

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Chester
Women's
Aid

NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE

FROM THE CHAIR



Looking back over the year since our last AGM in September 2021, we can see that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to reverberate and affect every area of life.

The consequences of the gaps in Universal Credit payments for new applicants, remote working becoming normalised, and the cost-of-living crisis will disproportionately affect women in abusive relationships. At the same time, domestic and sexual abuse has dominated headlines in a series of very high-profile court cases in the UK and US, exposing systemic biases and failures, misogyny in society and institutions, and the insidious ability of people with power, authority, and celebrity to abuse and exploit. These mainstream news items are creating conversations within interpersonal relationships that challenge our perceptions of abuse, ourselves, and our friends and family.

While the headlines and doom scrolling may give us the sense that our social situation is getting worse, in fact this is the real time changing of the status quo and society's reflection on our collective experience.

As we returned to public events in 2021, we saw how uplifting and important it is to continue to speak up and show up for all women and people who experience abuse, in particular marginalised populations. Evidence that women's collective action and outrage are having a positive effect has been demonstrated by the Royal Assent of the Domestic Abuse Bill, the championing of the Online Safety Bill, new guidance by the College of Policing, and increased reporting of domestic abuse and self-referrals to support services.

Here in our corner of the world, Chester Women's Aid celebrated a return to public events at our 2021 White Ribbon Day event, which you can read further about in this report.

We subsequently attended the Be Marvellous event by the Northwich Business Ladies, attended Chester Pride in the Just Ask Wellbeing Zone, and held a street collection on Ladies Day of the Chester Races. As always, we are energised and gratified by holding events as we connect with so many people in our community who support our work financially, in principle, or with their labour. We also provide signposting and information about domestic abuse resources to anyone who may require it.

Our flagship event in 2022 was our partnership with Chester Cathedral during 'Extraordinary Women', a posthumous exhibition of Tom Stoddart's powerful photography. The exhibition allowed us to interact with the public in a different way and generated interest from new volunteers and strengthened our connections with Chester organisations.

Throughout the year, and while planning our events, we continued to deliver our Domestic Abuse Awareness Training for Employers with our delivery partner, UP CIC. You can read about the encouraging results we have had in training businesses in supporting their employees experiencing domestic abuse and raising awareness in the business sector. We were very honoured by the renewed funding to carry out our work from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire.

Our website and branding have been renewed and are helping attract delegates to the training programme and volunteers. We have recently signed up with Cheshire Cat Marketing, a female led small business in Cheshire, to deliver the marketing campaign. Its aim is to ensure businesses all over Cheshire find out about our training and can quickly and easily book on. If you know of a business, help us spread the word by liking, sharing, and tagging them in our campaign.

Does that sound like a busy year? It certainly was, and we are looking forward to the next year of events, training, and recruiting new trustees and volunteers to continue the work CWA does.

To all our hard-working trustees, volunteers, supporters, donors, funders, and the public – a huge thank you for making 2021 such a successful year.



NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE

Our beliefs:

- Domestic abuse can affect anyone
- The overwhelming majority of victims are women and their children
- We believe in the right of all women to live free from fear and abuse

Our actions:

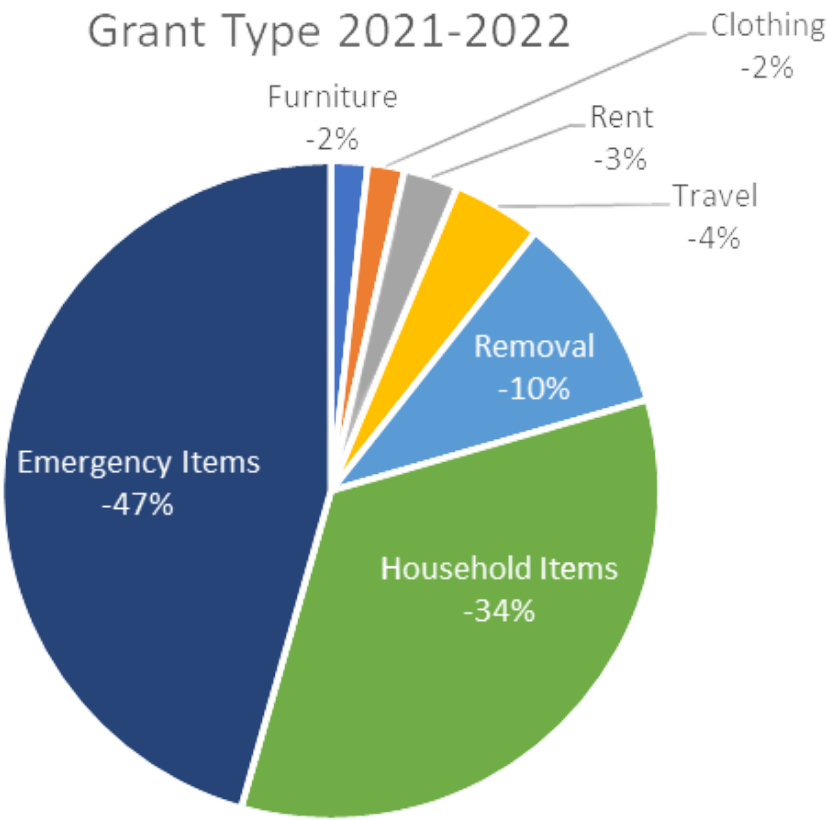
- Monitor service provision of relevant local agencies
- Raise awareness of and educate about domestic abuse
- Promote interaction, good practice, and knowledge exchange between organisations
- Fundraise and provide financial grants to victims who are in crisis need

TREASURERS REPORT

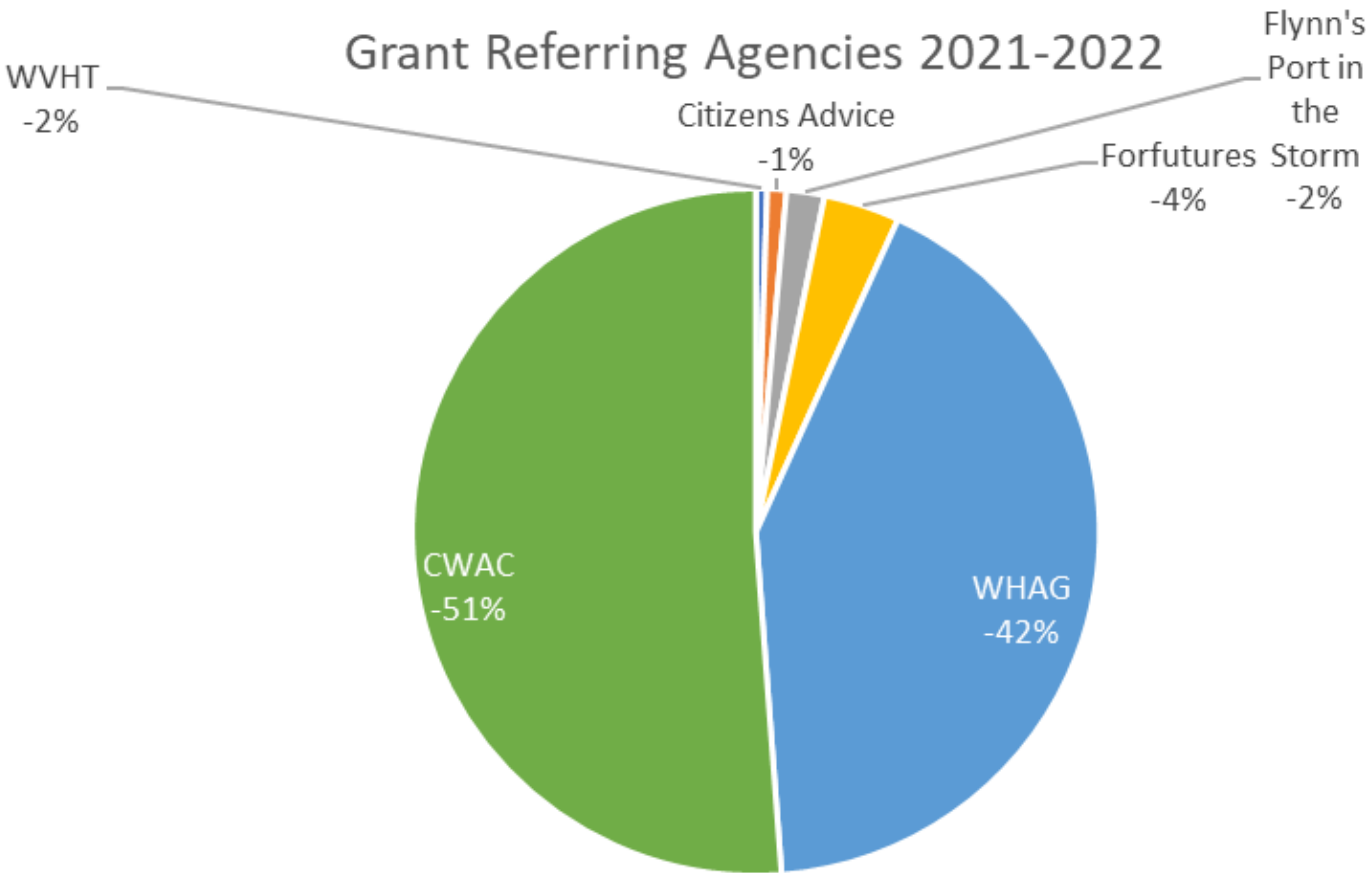
2021 – 2022 was another year with a very high demand for emergency grant funding. The new financial year 2022 – 2023 seems to be continuing this trend, so it may soon be time to rethink our funding criteria, particularly as fundraising opportunities and income generation remain difficult in the post-COVID era.

Domestic Abuse continued to have a high profile in the media and huge steps have been made locally and nationally to meet all the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. As noted above, this inevitably creates higher demand for DA services and, whilst the CWAC council received additional Government funding for some of these, the people who have been harmed still face financial difficulty in the first few weeks of fleeing, particularly with accessing Universal Credit.

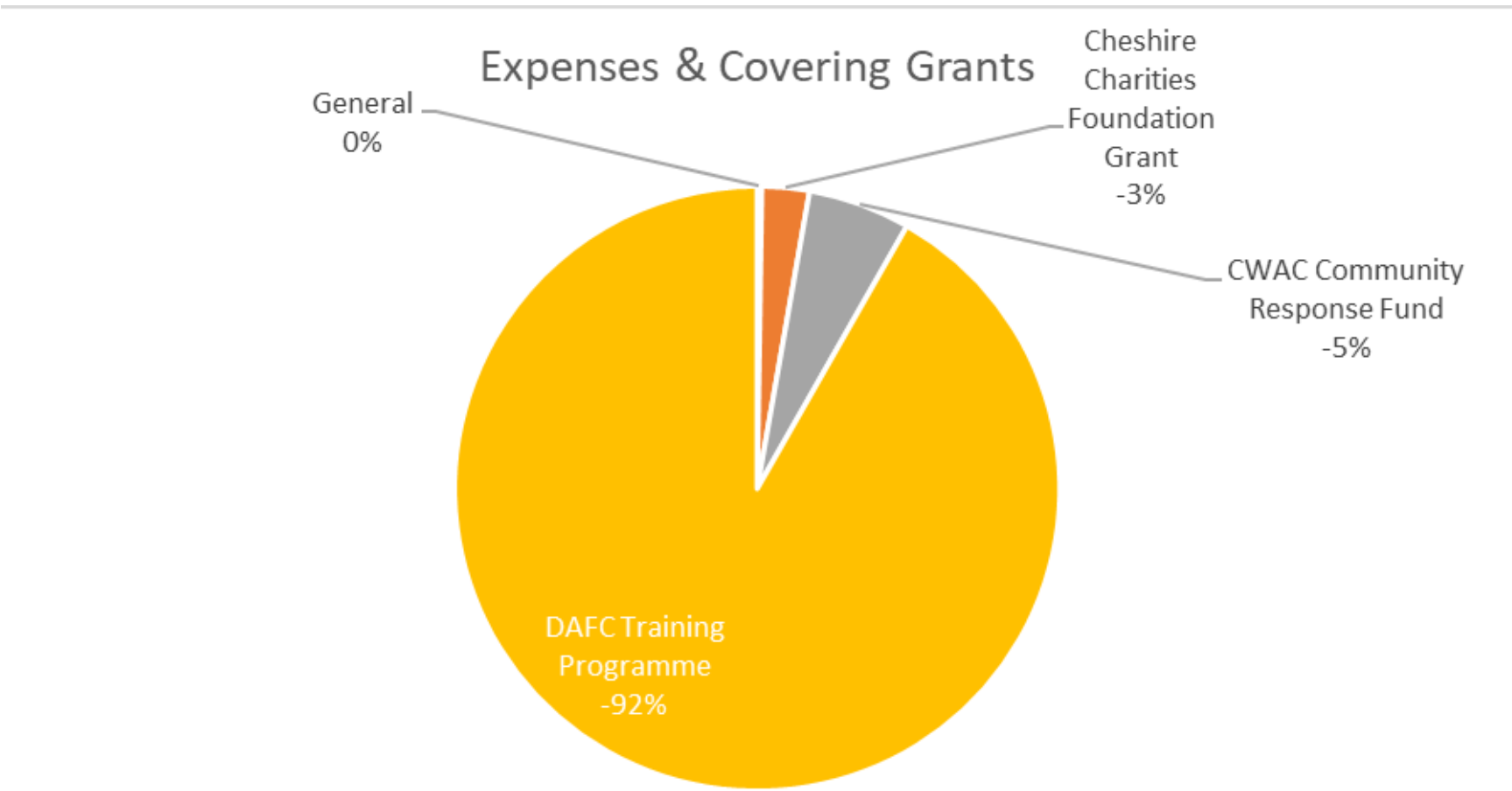
This is reflected in the chart below, with nearly 50% of the grants being issued for emergency items, clothing, removal, travel. Household items includes both kitchen utensils and linens for people placed in safe dispersed housing and those moving out of refuge into a new home. On occasion grants have been used for clearance of rent debts, to enable a new tenancy to be started in the client’s own name.



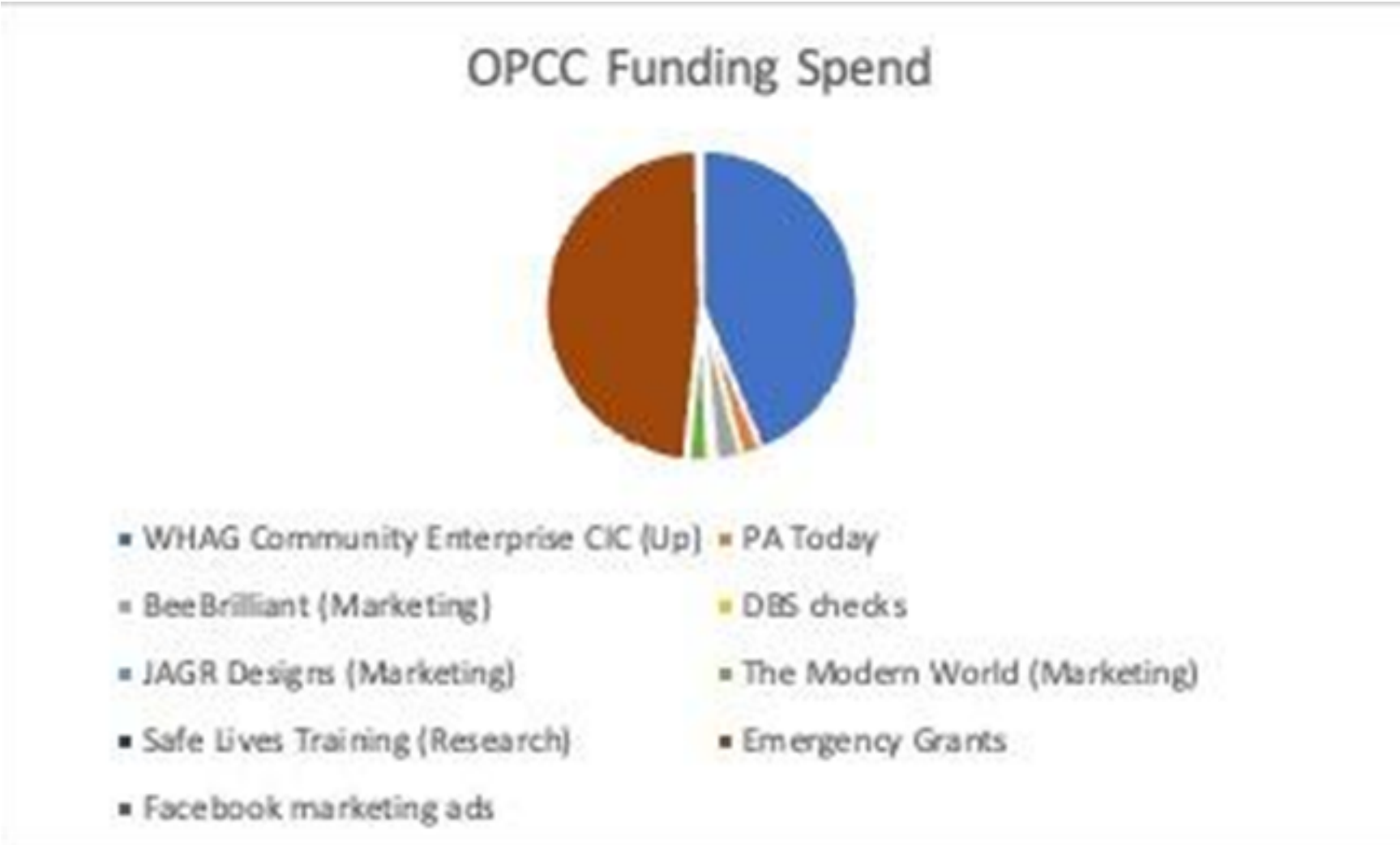
The principal agencies requesting grants for their clients were CWAC (Cheshire West and Chester) which include self-referrals, police and NHS referrals, DA Intervention and Prevention Services and WHAG (Women’s Housing Acton Group) which include refuge and dispersed housing. Requests were also received via ForFutures, Citizens Advice, Flynn’s Port in a Storm and Weaver Vale Housing Trust.



CWA has always worked hard to ensure that expenses are kept to a minimum, particularly the general administrative expenses. The pandemic and switching to mainly online activities, threw up some unexpected additional expenses, such as Zoom and social media subscriptions and CWA was fortunate to be able to bid for grants from local foundations to cover these additional costs.



The funding received from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire has been used during the year to set up and run the training programme. At the outset it was made clear to the OPCC that CWA would need to use some of the funding to continue the emergency grant programme, because the volunteer Trustees were having to put time and energy into setting up the training, rather than fundraising. The funding was also used for re-branding and making the website fit for purpose to market the training to corporate and SME business clients. Using a virtual administration service has ensured that the administration associated with the training could be cost effectively and efficiently managed.



CWA is extremely grateful to the OPCC Cheshire for continuing the funding to deliver Employers Workplace DA Training, with a further £40K received in March 2022, just prior to the year end.

Aside from the OPCC grant, income has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels generated by in person fundraising events, but CWA was delighted to be able to hold a street collection for White Ribbon Day once more, collecting just under £870 in November, via collection buckets and SumUp card readers.

TAKING A STAND ON WHITE RIBBON DAY

Each year, our White Ribbon Day event is a staple in the CWA calendar. We stand in solidarity with thousands of people around the world by taking action to raise awareness about domestic abuse.

Due to the pandemic, we were unable to hold our usual in-person event in 2020, so we were even more delighted to be back in Chester City Centre on the 28th of November last year.

Although it was a wet and windy day, we had a great time speaking to passers-by and bringing some joy with performances from two amazing choirs – Pop Vox and Proud Mary’s. We even had a visit from Father Christmas and his Elf!



Our amazing CWA volunteers were supported by a range of local people and organisations, including Cheshire Fire & Rescue, Cheshire Police, MPs Chris Matheson and Justin Madders, Women’s Self Defence Ellesmere Port, The Deva Victrix Beard and Moustache Club, CSASS Chester and Retina Digital.

The weather may have been a wash out, but the event was not! Thank you to everyone who made our first in-person event in a year and half a success. Our 2022 event will take place on the 27th of November – we hope to see you there!

Find out more about White Ribbon Day [here](#).





Chester Women's Aid Community Events, 2021-22

Emma Rees, Vice Chair

Our online awareness-raising and fundraising work, first galvanised by the pandemic, continued throughout 2021-22. We carried on developing our links with other local organisations, working alongside the Soroptimists and, in November and December 2021, launching our always popular 16 Days of Activism campaign, culminating in White Ribbon Day (which you can read about in this Annual Report).

Good For Nothing Chester continued this theme by adopting our 2020 'lockdown legends' for their Local Heroes campaign, also in November 2021.

In February 2022 we highlighted the sometimes overlooked but very real issue of abuse in LGBTQ+ relationships. As our Instagram posts appeared (thanks to the hard work of trustee Emma G.) throughout the month, so did the Progress Pride Flag, until it fluttered magnificently right across our grid.

One of our long-time supporters, the mysterious host behind the phenomenally successful 'ShitChester' Twitter account, raised much-needed funds for us throughout 2021-22, not least with their amazing LEGO display in Chester Market.

As the world slowly began to get back to 'normal', so we began to increase our involvement in face-to-face events. In May 2022 our Chair, Angela, and former Chair, Fiona, attended an event run by Northwich Women in Business in support of the work we do.

'Be Marvellous' focused on women's health and wellbeing and was held in the glorious surroundings of Hartford Hall. Over £300 was raised, every penny of which will support local people fleeing domestic abuse.



DOMESTIC ABUSE AWARENESS TRAINING FOR EMPLOYERS

Our domestic abuse awareness training was first developed over a year ago. It is designed to help employers understand how to support their employees within the workplace. The training is available to all employers/businesses across Cheshire and is funded by the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner. The funding has been renewed for 2022 with another £40,000 from the OPCC and Cheshire Constabulary. This generous funding means that we can continue to offer funded places on the training to small and medium-sized businesses.

Our training programme was developed with input from CWA, UP CIC (who also delivers the training) and the Police. It considers several important areas, which include possible indicators of abuse, the impact of abuse, how to deal with a perpetrator in the workplace and where to signpost/sources of support. We also provide a toolkit and digital badge for delegates once training is completed.

The training is generally delivered online but, in April, we delivered a cohort face-to-face for the first time, training a group of wellbeing coordinators for GP offices in Ellesmere Port, Cheshire West. We offer three cohorts per month, each consisting of three modules, with a minimum of four and a maximum of ten delegates per cohort. Our first training event was held in April 2021 as a pilot; since then, we have trained 71 delegates from 28 different companies located in Cheshire.

We recognise the importance of measuring the impact of our training and gather feedback and data to reflect this. The most significant change measured by participants as a result of our training, is a substantial increase in confidence to recognise the signs of domestic abuse in the workplace. This is a very encouraging statistic, indicating that managers can more successfully identify concerns. Participants also report a significant increase in their understanding of how to respond to a disclosure of domestic abuse, which means that they are more able to provide effective support.

We are very proud of our training and think that it is a valuable tool in tackling domestic abuse. Over the next year we aim to develop our training further, by implementing adjustments to its marketing and delivery, so that we increase the number of delegates and businesses attending.



A TRUSTEE'S JOURNEY: CARA



When I joined Chester Women's Aid in 2017, I was 24, had recently left an abusive relationship, lost my job and was struggling to know what to do with myself. My confidence had been obliterated and I struggled to trust in others as well as to trust myself and my own decisions and abilities.

Throughout my time as a trustee, I have had the continuous support of my colleagues who have helped me to grow in confidence in myself and my abilities, and I have been provided with the opportunity to meet other survivors and share our experiences, as well as offer direct and indirect support to others. I have been part of a team who have raised thousands of pounds for the charity and have reached thousands of people in the Cheshire area and further through online campaigns, social media, and face to face events.

I am endlessly grateful for the five years I have spent at the charity and for the growth it has given me and I look forward to seeing what the future brings.

THANK YOU

A special thank you to the following individuals and organisations:

Anne MacDonald
BeeBrilliant
Bristol Myers Squibb
Charlotte Brook
Cheshire West & Chester Council
Chester Cathedral
Chester Markets & @ShitChester (Lego model collection)
Chester Racecourse Company
Christine Stockton
Jodie Robb, JAGR Designs
Just Giving
Mr J Nemcek
PA Today
Paypal
Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire, John Dwyer
Raymond Lea
Rotary Chester
Ruth Tunnicliffe, UP CIC
St Anselm Lodge and Cheshire Freemasons
Soroptimist International Chester
Storage King Chester
The Appreciate Group
The Modern World
University of Chester
WHAG Community Enterprise
Women's Aid Federation
Zoom

Plus all the donors who have contributed via JustGiving, PayPal, Amazon Smile and Facebook

Chester Womens Aid Board of Trustees 2021-2022

Chair Angela Benson
Vice Chair Emma Rees
Treasurer Fiona Neame
Secretary Rachel Lewis
Committee Member Pat Daniels

Committee Member Emma Gray
Committee Member Pat Daniels
Committee Member Chiara Lisowski
Committee Member Chinwe Enyinna
Committee Member Cara Fletcher

Committee Member Bridie Jackson (Resigned August 2022)
Committee Member Hannah Langford (Resigned June 2022)

Watch this space for:

- White Ribbon Day event and fundraising – 27th November, 2022 Chester City Centre
- 16 Days of Activism #HeForShe – 25th November to 10th December
- Domestic Abuse Free Chester employer training sessions



Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	4/1/2021	To	31-Mar
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £
A1 Receipts				
Donations	8,853	-	-	8,853
PayPal Donation	539	-	-	539
Amazon Smile Donation	157	-	-	157
Activities - International Women's Day	-	-	-	-
Activities - White Ribbon Day	869	-	-	869
Bank Interest	4	-	-	4
Membership Fees	78	-	-	78
Fundraising Activities	-	-	-	-
Grants Returned	239	-	-	239
Cheshire Communities Foundation Grant	-	-	-	-
OPCC Domestic Abuse Training Funding	40,000	-	-	40,000
CWAC Covid-19 Community Response Fund	-	-	-	-
Steve Morgan Foundation Grant	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	50,739	-	-	50,739
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).				
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	50,739	-	-	50,739
A3 Payments				
Grants	17,026	-	-	17,026
Activities- International Women's Day	-	-	-	-
Activities- White Ribbon Day	-	-	-	-
WAFE Subscription	100	-	-	100
Stamps/stationery/Printer Ink/Raffle Tickets	25	-	-	25
AGM/EGM/Other Meeting Costs	-	-	-	-
16 Men Campaign Expenses	-	-	-	-
Website	-	-	-	-
Insurance	181	-	-	181
Other expenses	559	-	-	559
Domestic Abuse Training Expenses	21,669	-	-	21,669
Online donation platform processing fees	77	-	-	77
Just Giving Account Fee	216	-	-	216
Zoom Account Fee	201	-	-	201
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	40,055	-	-	40,055
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)				
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-
Total payments	40,055	-	-	40,055
Net of receipts/(payments)	10,684	-	-	10,684
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	58,268	-	-	58,268

Cash funds this year end	68,951	-	-	68,951
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Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank Accounts	68,850	-
	Cash Account	101	-
		-	-
	Total cash funds	68,951	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)
			-
			-
			-
			-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)
			-
			-
			-
			-
			-
			-
			-
			-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)
			-
			-
			-
			-
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	
		Angela Benson	

CC16a



Last year
to the nearest £

13,370
-
-
247
-
9
60
2,539
-
948
40,000
2,000
355
59,529

-
-

59,529

13,082
136
-
100
5
-
20
95
161
393
488
107
198
173
14,958

-

14,958

44,571
-
13,697

58,268



**Endowment
funds**

to nearest £

-
-
-
-

OK

**Endowment
funds**

to nearest £

-
-
-
-
-
-

**Current value
(optional)**

-
-
-
-
-

**Current value
(optional)**

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

**When due
(optional)**

Date of
approval

9/28/2022



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name:
Chester Women's Aid

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 March 2022

**Charity no
(if any)** 504854

Set out on pages

(insert number to include the page number of additional pages)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2022.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

28/9/22

Name:

Joanne Rishworth

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Association of Chartered Accountants (ICAEW)

Address:

Station Farmhouse, Main Road, CH4 9AJ

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.