rather than eliminate risk. The council of management agree that the following are the principal risks that Refuge faces:

- Safeguarding. The nature of Refuge’s work leads to a high risk of safeguarding issues. There are strong policies, processes and ways of working to meet our high safeguarding standards including comprehensive external reviews of services where issues have been raised.
- Continuity of services. There are a number of significant contracts due for recommissioning during 2021. In order to maintain and extend contracts a local engagement and ‘win’ strategy is prepared for each service. Maintaining good relations with commissioners, negotiating contract extensions where possible and tight budgeting and control of costs are priorities. If contracts are lost staff are covered by TUPE arrangements.

- The National Domestic Advice Helpline – The level of unmet need is at the forefront of Refuge’s direction. Given the increased level of funding, there are plans to restructure the team to provide better support during shifts, better capacity and better management.
- Strategic Direction – The strategic direction Refuge will be taking will affect long term planning, senior team recruitment and fundraising. The work on the strategic review has begun and will engage a wide range of stakeholders over the next few months. The review will also address any lack of agreement on values which affects messaging both internally and externally.
- Senior staff changes can unsettle an organization and staff morale. Staff changes and plans are being communicated to all in the organisation as soon as possible with support and discussion with affected teams.
- Following on from senior staff changes delegated authority across the organization needs to be clear to avoid duplication of work, frustrated staff and inappropriate authorizing. A review is currently underway which will give clarity and better control.
- Current IT connectivity and Head office air quality issues are restricting and affecting how staff are working and how any return to office may work. There is a review of the air quality being undertaken with the landlord and work is underway to migrate databases and strengthen networks and improve equipment for staff.

Investment powers and policy

The Articles of Association contains powers for the council of management to invest funds in any investments, securities and properties.

Reserves policy

Total funds at the year-end are £15.4m of which £1.1m are restricted reserves and £14.2m are unrestricted reserves. The board further designated £3.8m out of the unrestricted reserves for strategic development work. The fund should be fully utilised in the next three years depending on the outcome of the strategic review.

Free reserves excluding fixed assets of £0.2m and designated reserves total £10.4m. The council of management, having referred to the Charity Commission’s revised guidance CC19, reviewed

Refuge’s existing reserves policy and agreed a new policy at the Board meeting in July 2021. The original reserves policy stated that unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets should equate to six months of core running costs plus the running costs of a quarter of services for three months. The new free reserves policy, as agreed by the board, include; Head office expenditure and helpline costs for 6 months. The calculation is based on the 2021-22 budget figures and is expressed as a range to reflect any increase/decrease in actual results for that year.

The calculation gives a range of £6.7m to £10m as a free reserves target. The year-end free reserves figure is £10.4m, £0.4m over the maximum figure. In addition, we are now forecasting a further surplus for 2021/22 following the success in raising funds to support services since the lockdown. A strategic review is currently underway and it is anticipated that this will result in further investment to enable Refuge to maintain and enhance the increased capacity of services delivered during the lockdown bringing reserves within the free reserves target range.

The impact of COVID-19 and going concern

COVID-19 and the ensuing lockdown brought many challenges to Refuge but all of our services remained operational throughout lockdown

Due to the raised profile of domestic abuse Refuge’s fundraising team was able to bring forward strategies to provide move options to enable the public to support our cause. The public, corporates and trusts responded with great generosity which meant that fundraising targets were exceeded. This provided vital funds to increase capacity to provide services during the lockdown.

Refuge’s forecast reserves through 2021/22 means that the council of management consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for the 2021 Annual Report and Financial statements and is confident of Refuge’s ability to remain as a going concern for the foreseeable future.

Statement of the council of management responsibilities

The council of management (whose members are also directors of Refuge for the purposes of company law) is responsible for preparing the trustees’ report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

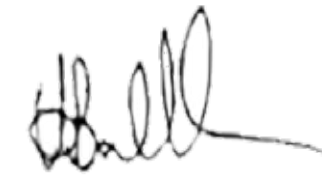
Company law requires the council of management to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the outgoing resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the council of management is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Housing and Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business

The council of management is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and 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. As far as the council of management is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company’s auditor is unaware; and
- The council of management has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information
- The board reviewed the procurement of external audit services in 2016 as part of its governance responsibilities.

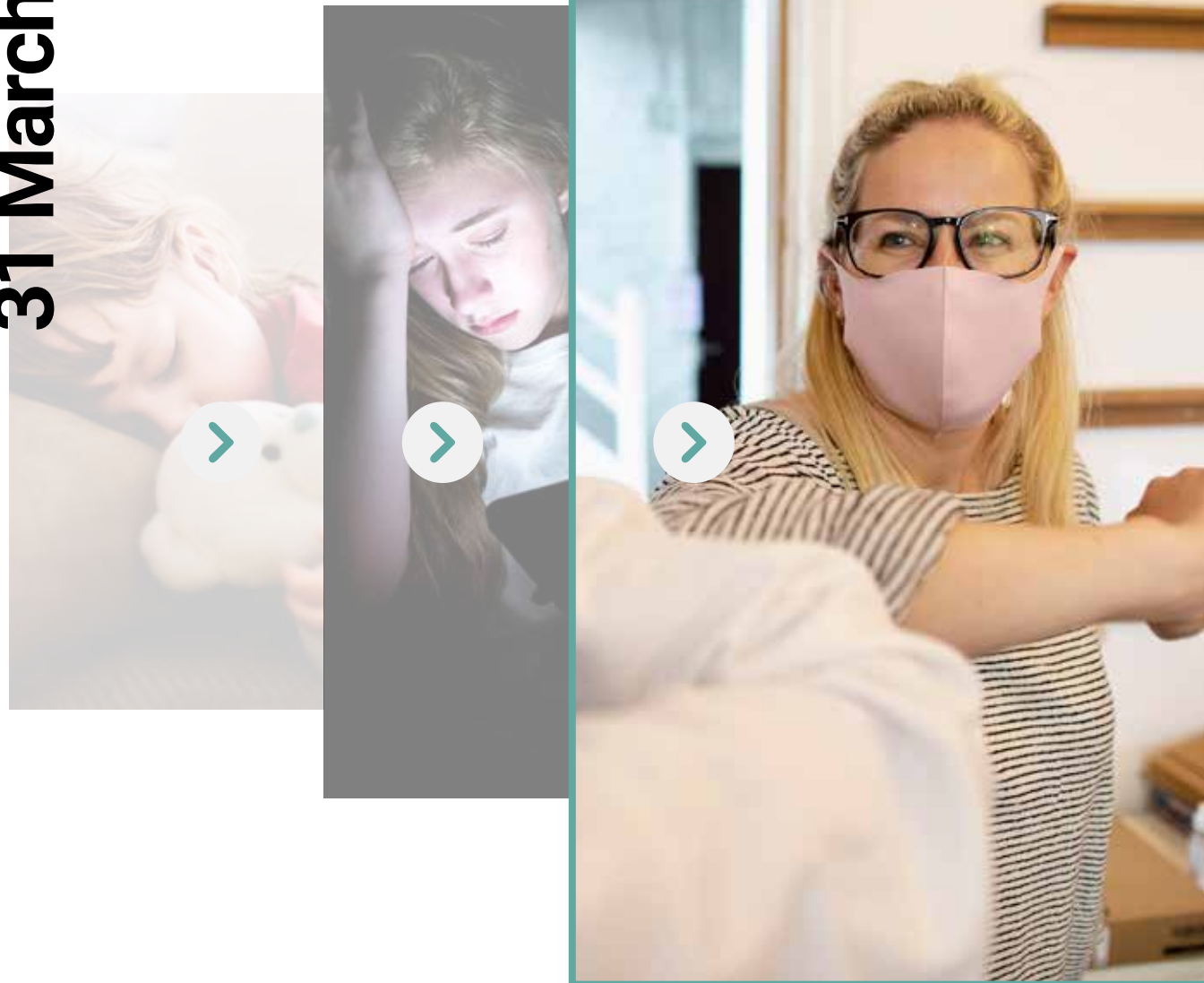
On behalf of the council of management



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair

This report acts as a directors’ report for the charitable company as required by s415 of the Companies Act 2006 and includes the Strategic Report which has been approved by the Council of Management in their capacity as company directors.

Financial statements for the year to 31 March 2021



2020-21

Financial overview



Income

- Donations and legacies 48.9%
- Contracts for support services 18.7%
- Housing management 14.5%
- Grants and contracted income provided for services 17.8%
- Investments 0.1%



Charitable activities expenditure

- Refuge provision 39.5%
- Advocacy 20.5%
- Integrated services 17.8%
- Outreach and floating support 5.6%
- Domestic Violence Helpline 12.4%
- Public information 4%
- Specialist services 0.2%

2020-21 has been an unprecedented year for Refuge. The COVID-19 pandemic shone a spotlight on domestic abuse more than ever before, which generated an extraordinary outpouring of support for our work.

The income generated during this period is in stark contrast to the decade of austerity Refuge has faced. Because of the financial challenges of the last 10 years, we have put projects on hold, our infrastructure has reached breaking point and, to ensure the continuation of our frontline services, we've drawn significantly from Refuge's charitable reserves.

Thanks to the funds raised in the last financial year we have been in the unexpected position of being able to invest in critical specialist services. In response to the surge in demand for domestic abuse support we have built the capability and capacity of Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline and its associated services, which act as a gateway to survivors across the country. We have progressed previously stalled projects and invested in frontline services and much-needed infrastructure. Any new commitments we have made have been budgeted to cover a three-year period.

We have also been able to rebuild our depleted reserves to recommended charitable levels.

We recognise that the unparalleled outpouring of support for Refuge's work was in response to the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19. But we are also aware that the impacts of lockdown will be long lasting. These reserves will ensure that we can continue to be there for the women and children who will need us in the years ahead. The board, senior leadership team and staff at Refuge remain unwaveringly committed to working hard, creatively and innovatively to continue to raise funds into the future to maintain and grow Refuge's work.

We want to thank all our loyal, long-standing supporters and those who stepped up during the pandemic and stood by us during this testing time. We value your commitment enormously. Your support has protected our work and helped us to support more women than ever before. As we look to the year ahead, Refuge remains steadfast in its commitment to reach yet more women and children who need its life-saving services and life-changing support.

Independent auditors report to the members of Refuge

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Refuge ('the company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement 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, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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 2021 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 FRS102 the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 and the Accounting Direction for Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

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 Auditor's 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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. 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.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the strategic report and the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the trustees' annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out in the Statement of Council of Management's 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.

Auditor's 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 an auditor's report 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 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.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, the Accounting Direction for Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019, the Housing SORP and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty

exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

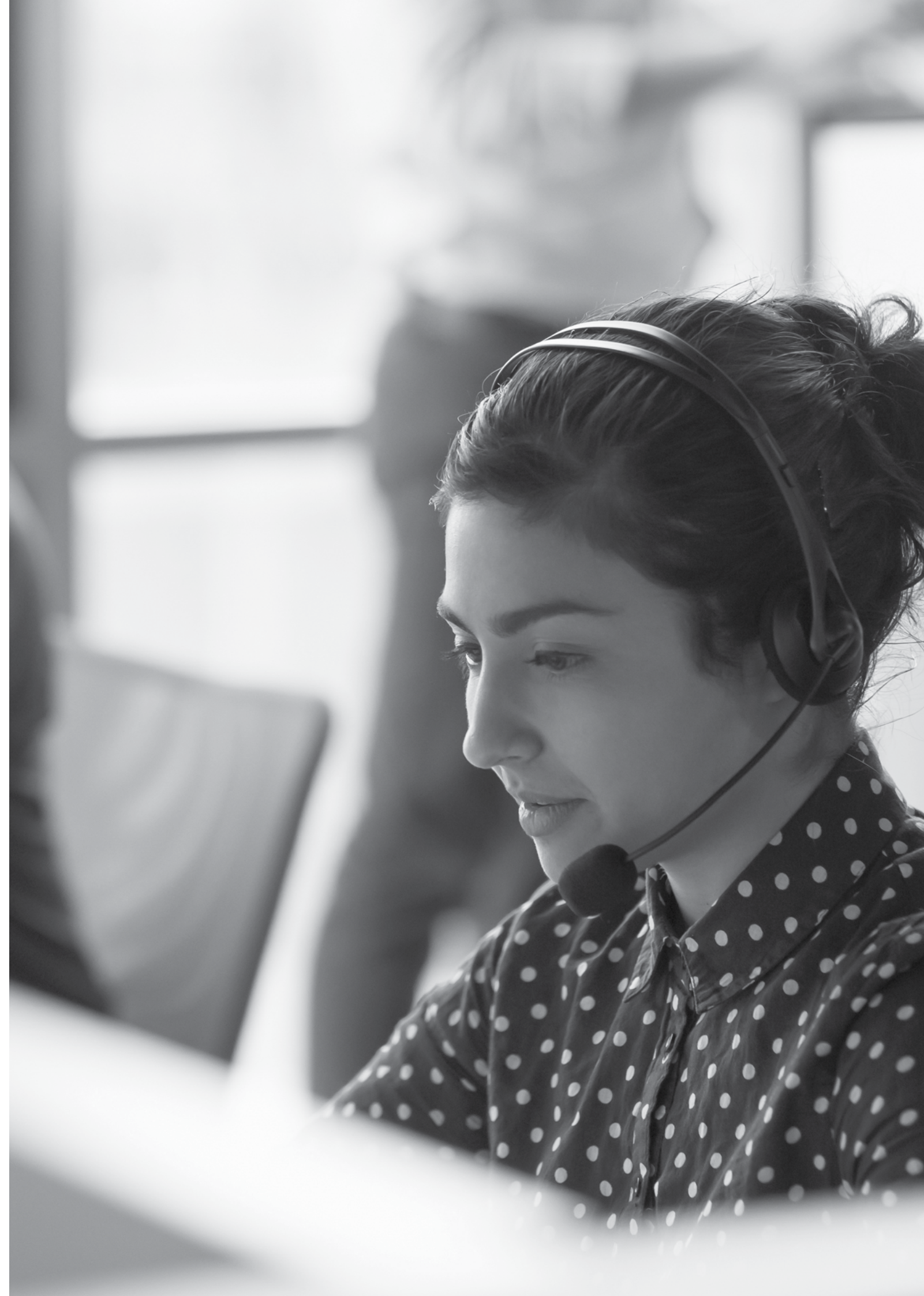
This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP,
Statutory Auditor

Date: 22 September 2021

Devonshire House
60 Goswell Road
London
EC1M 7AD

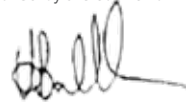


Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2021

(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Note	2021	2021	2021	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	4	15,621,590	985,970	16,607,559	3,895,809
Operating activities					
Contracts for Support Services	5	6,349,475		6,349,475	6,374,336
Housing Management		4,949,086		4,949,086	4,785,552
Grants	6		6,057,003	6,057,003	2,461,962
Investments	7	17,749		17,749	44,446
Other trading activities	8	2,708		2,708	
Total income and endowments	3	26,940,609	7,042,973	33,983,581	17,562,105
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	9	2,374,009	-	2,374,009	1,218,612
Operating activities					
Refuge provision		6,725,645	1,154,047	7,879,692	6,954,595
Advocacy		2,684,417	1,402,911	4,087,329	4,229,109
Integrated services		3,215,566	342,207	3,557,774	2,994,927
Outreach and Floating Support		129,351	976,495	1,105,847	1,082,063
Freephone 24 Hour National					
Domestic Violence Helpline		516	2,467,386	2,467,902	910,017
Public information		778,301	25,000	803,301	640,881
Specialist support services		3,447	27,358	30,805	72,350
Total Expenditure	3,11	15,911,252	6,395,405	22,306,658	18,102,554
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	15	(2,202)		(2,202)	(1,163)
Unrealised (losses)/gains on investments	15	136,109		136,109	(74,098)
Net income/(expenditure)		11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830	(615,710)
Transfers between funds	20,21			-	-
Net movement in funds		11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830	(615,710)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward		3,087,976	525,834	3,613,810	4,229,520
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2021	20, 21, 22	14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,640	3,613,810

Approved by the council of management on 20th September 2021



Hetti Barkworth- Nanton



Christine Higgins

Notes 1 to 24 form part of these financial statements.

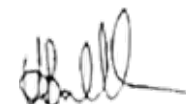
All of the activities of the charitable company related to continuing operations. There were no recognised gains and losses other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities

Register Company number 1412276

Balance sheet as of 31 March 2021

	Note	2021	2021	2020	2020
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	13		93,130		132,666
Intangible assets	14		277,398		12,126
Financial Investments	15		694,667		561,086
			1,065,195		705,878
Current Assets					
Debtors	16	2,701,150		2,098,442	
Cash at bank and in hand		16,367,480		4,366,349	
				6,464,791	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	(4,339,185)		(3,186,859)	
Net Current Assets			14,729,445		3,277,932
Total Assets less Current Liabilities			15,794,640		3,983,810
Provisions for liabilities and charges	19		(370,000)		(370,000)
Net Assets			15,424,640		3,613,810
Represented by:					
Unrestricted Funds					
General	20		10,414,172		2,750,903
Designated			3,837,072		337,073
			14,251,244		3,087,976
Restricted Funds					
	21		1,173,396		525,834
Total Funds					
	22		15,424,640		3,613,810

Approved by the council of management on 20th September 2021



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

Notes 1 to 24 form part of these accounts.



Christine Higgins

Register Company number 1412276

Cash-flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Statement of Cash Flows			
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities	1	12,384,516	(1,070,156)
- Investment income	7	17,749	44,446
Capital Expenditure and financial investment			
- Payments to acquire Tangible Fixed Assets	13	(128,619)	(163,739)
- Payments to acquire Intangible Fixed Assets	14	(272,842)	
- Payments to acquire Financial Investments	15	(107,095)	(63,940)
- Investment disposal proceeds		104,600	75,154
Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	11,998,309	(1,178,235)

Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows

1. Reconciliation of Changes in Resources to Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities

Net movement in funds	11,810,830	(615,709)
Depreciation	168,155	99,670
Amortisation	7,570	10,261
Investment income	(17,749)	(44,446)
Unrealised/Realised losses/(gains)	(133,907)	75,262
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other Debtors	(602,709)	(23,101)
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other Creditors	1,152,326	(602,093)
Increase in provisions		30,000
	12,384,516	(1,070,156)

2 Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movements in Net Funds

Increase in Cash and Cash at Bank in the year	11,998,309	(1,178,235)
(Decrease)/Increase in net funds	11,998,309	(1,178,235)
Net funds at 1 April 2020	4,401,884	5,580,119
Net funds at 31 March 2021	16,400,193	4,401,884
Reconciliation of net funds to cash at bank and in hand		
Net funds	16,400,193	4,401,884
Cash held with investment managers	(32,713)	(35,535)
Cash at bank and in hand	16,367,480	4,366,349

Notes 1 to 24 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The accounts are prepared on the historical cost convention of accounting and in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and in compliance with The Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2015, Housing SORP 2014, the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting for Registered Social Providers", the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with "The Financial Reporting Standard Accounts applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") issued on 16 July 2014, The Charities Act 2011 and the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. The charity is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102.

Going concern

These financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis. The funding received by the company has increased significantly during and following lockdown following increased awareness of the effects of domestic abuse. The council of management therefore have a reasonable expectation that the company will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future based on budgets, forecasts and projections for the following year and up to 12 months from the date the financial statements are approved. The council of management are not aware of any material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt upon the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Tangible Fixed Assets - Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £500, except items of high wear and tear for refuges, have been capitalised and recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over their estimated useful lives or the length of the contract/project for which the fixed assets were acquired.

Leasehold improvements	7 years straight line
Freehold buildings	50 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	1 - 4 years straight line
Motor vehicles	1 - 4 years straight line
Office equipment	1 - 4 years straight line

Intangible Fixed Assets - Amortisation

Intangible assets costing more than £500 are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets over their useful lives on the following bases:

Software	1 - 4 years straight line
Website	1 - 4 years straight line

Income

All income is accounted for when the company has entitlement to the funds, receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Donations and legacies include donations, gifts, legacies and some grants receivable.

Gifts in kind and intangible income are treated either as donations in the period the gift or intangible income is received, or as an asset, in both cases at a reasonable estimate of the gross value to the charity.

Fundraising income is shown gross except for small fundraising events where the cash is received net of expenditure.

Investment income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

Legacies are recognised as income where there is entitlement, probability of receipt and measurability of the legacy.

Grants are recognised when the entitlement to the grant is confirmed and any conditions not within the company's control have been met..

Grants that provide core funding, or are of a general nature provided by the government and charitable foundations, are recorded as voluntary income.

Costs of raising funds

Fundraising expenditure comprises costs incurred encouraging people and organisations to contribute financially to the charity's work. This includes costs of advertising and staging of special fundraising events.

Governance Costs

Governance costs comprise all expenditure not directly related to the charitable activity or fundraising ventures including audit fees.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

1 Accounting Policies (Continued)

Provisions

Provisions include the council of management's estimate of the present cost of cyclical maintenance of properties and office dilapidations that Refuge is directly responsible for.

Bad debts

Bad debts are recognised when all arrears and debt collection procedures have been exhausted. Bad debts are provided for on a percentage basis depending on their age and the probability of collection.

Investments

Investments are held in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Any change from market value at the previous balance sheet date or from cost if purchased during the year, is included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Stocks

No value has been ascribed to stocks of publications on the basis that the majority of these are normally given away and therefore it is considered prudent to account for the cost of all publications in the period they are incurred.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities. These financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis.

Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when they legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial instruments, which include trade and other receivables and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest.

Other financial assets

Other financial assets, including investments in equity instruments which are not subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures, are initially measured at fair value, which is normally the transaction price. Such assets are subsequently carried at fair value and the changes in fair value are recognised in profit or loss, except that investments in equity instruments that are not publicly traded and whose fair values cannot be measured reliably are measured at cost less impairment.

Trade debtors, loans and other receivables that have fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market are classified as 'loans and receivables'. Loans and receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

Interest is recognised by applying the effective interest rate, except for short-term receivables when the recognition of interest would be immaterial. The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a debt instrument and of allocating the interest income over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the debt instrument to the net carrying amount on initial recognition.

Impairment of financial assets

Financial assets, other than those held at fair value through profit and loss, are assessed for indicators of impairment at each reporting end date.

Financial assets are impaired where there is objective evidence that, as a result of one or more events that occurred after the initial recognition of the financial asset, the estimated future cash flows have been affected. The impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire, or when it transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity.

1. Accounting policies (Continued)

Classification of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the company after deducting all of its liabilities.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including trade and other payables, bank loans, loans from fellow group companies and preference shares that are classified as debt, are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade payables are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Other financial liabilities

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the company after deducting all of its liabilities.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when, and only when, the company's obligations are discharged, cancelled, or they expire.

Pension Funds

Refuge operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all staff. The amount charged to the Income and Expenditure Account in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year.

Operating Lease Agreement

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged against profits on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Research and Development

Research and development costs are expensed to the SOFA in the year that they are incurred.

Fund Account

Restricted funds represent monies received for specific projects undertaken by the charity. Designated funds represent monies set aside by the trustees for a specific purpose. General unrestricted funds of the charity are available for the general purposes of the charity.

Status

Refuge is a registered social landlord with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The register number is 4730.

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. It is also a registered charity (Number 277424). In the event of the company winding up, members are required to contribute a sum not exceeding £1.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the company's accounting policies, the directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount 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 estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies (Continued)

Critical judgements

The following judgements (apart from those involving estimates) have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

The company has an obligation to pay dilapidations on expiry of the company's lease. The cost of these reinstatements and the present value of the obligation depend on a number of factors including the expected rise in cost of building maintenance, uncertainty over the timing of the cost of reinstatements, and the discount rate. Management estimates these factors in determining the net dilapidation provision in the balance sheet. The assumptions reflect historical experience and current trends. See note 19 for the disclosures relating to the dilapidation provision.

The company makes an estimate of the recoverable value of trade and other debtors. When assessing impairment of trade and other debtors, management considers factors including the current credit rating of the debtor, the ageing profile of debtors and historical experience. See note 16 for the net carrying amount of the debtors and associated impairment provision.

The annual depreciation charge for property, plant and equipment is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 13 for the carrying amount of the property, plant and equipment and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of asset.

Similarly the amortisation charge for intangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments and economic utilisation of the assets. See note 14 for the carrying amount of the intangible assets and note 1 for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

2. Comparative statements of financial activities

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	Note	2021 £	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £	2020 £
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	4	15,621,590	985,970	16,607,559	3,398,472	497,337	3,895,809
Operating activities		-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracts for Support Services	5	6,349,475	-	6,349,475	6,374,336	-	6,374,336
Housing Management		4,949,086	-	4,949,086	4,785,552	-	4,785,552
Grants	6	-	6,057,003	6,057,003	-	2,461,962	2,461,962
Investments	7	17,749	-	17,749	44,446	-	44,446
Other trading activities	8	2,708	-	2,708	-	-	-
Total income and endowments	3	26,940,609	7,042,973	33,983,581	14,602,806	2,959,299	17,562,105
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	9	2,374,009	-	2,374,009	1,218,612	-	1,218,612
Operating activities							
Refuge provision		6,725,645	1,154,047	7,879,692	6,494,209	460,386	6,954,595
Advocacy		2,684,417	1,402,911	4,087,329	3,319,813	909,296	4,229,109
Integrated services		3,215,566	342,207	3,557,774	2,891,049	103,878	2,994,927
Outreach and Floating Support		129,351	976,495	1,105,847	195,680	886,383	1,082,063
Freephone 24 Hour National							
Domestic Violence Helpline		516	2,467,386	2,467,902	216,355	693,662	910,017
Public information		778,301	25,000	803,301	628,881	12,000	640,881
Specialist support services		3,447	27,358	30,805	586	71,764	72,350
Total Expenditure	3, 11	15,911,252	6,395,405	22,306,658	14,965,185	3,137,369	18,102,554
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	15	(2,202)	-	(2,202)	(1,163)	-	(1,163)
Unrealised gains/(losses) on investments	15	136,109	-	136,109	(74,098)	-	(74,098)
Net income/(expenditure)		11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830	(437,640)	(178,070)	(615,710)
Transfers between funds	20, 21	-	-	-	(19,239)	19,239	-
Net movement in funds		11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830	(456,879)	(158,831)	(615,710)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances brought forward		3,087,976	525,834	3,613,810	3,544,855	684,665	4,229,520
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2021		14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,540	3,087,976	525,834	3,613,810

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

3a. Particulars of turnover, cost of sales, operating costs and operating surplus

	2021 Turnover	2021 Operating Costs	2021 Operating Surplus/ (deficit)	2020 Turnover	2020 Operating Costs	2020 Operating Surplus/ (deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Social housing lettings	4,949,086	4,817,068	132,018	4,785,553	4,710,237	75,316
Other social housing activities:						
Contracts for Support Services	2,467,218	2,466,541	677	2,388,643	2,435,420	(46,777)
Other grants and donations	1,230,658	1,230,658	-	545,702	545,702	-
	8,646,962	8,514,267	132,695	7,719,898	7,691,359	28,539
Non-social housing activities	25,336,619	13,792,391	11,544,228	9,842,207	10,411,195	(568,988)
Total:	33,983,581	22,306,658	11,676,923	17,562,105	18,102,554	(540,449)

3b. Particulars of income and expenditure from social housing lettings

	2021 £	2020 £
Social housing income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charges	2,058,139	2,048,348
Service charges receivable eligible for Housing Benefit	3,008,328	2,848,313
Service charges receivable ineligible for Housing Benefit	271,709	260,881
Rent losses due to voids	(389,090)	(371,989)
Turnover from social housing lettings	4,949,086	4,785,553
Expenditure on social housing lettings		
Services	1,304,237	1,324,738
Management	1,691,151	1,628,539
Routine maintenance	202,641	167,812
Planned maintenance	123,389	113,675
Bad debts	122,831	98,879
Lease charges	1,372,135	1,375,910
Property depreciation	684	684
Operating costs on social housing lettings	4,817,068	4,710,237
Operating surplus/(deficit) on social lettings	132,018	75,316
Social housing units		
The number of supported housing units under management at the end of the period:	2021	2020
Owned and managed	8	8
Not owned but managed	348	347
	356	355

4. Donations and legacies

Donations and legacies income was received during the year from trusts, corporate and private donors.

5. Contracts for support services

Support services under housing related support would encompass such activities that enabled the service user to develop the appropriate skills needed for maintaining independence in their own home once outside of the support service framework i.e. building local networks for support, making links into the community, understanding benefit entitlement and how to apply, developing personal finance awareness to pay rent and other associated household bills.

Contracts for support services are awarded to Refuge as the Service Provider by the Administering Authority (Local Authority/Borough) with approval of the Commission Body "(a partnership of local housing, social care, health and probation statutory services)".

Outreach and floating support

Outreach and Floating Support services are awarded by contract for the provision of support to vulnerable service users who are in their own homes. The aims of empowering the service user towards maintaining independence are equally inherent in all outreach support service provision.

6. Grants

	2021 £	2020 £
	Restricted	Restricted
Bain Capital	19,801	
BBC Children in Need	35,974	35,775
Big Lottery Fund	290,161	292,227
Cambridgeshire Community Foundation	5,000	
Cambridgeshire County Council	135,435	145,929
Charles Hayward Foundation		25,000
Comic Relief	77,091	87,738
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport		35,678
Department for Work and Pensions	972	8,200
Derby City Council	56,002	153,360
Derbyshire Community Foundation	4,890	
East Sussex County Council		103,797
HMRC Furlough	1,533	
Home Office	803,303	355,327
John Coates Charitable Trust	5,000	
Kingston Council	17,477	

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

6. Grants (continued)

	2021 £ Restricted	2020 £ Restricted
London Borough Barking and Dagenham	133,155	4,000
London Borough of Hackney		47,831
London Borough of Hounslow		93,017
London Borough of Lambeth		5,400
London Borough of Lewisham	143,278	54,982
London Borough of Redbridge	29,711	20,349
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Wandsworth	244,533	223,205
London Borough of Southwark		4,000
London Councils	127,613	93,974
London Stock Exchange Group Foundation	10,000	
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	890,597	
Ministry of Justice (London Community Foundation)	153,454	
Morrisons Trust	24,724	
National Emergencies Trust	1,443,378	
NHS Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group	100	
Permira Foundation	75,300	
Rugby Borough Council	29,409	
Shroder Charity Trust	10,000	
Sir John Priestman Charitable Trust	2,000	
Southwark Council	5,000	
Standard Life Foundation	25,000	12,000
Standing Together Against Domestic Violence	73,843	64,228
Stratford Town Trust	18,333	6,667
The Alan Edward Higgs Charity	6,320	
The Albert Hunt Trust	5,000	
The Brian Woolf Trust	5,000	
The Evan Cornish Foundation		10,000
The Leri Charitable Trust		85,000
The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	500,000	
The Mayor's Young Londoners Fund	49,277	12,399
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire	173,628	5,357
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire	78,214	
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire	45,633	
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire	76,085	
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire	32,120	
The Singer Foundation		1,000
The Violet Melchett Children's Trust	5,000	5,000
Tides Foundation	65,000	260,000
Warwickshire County Council	123,659	209,522
Others		1,000
	6,057,003	2,461,962

6. Grants (continued)

In 2020/21 Refuge received two grants from Big Lottery Fund totalling £290,161. The first grant of £153,858 is part of three year award of £499,935, towards general running cost and salaries for Eastern European Independent Gender Violence Advocacy service. The second grant of £136,303 is a one year award towards the general running cost of LEAP project Caseworkers for Victims of Domestic Violence in Lambeth. During the year £ 292,446 of the grants was expended as disclosed in note 21.

In accordance with section 37 of the Local Government Act 1989 the grant from London Councils of £127,613 was used in respect of the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, as follows:
Towards general running costs and salaries of the 24 hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline. **£127,613**
The grant was fully used.

7. Investment income

	2021 £	2020 £
Listed investments	11,170	15,417
Interest receivable	6,579	29,029
	17,749	44,446

8. Other trading activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Merchandise	2,708	-

9. Costs of raising funds

	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs	956,184	707,434
Depreciation and amortisation	2,415	2,415
Other costs	1,415,410	508,763
	2,374,009	1,218,612

10. Governance costs

	2021 £	2020 £
Auditors' remuneration (net)	19,750	15,100
Auditors' remuneration non-audit (net)	2,350	2,079
Irrecoverable VAT/accruals	4,420	4,636
Total auditors' remuneration inclusive of VAT	26,520	21,815
Legal advice and recruitment of trustees	47,804	51,744
Tax review		
Total governance costs	74,324	73,559

Governance costs for the year which are included in support cost in note 11 are £74,324 (inclusive of irrecoverable VAT) (2020 - £73,559) representing less than 1% of our total costs.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

11. Total expenditure (continued)

2021

	Cost of Raising Funds £	Refuge Provision £	Advocacy £	Integrated services £	Floating Support and Outreach £	24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline £	Public Information £	Specialist Services £	2020/21 Total £
Direct Costs including Operational Support	2,152,833	6,770,363	3,733,536	3,343,588	977,850	2,275,248	579,976	27,358	19,860,752
Support Costs*	221,176	1,109,329	353,793	214,185	127,997	192,654	223,325	3,447	2,445,905
	2,374,009	7,879,692	4,087,329	3,557,774	1,105,847	2,467,902	803,301	30,805	22,306,658

*Support costs include governance costs of £74,324 incl. VAT

2020

	Cost of Raising Funds £	Refuge Provision £	Advocacy £	Integrated services £	Floating Support and Outreach £	24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline £	Public Information £	Specialist Services £	2019/20 Total £
Direct Costs including Operational Support	1,025,815	5,918,936	3,858,904	2,810,710	962,496	782,753	435,617	68,857	15,864,088
Support Costs*	192,796	1,035,658	370,205	184,216	119,567	127,264	205,264	3,496	2,238,466
	1,218,611	6,954,594	4,229,109	2,994,926	1,082,063	910,017	640,881	72,353	18,102,554

*Support costs include governance costs of £73,559 (2020)

Expenditure Analysis	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs	12,525,831	10,693,621
Temporary staff	371,984	416,448
Consultants	316,261	313,941
Other staff costs	376,518	381,273
Property costs	2,473,371	2,491,079
Equipment costs	15,988	19,990
Telephone	465,775	408,126
Audit	23,700	19,320
Depreciation and amortisation	175,725	109,931
Other costs	5,561,504	3,248,825
	22,306,658	18,102,554

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

12. Staff Costs

	2021	2020
	£	£
Wages and salaries	10,806,971	9,200,875
Staff benefits	46,268	37,823
Social security costs	1,077,403	916,505
Pension costs	595,189	538,419
	12,525,831	10,693,622

The average number of employees (full time equivalents) analysed by operating activities during the year was:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
Refuge provision	82	76
Advocacy	73	76
Integrated Services	57	49
Outreach and Floating Support	22	22
24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline	28	16
Public information	8	7
Specialist services	1	1
Other Refuge services	58	55
	329	302

Redundancy and termination payments

	2021	2020
	£	£
	93,060	71,827

12. Staff Costs (continued)

The number of employees whose remuneration (including benefit in kind but excluding employers' National Insurance and employers' pension contributions was in excess of £60,000.

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	-	2
£70,001 - £80,000	4	3
£80,001 - £90,000	-	1
£90,001 - £100,000	1	-
£200,001 - £210,000*	1	-
£210,001 - £220,000*	-	1

* Includes keyman health cover and pension supplement from 2017

	2021	2020
	£	£
Pension contributions in respect of the highest paid employees above	33,834	31,346

Emoluments to key management personnel

	2021	2020
	£	£
The remuneration paid to the key management personnel of Refuge (the Chief Executive, the Director of Operations, the Director of Fundraising, the Director of Communications and External Relations, the Head of Finance and IT, the Head of HR, the Head Of People And Transformation and the Head of Development) was:		
Emoluments (including pension contributions, employers National Insurance and benefits in kind)	784,385	786,405
Emoluments (excluding pension contributions) paid to the highest paid member of key management personnel	202,439	217,517
The highest paid member of key management personnel has a personal pension to which Refuge contributed:	-	-

During the year members of the council of management received reimbursement of expenses totalling £312 (2020 - £2,486). No members of the council of management received any remuneration during the year (2020 -£Nil).

Remuneration Policy

The remuneration of key management personnel is set by undertaking an annual review of their roles considering:

- Any change or additional scope to the role requiring a re-evaluation
- The benchmarking of similar roles within the market relevant for the professional field and /or sector
- Recruitment and retention issues or requirements

Any changes are discussed by the chief executive and the chair of the council of management, before the remuneration is agreed.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

13. Tangible Fixed Assets

2020/21	Freehold Property £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Motor Vehicles £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost					
At 1 April 2020	34,173	436,352	-	256,072	726,597
Additions		49,347	-	79,272	128,619
Written off	-	(80,957)	-	(84,490)	(165,447)
At 31 March 2021	34,173	404,742	-	250,854	689,769
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2020	15,734	397,125	-	181,072	593,931
Charge for the year	684	70,858		96,613	168,155
Written off		(80,957)		(84,490)	(165,447)
At 31 March 2021	16,418	387,026	-	193,195	596,639
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2021	17,755	17,716	-	57,659	93,130
At 31 March 2020	18,439	39,227	-	74,999	132,665

In the opinion of the council of management, the value of the company's freehold property is considerably in excess of its book value. Due to the costs involved, it is not considered practicable to quantify the difference.

14. Intangible Fixed Assets

2020/21	Website £	Software £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2020	22,060	126,367	148,427
Additions	272,842		272,842
Disposals			-
At 31 March 2021	294,902	126,367	421,269
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2020	19,006	117,295	136,301
Charge for the year	2,215	5,355	7,570
Disposals			-
At 31 March 2021	21,221	122,650	143,871
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2021	273,681	3,717	277,398
At 31 March 2020	3,054	9,072	12,126

15. Financial Investments

	2021 £	2020 £
Investments at market value at beginning of the year	525,552	612,028
Additions at cost	107,095	63,940
Disposal proceeds	(104,600)	(75,155)
Realised/unrealised (losses)/gains	(2,202)	(1,163)
Unrealised/unrealised gains (losses)	136,109	(74,098)
Cash held with investment managers	32,713	35,534
Market value at end of the year	694,667	561,086
Comprising:		
Global fixed interest	118,346	99,782
UK equities and funds	208,662	184,754
Overseas equities and funds	287,858	201,282
Property	5,379	5,660
Alternatives	41,709	34,073
Cash	32,713	35,535
	694,667	561,086
Historic cost at end of the year	561,087	542,178

All investments are listed on a recognised stock exchange.

There were no individual holdings the market value of which is considered to be material in the context of the portfolio as a whole.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

16. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade Debtors	760,669	962,472
Bad debt provision		
Prepayments	515,497	418,444
Rent deposit	202,977	201,396
Other Debtors	1,222,007	516,130
	2,701,150	2,098,442

	2021	2020
	£	£
Financial assets that are debt instruments at amortised cost	2,185,653	1,679,998

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade Creditors	1,710,889	1,171,588
Accruals	975,512	662,715
Deferred income (note 18)	1,056,820	981,106
Other taxes and social security	342,741	266,300
Other Creditors	253,222	105,150
	4,339,185	3,186,859

	2021	2020
	£	£
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	2,939,623	1,939,453

18. Deferred Income

	At 31 March 2021
	Released £
Deferred income	(726,503)

	At 31 March 2020
	Released £
Deferred income	(909,023)

19. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2021 £	2020 £
Provision at beginning of the year	370,000	340,000
Created during the year		30,000
Balance at the end of the year	370,000	370,000

The total provision of £370,000 relates to the council of management's estimate of £300,000 of the present value cost of dilapidations work that will be required to be undertaken on expiry of and in accordance with the terms of the company's lease, on the premises at Head Office and £70,000 relates to future deficits concerning Refuge's Admitted Body Status of Hertfordshire LGPS scheme.

20. Unrestricted Funds

	1 April 2020 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	31 March 2021 £
General	2,750,903	27,076,717	(15,913,454)	(3,500,000)	10,414,166
Designated	337,073			3,500,000	3,837,073
	3,087,976	27,076,717	(15,913,454)	-	14,251,239

	1 April 2019 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	31 March 2020 £
General	3,030,266	14,602,806	(15,040,446)	158,277	2,750,903
Designated	514,589			(177,516)	337,073
	3,544,855	14,602,806	(15,040,446)	(19,239)	3,087,976

General funds

These funds are available for Refuge's general purposes

Designated funds

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that the council of management have set aside to support innovations in service delivery, the strengthening of support infrastructure, diversification of income streams and to provide for sinking fund repairs of leased and owned properties. The funds are expected to be utilised over the next three financial years.

Transfers* 2020/21

During the year transfer of £3,500,000 between general and designated funds has taken place. This transfer represents Refuge's investment into innovations in service delivery and the strengthening of support infrastructure.

Transfers* 2019/20

Part of the designated fund was set up to support diversification into new services and to support new contracts. During the year transfer of £177,516 between general and designated funds has taken place. This transfer represents Refuge's investment into modern slavery £65,799 and 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline £111,717. Transfer of £19,239 from unrestricted to restricted reserves represents the covering of expenditure relating to specialist support service provision.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

21. Restricted Funds

	1 April 2020 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	31 March 2021 £
Refuge provision	458,705	1,238,605	(1,154,047)	-	543,263
Outreach and Floating Support	23,424	993,406	(976,495)		40,335
Integrated Services	2,577	367,573	(342,207)		27,943
Big Lottery Fund	5,714	290,161	(292,446)		3,429
Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline		2,795,201	(2,467,386)		327,815
Public information		25,000	(25,000)		-
Specialist Services		27,358	(27,358)		-
Advocacy	35,414	1,305,669	(1,110,465)		230,618
	525,834	7,042,973	(6,395,405)	-	1,173,401

	1 April 2019 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	At 31 March 2020 £
Refuge provision	459,815	459,276	(460,386)		458,705
Outreach and Floating Support	32,247	877,560	(886,383)		23,424
Integrated Services	2,577	103,878	(103,878)		2,577
Big Lottery Fund	3,490	292,227	(290,003)		5,714
Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline	53,908	639,754	(693,662)		-
Public information		12,000	(12,000)		-
Specialist Services	3,801	48,722	(71,762)	19,239	-
Advocacy	128,827	525,882	(619,295)		35,414
	684,665	2,959,299	(3,137,369)	19,239	525,834

21. Restricted Funds (continued)

Refuge provision

Housing benefit and Supporting People funding used in an emergency accommodation setting to provide critical support services to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. Relevant support activities range from support to set up and maintain a home making links with community groups and organizations; assistance in developing independent living skills (finance, social and domestic/life); signposting to specialist services to help maintain health and well being; signposting to culturally specific legal services, health services, counselling and advocacy.

Advocacy

Used to fund intensive short to medium support to women at high risk of domestic violence as they pursue legal remedies and protection through the criminal and civil justice systems.

Big Lottery Fund - Eastern European Independent Gender Violence Advocacy Service

Used to fund support and information to Eastern European women and children experiencing domestic violence across three London boroughs.

Big Lottery Fund - LEAP Caseworkers for Victims of Domestic Violence in Lambeth

Used to fund support and information to women and children experiencing domestic violence in Lambeth.

Integrated services

Refuge runs a number of integrated services, which act as the first point of contact for any victim of gender-based violence. This service supports those who have experienced domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, prostitution, stalking, trafficking, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and so-called 'honour' based violence. Our clients are able to come to one place to access a range of specialist support, including safety, alongside emotional and practical support.

Outreach & Floating Support

Used in the local community setting to provide critical support services to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. Relevant support activities range from support to maintain a home; making links with community groups and organizations; assistance in developing independent living skills (finance, social and domestic/life); signposting to specialist services to help maintain health and well being; signposting to culturally specific legal services, health services, counselling and advocacy.

24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline

Used to fund the 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline

Specialist Services

Used to fund support workers to improve outcomes for women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

Transfers* 2020/21

Transfers* 2019/20

Part of the designated fund was set up to support diversification into new services and to support new contracts. During the year transfer of £177,516 between general and designated funds has taken place. This transfer represents Refuge's investment into modern slavery £65,799 and 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline £111,717. Transfer of £19,239 from unrestricted to restricted reserves represents the covering of expenditure relating to specialist support service provision.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

22. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Analysis of Net Assets between Funds 2021	Unrestricted	Restricted	
	Funds	Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	83,361	9,769	93,130
Intangible fixed assets	78,734	198,664	277,398
Financial Investments	694,667		694,667
Net current assets	13,764,477	964,968	14,729,445
Provisions	(370,000)		(370,000)
	14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,640

Analysis of Net Assets between Funds 2020	Unrestricted	Restricted	
	Funds	Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	112,686	19,980	132,666
Intangible fixed assets	12,126	-	12,126
Financial Investments	561,086	-	561,086
Net current assets	2,772,077	505,855	3,277,932
Provisions	(370,000)		(370,000)
	3,087,975	525,835	3,613,810

23. Commitments

At the year-end the company had future minimum lease commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below:

	2021 Land and Buildings £	2021 Other	2020 Land and Buildings £	2020 Other £
Up to one year	320,960	10,689	931,954	11,318
Between one and five years	587,981		662,023	2,985
Later than five years				
	908,941	10,689	1,593,977	14,303

Operating lease costs in the year amounted to £870,549 (2020: £896,425) in respect of land and buildings and £15,362 (2020: £19,508) in respect of other leases.

24. Related Party Transactions

During the year trustees received reimbursement of expenses totalling £312 (2020 - £2,486)

Donations from trustees during the year were:

	2021 £	2020 £
	30	10

Our response to a profound year

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