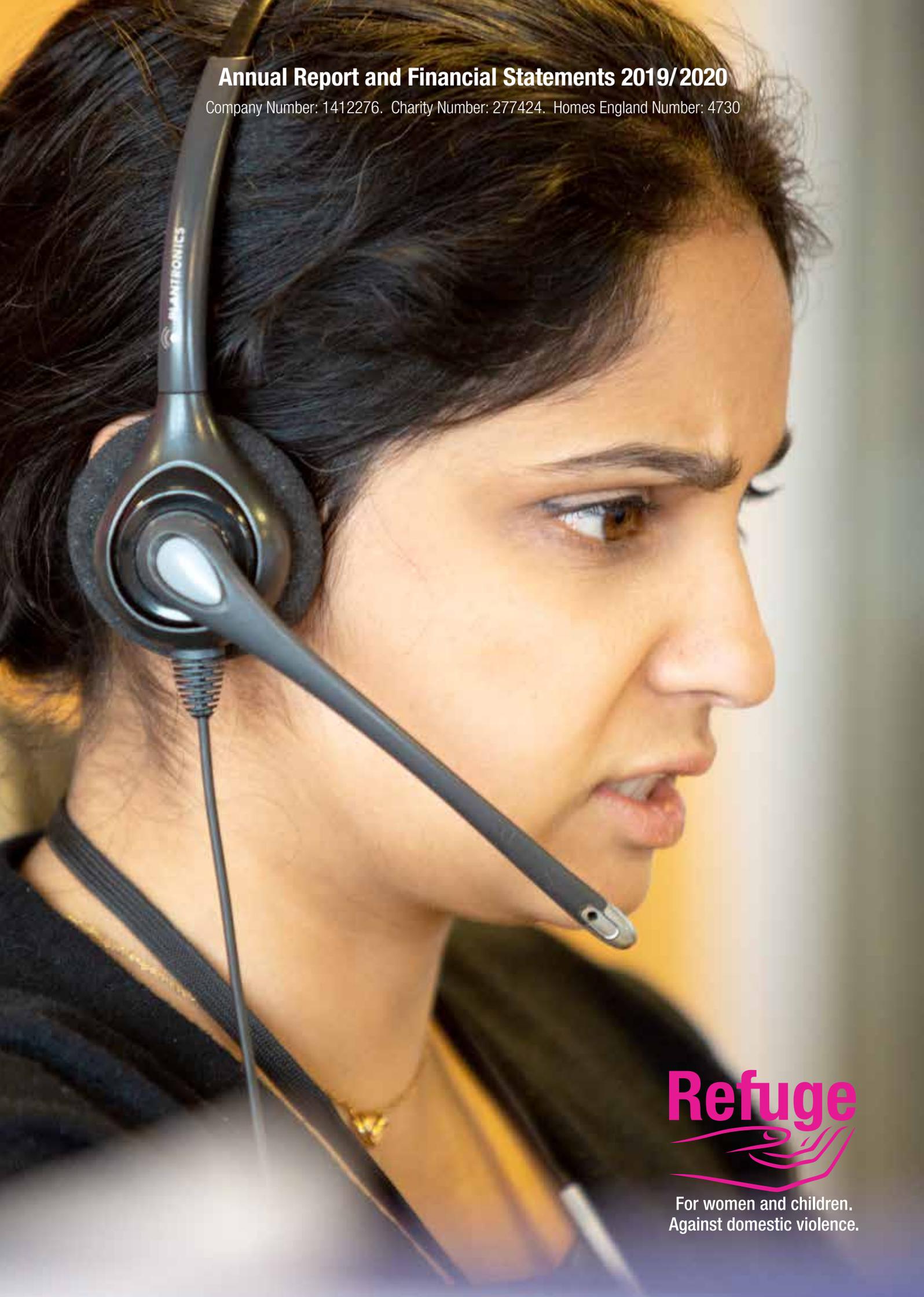


Annual Report and Financial Statements 2019/2020

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



For women and children.
Against domestic violence.



Contents

Introduction	1
Refuge at a glance	2
Violence against women and girls (VAWG)	4
Our 'three Ps' approach to ending woman abuse	7
What makes refuge unique?	8
Message from our chair, Maggie Rae	10
Message from our chief executive, Sandra Horley CBE	11
Our services	12
Services for children	14
Young person's peer support	16
Our independent advocates	17
Community based services	18
Modern slavery and human trafficking	19
Technological abuse	21
Economic abuse - empowering women	22
National domestic abuse helpline	23
Policy and public affairs	24
Refuge in the media	26
Natasha's story	29
Social media - reaching more women, securing more supporters	30
Raising voluntary income	31
Thank you	32
Structure, governance and management reference, and administrative details	33
Strategic report	36
Financials	42

**Some names and identifying details have been changed throughout this report, in order to protect the privacy of Refuge's clients.*

“Thank you so much for being so supportive and for your warmth. Thank you for always being there for us and listening and helping when we ask. Your help and encouragement will make a difference in our life.”

Southwark Refuge mother and child residents

INTRODUCTION



Refuge is the largest specialist provider of domestic abuse and gender-based services in the UK

Who we are and what we do

Refuge is at the forefront of addressing violence against women and girls. In 1971, approaching five decades ago, Refuge opened the world's first women's refuge and since then has grown to become the country's largest specialist provider of domestic abuse services across.

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) takes multiple forms. Every day, we see the myriad ways men seek to control and exploit women through physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, economic and technological abuse. Listening to the needs and experiences of survivors is at the heart of what we do. Over the years the more we have listened, the more we have understood that women experience abuse from their partners and ex-partners in many different ways, including modern slavery and human trafficking, forced prostitution, so-called 'honour'-based violence, forced marriage, rape and sexual assault, and female genital mutilation. As we have listened, we have pioneered technological and economic abuse programmes of work - as the world becomes more sophisticated and more subversive ways of controlling women evolve, so must our services evolve and grow. We are an organisation where our experts can support women no matter what their experiences.

Our 330 frontline staff and 90 volunteers work tirelessly to provide tailored expert support to survivors across our refuges, independent advocacy, community outreach and culturally-specific services. On any given day these services support over 6,500 survivors, and many more reach out to us for support online. For example, this year we welcomed over 1.4 million visits to our website.

Towards the end of 2019 Refuge won the contract to become sole provider of the National Domestic Abuse Helpline. On an average day this vital service receives around 270 calls and contacts – this figure more than doubled during COVID-19 and trebled during lockdown.

Every day the team at Refuge rises to this never-ending challenge. It is testament to the expert team at Refuge that we have not only survived this challenging period but provided more support than ever before.

Refuge at a glance

In 2019/20, Refuge provided life-changing services to 15,430 survivors and their children.

- 1,307 women and children accessed our refuge provision
- 14,123 survivors and their children were supported in our community-based services
- Of all those supported by Refuge, 3,615 women were additionally supported in overcoming technological abuse – a near 15% increase on women supported the previous year; and 304 women were supported with complex immigration cases

Our National Domestic Abuse Helpline (0808 2000 247) logged on average 270 calls and contacts every day – this figure rose dramatically during COVID-19.

Thousands more women turned to our website and social media channels for information and support. This year we saw:

- 54,000 engagements on Twitter (including likes, replies, retweets) – a 38% growth compared to last year
- 179% increase in our Instagram following to 8,774 followers
- 1,431,207 website page views – a 347% increase on last year
- 14% increase in Facebook fans to 30,968

Of the women who entered Refuge's full suite of services last year:

- One third were injured when they arrived
- More than 40% had their lives threatened by their abuser
- 67% had experienced physical abuse
- 31% sexual violence
- 86% psychological violence
- 38% economic abuse

Refuge at a glance

All of our services are trauma-informed and we support women with complex needs:

- 18% of survivors disclosed needs related to drugs and 5% to alcohol
- 22% had mental health difficulties
- 6% had no recourse to public funds
- 10% of women said they were feeling suicidal by the time they reached out to us

While the scale of our challenge is daunting, our services this year were able to achieve the following results:

- 95% of survivors said they felt safer when they left our services
- 92% achieved the changes they wanted in their lives across safety, health and social and economic well-being
- 91% were supported to find a safe new home
- 93% said their quality of life had improved
- 95% 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

Our teams also contributed to criminal justice outcomes for the women we support, including:

- 824 perpetrators charged
- 316 guilty verdicts

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG)

Who are the victims and who are the perpetrators of VAWG?

VAWG is most often committed by men; the perpetrators are partners, ex partners, family members, sex traffickers, organised crime groups or sometimes a combination. The aim of their behaviour is to control women or to profit from their exploitation.

The statistics speak volumes:

- Almost one in three women aged 16-59 in England and Wales will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives
- An average of two women a week are killed by current or former partners - a statistic which has remained consistent for decades ^[2]
- Over the past ten years, women have made up 76% of all domestic homicides, with four in five of these women killed by a current or former partner ^[3]
- The majority of perpetrators of domestic homicides in England and Wales² are men
- Furthermore, in England and Wales, 92% of defendants in domestic abuse-related prosecutions were men in the year 2018/19 and 75% of victims were women ^[6]

Refuge recognises that men are also abused. However, statistics show the majority of incidents are perpetrated by men and experienced by women.

What is the cause of violence against women and girls?

Gender inequality, misogyny and sexism are at the root of domestic abuse, being both causes and consequences of domestic abuse. Abuse is often a hidden crime which is tolerated, if not condoned. Abuse can happen to anyone regardless of age, social background, gender, religion, sexuality or ethnicity.

¹ A trauma-informed approach seeks to avoid the re-traumatisation of clients and to create conditions necessary for their recovery. A trauma-informed organisation embodies this approach and recognising the potential for vicarious re-traumatisation, and applies it at all times.

^[2] ONS (2020), 'Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2019'. www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/homicideinenglandandwales/latest#how-were-victims-and-suspects-related

^[3] Ibid.

² In England and Wales, there were 270 domestic homicides recorded by the police between April 2015 and March 2018 where the victims were women. ^[1] In 260 of these cases, the suspect was male. ^[2] www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2019#domestic-homicide

^[6] CPS (2019), 'CPS VAWG report 2019'. www.cps.gov.uk/publication/violence-against-women-and-girls



What does domestic abuse and violence against women and girls mean?

Domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence describe any violence or abuse that is used by someone to control, coerce or obtain power over their partner. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, emotional and economic abuse. It is a pattern of behaviour by an abusive partner to make the victim feel scared, isolated and compliant. Many women experience domestic and other forms of abuse without ever being physically abused. Non-physical forms of abuse can be as destructive and as undermining as physical violence. Many forms of gender-based violence are overlapping – you can be a victim of domestic abuse and a trafficked victim, or a victim of rape and sexual assault perpetrated by a partner.

Isolating the victim from family and friends, controlling how

much money she has and how she can spend it, putting her down and eroding her sense of self-worth, monitoring and restricting her movements and activities, threatening the victim or her loved ones with violence, or humiliating her in front of family and friends are examples. Put most simply - if you alter your behaviour because you are frightened of how your partner will react, you are being abused.

Changing how society views violence against women and girls

Refuge works hard to change the way society views violence against women and girls. We believe the public debate needs to shift from 'what did she do?' to 'what makes him choose to do it?' The abused woman is not to blame for her partner's behaviour. The perpetrator is solely responsible for his actions. Abuse is a choice a man makes, and he alone is responsible for changing his behaviour.



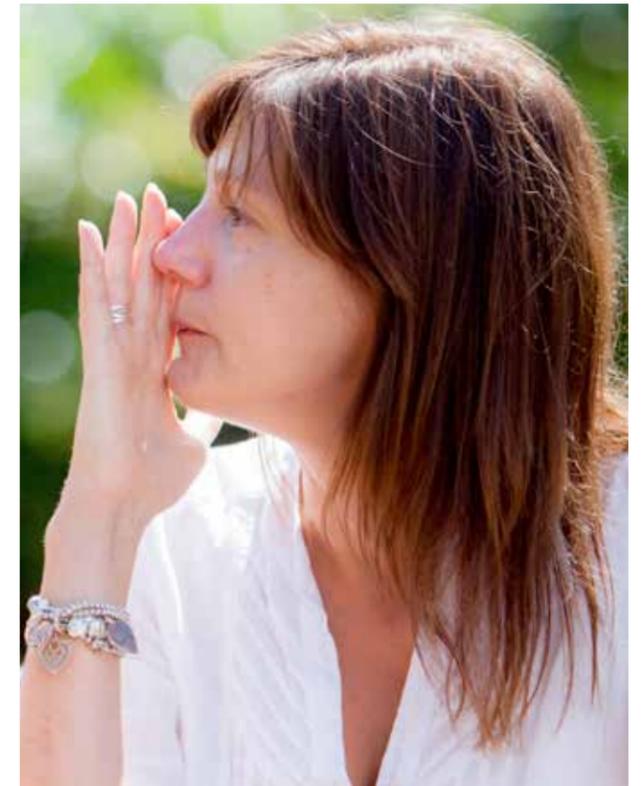
Our 'Three Ps' approach to ending woman abuse: provision, protection and prevention

Our strategic priorities support our commitment to deliver a 'Three P' approach: **preventing** violence and abuse, **protecting** the victims and **providing** services to empower those who have experienced gender-based violence.

In 2019/2020 our strategic priorities included:

- **Safeguarding** our current provision to reach over 6,500 survivors every day through winning contracts that are up for renewal - competition is tough, budgets are being cut and caseloads are increasing in complexity and number
- **Extending** services to reach even more women and children who are experiencing abuse; growing our tech abuse, trafficking and wider violence against women and girls services; extending our influence through our policy, campaigning and communications work; driving the agenda to ensure policy makers, legislators and the criminal justice system provide protection to those at risk or experiencing violence
- **Building** Refuge's independence and resilience through ongoing investment in our HR, finance, IT and fundraising and communications initiatives

We achieved our 2019/20 priorities – and more. We are delighted to share some of our highlights in this annual report.



Violence against women is unacceptable. We all have a role to play in eliminating sexism and gender inequality.

WHAT MAKES REFUGE UNIQUE?

Keeping survivors at the centre of all we do

We are the largest provider of specialist support to the greatest number of survivors across the country. We tailor our support to ensure every woman is safe and is given options to enable her to overcome trauma and regain control of her life free from abuse, violence and fear.

We listen to women; we give them the space to describe their experiences; we empower them to rediscover their own needs, gradually overcoming the trauma they have suffered. We believe that survivors should be part of the solution to domestic abuse. We actively encourage our service users to talk about their experiences to support our campaigning and policy work and contribute to the ongoing enhancement of our services.

Arlene Simon, survivor engagement co-ordinator

'My job as survivor engagement co-ordinator is central to Refuge's commitment to keep survivors at the heart of all we do. I listen to survivors' experiences so we can learn from them on an on-going basis.

'I started working at Refuge in 2015 as a frontline worker and have had several roles since. I started my current role in November. My work with survivors means I bring their experiences and needs into all Refuge does – from shaping our resources to better respond to their needs, to informing policy consultations, to seeking new survivor voices for campaigns, reports and media opportunities.

'I meet amazing women on daily basis and I know that my work really makes a positive difference to Refuge, but most importantly to the lives of the women and girls we support.'

Our staff

We have over 400 passionate experts in our workforce who work tirelessly to provide essential support to traumatised women and children. Refuge recognises that its staff are its most precious asset; we support them and provide exceptional training and robust management processes to ensure they are equipped to deal with the challenges they face on a daily basis. We want to learn from our staff, ensure their well-being and enable them to give their best at work.

Our values

Feminist, empowering, expert and transforming; our values run through the core of everything we do. We integrate our values internally and externally and continually seek to build and develop them. At the same time, Refuge expects the highest standard of behaviour and conduct of its employees, volunteers, trustees and contractors and as such, our values are underpinned by a behavioural framework to demonstrate this commitment.

Continual development

In 2019/20 we embarked upon a staff engagement survey to identify what was working well, alongside areas for improvement. We sought employee feedback on various important aspects of our organisation including its leadership, reward factors and purpose - with 98% of those surveyed telling us they felt they had a strong sense of purpose. We held focus group discussions to explore the initial survey findings and gather further information. We put in place an eight-point action plan to address the gaps and take the organisation forward.

Culture, communications and well-being were among the priorities. Throughout the year, Refuge embedded its values more visibly across the organisation, made IT improvements, introduced a new self-service HR system, supplied state-of-the-art personal panic alarm technology to safeguard our staff, recruited new board members and a new chair, and developed our internal communications, staff well-being and trauma-informed work.

As we reached the end of the year, the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic meant devising new ways to support our staff online both individually and in groups. In addition, we intensified emotional and psychological support for our Helpline and our key staff workers who continued to work with women in our refuges.

Data informed

Every day our practitioners at Refuge engage in thousands of interactions with the women and children who use our services. To ensure survivors' safety and to manage their support holistically, we developed a bespoke casework management system called IMPACT. Our wealth of data informs our policies, campaigns and our future services.

www.impactbyrefuge.org.uk

Commitment to quality

Refuge is British Standards Institute (BSI) ISO 9001 accredited and again secured BSI accreditation in February. This is a quality management status that can only be achieved and maintained through evidence of continuous improvement. It involves a rigorous review and we were delighted to be awarded this recognition in relation to the quality of our services.



' The organisation was evidenced to be continuing to follow its strategic direction and to deliver on key projects with one example being tech abuse which, over the past three years, has gone from an idea to an embedded and effective service. The organisation's strengths are the efficient and effective use of the plan, do, check and act process at the heart of the standard. The organisation continues to evidence that it is one of the best implementations of ISO 9001:2015. '

British Standards Institute.

Message from chair, Maggie Rae

This is, sadly, my last message to you as chair of Refuge.

By the time I step down on 31 May 2020, I shall be saying goodbye to an organisation that is much changed, strengthened and renewed since I became chair in 2012. Over these eight years, Refuge has grown considerably. At first glance the number of refuges has remained relatively stable. In 2012 it was 42 in 19 local authority areas. Today the figures are 48 refuges in 22 local authorities. The real change has come in the numbers of women and children the organisation supports every day. In 2012, it was close to 2,000 and today it is over 6,500. This is because Refuge has continued to look beyond the ordinary and the commonplace and campaigned against violence against women and girls in all its manifestations. Refuge has also raised awareness among our MPs and the general public so that more people understand the issues and support our work to confront and eradicate all forms of this abuse from UK society. The complexity of the work is much greater than it was when I first became chair, for example, the increase in online and tech abuse where women and children are stalked, monitored and controlled by abusers.

As the 2019/20 year closed, the UK went into lockdown and we worried tremendously about keeping our refuges open and services running. Fortunately, with careful thought, hard work and dedication by Refuge staff, all services remained open and functional. The Helpline moved off site and staff received safe and secure mobiles and laptops to continue the service from home. The Helpline service is all the more vital in these isolating times.

In wishing Refuge farewell, I would like to pay tribute to the chief executive, Sandra Horley and her committed staff who have made Refuge what it is today. I am honoured to have had this opportunity to work with Sandra and the entire Refuge team. I would also like to thank all the Refuge staff and volunteers, commissioners, donors, patrons, partners, fundraisers and supporters who have been part of Refuge throughout my term as chair, and before that as a board member, for their role in saving and changing lives.



I would also like to thank my fellow trustees who put in a great deal of work in supporting Refuge. They do this on a voluntary basis and alongside their “day jobs”. We have said goodbye this year to several long-standing trustees, in particular Barbara Donoghue, Manel de Silva and Dianne Nelmes, all of whom have given outstanding service to Refuge. Throughout my time as chair, Refuge and I have been fortunate to have their support as well as the support of our very capable and committed current board.

Finally, I would like to welcome my successor Hetti Nanton-Barkworth. She will, I know, be an excellent chair and that in her hands Refuge will go from strength to strength.

Maggie Rae

Message from our chief executive, Sandra Horley, CBE

This year is certainly not one I could ever have predicted. We have faced some enormous and unexpected challenges, in particular COVID-19. By the time our reporting year ended, the country was in lockdown a women were in lockdown with perpetrators of domestic abuse. Despite the challenges, Refuge supported more women and children than ever before. Our frontline staff became designated key workers and our helpline staff were quickly enabled to work from home to keep that line of life-saving communication open. Our committed team of 330 staff and 90 volunteers continued to provide tailored one-to-one support through our refuges, community outreach services, independent domestic, sexual and gender abuse advocates and child support workers. We also continued to offer completely independent support to women who are among the most marginalised members of UK society; many of whom have no recourse to public funds, meaning they cannot claim any welfare benefits, others who have been trafficked to the UK and forced into prostitution. It is thanks to the staff in our services that so many life-saving and life-changing outcomes have been achieved for women and children over the course of the year.

In November the Home Office awarded Refuge the contract to run the new National Domestic Abuse Helpline as the sole provider. This is a momentous change for Refuge as an organisation, meaning that for the first time we have been able to transform, expand and modernise the Helpline to bring it fully into the 21st century. In a matter of months, we began developing sophisticated digital tools to provide information and support to thousands more women often needing to access our experts silently. There is a new website with non-traceable web forms, a new tech safety tool and, as the financial year ended, our new Live Chat function came online. We have extended our reach to support 270 calls and contacts to this national lifeline every day – which rose significantly as COVID-19 took effect.

Throughout the year we have worked tirelessly to secure funding for our services and have been very successful in increasing both statutory and voluntary income. We retained our community service, Athena, in Lewisham which we have run since 2014, whilst opening a new service in Barking and Dagenham. We have grown our voluntary income by 35%, whilst putting the foundations in place to develop sustainable income yet further.



Our communications activity has ensured Refuge’s work has remained high profile throughout the year with a greater volume of media coverage secured than we have ever seen before.

We made the Helpline famous by bringing the number to national attention – taking over Twitter for the day and showcasing the Helpline number on the iconic Piccadilly Circus lights and more. The campaign launched on International Women’s Day just two weeks before the country went into lockdown.

The year also brought unexpected political change, during which we influenced government to give women and children a voice and progressed the long-awaited Domestic Abuse Bill.

It is thanks to everyone at Refuge, from our services to the HR, finance, IT, fundraising, policy and communications teams and beyond, that we closed the financial year on such a strong footing in the midst of a crisis that Refuge has never experienced before. But with creativity, tenacity and a commitment to supporting abused women and children, Refuge maintained its services, ensuring more women than ever were supported during the course of the pandemic. I could not be more proud of, or grateful to, our staff, including my senior leadership team who have worked tremendously hard in the most challenging of circumstances to safeguard the lives of women and children experiencing domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence. This year has been one of the most outstanding. I am also grateful to our patrons, donors and supporters for their extraordinary, manifold generosity towards Refuge and for continuing to believe in the work of the organisation.

Sandra Horley

OUR SERVICES

Refuges

Refuge runs 48 refuges, which comprise 348 units of accommodation, across 22 local authorities. These refuges are an essential element of the national response to violence against women and girls in the UK. They provide a lifeline to the women who need to flee their abuser and find safety and support in secret locations in new parts of the country. Refuges are where lives are changed and where new lives begin. Our work with women not only keeps them safe but also helps women overcome the trauma they have experienced and rebuild their lives. Ruby*, who fled to one of our refuges in fear of her life, helped support a press article which appeared at Christmas where she said:

‘I’m living with my three children in one room, but I feel fulfilled. I’ve faced the worst challenges, but I can sleep without worrying for myself and my children.

‘I didn’t realise help was available. If you feel unsafe, you must find support or contact the police confidentially. When you’re safe and supported, you can achieve. My children keep me going and when I see them smile, I can hope again.’

Over the year our national network of specialist refuges continued to grow. We secured substantial funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to support and expand our existing accommodation services. This funding was critical in keeping some of our refuge services open. The professionalism, dedication and hard work of Refuge staff were cited as factors in the funding award decision.

Yet refuge services continue to be chronically underfunded so we will maintain our efforts to ensure they can continue to operate on a sustainable footing.

It is part of the tragedy of COVID-19 that the vital need of refuges was brought sharply into focus, with the number of domestic abuse killings occurring in the first three weeks of the pandemic doubling to at least 16. Never before has the need for refuges been greater.

**The identity of all survivors has been changed.*

Outreach

We offer community outreach services to support women who need protection and emotional and practical support. Our community services also run local helplines and raise awareness of domestic abuse to ensure local women know that they are not alone, and help is available. Survivors have their own key worker who provides one-to-one support around staying safe, obtaining housing, financial empowerment, contacting the police, understanding the criminal justice system, safety planning around child contact, as well as referrals to other services.

Our staff also train other agencies supporting survivors, helping them to develop a co-ordinated community response. Outreach staff run drop-in sessions in local communities. Flexible outreach support is particularly successful in engaging marginalised women, such as older women, women from different cultural backgrounds, women in rural communities and disabled survivors.

In Cambridgeshire, MHCLG funding enabled Refuge to deliver an outreach service which specialises in accessing housing for women, run in partnership with Standing Together. In Derby the MHCLG funded a specialist outreach worker to support the needs of women from South Asian communities. In Richmond, Kingston, Wandsworth and Merton they funded a project working across the four London boroughs to support women who, because of the complexity of their needs, are at risk of homelessness.



Supporting women and children from all ethnicities

We run culturally-specific services for women of many ethnicities, including our Vietnamese outreach and Eastern European independent advocacy services, outreach and refuge services for South Asian women and a refuge for African and Caribbean women.

Staff and managers in these services come from the same communities as the women they support, and they understand their cultural identity and speak the same language. Each refuge has facilities to meet the needs of its residents, including prayer rooms and specially equipped kitchens that cater for dietary requirements. Staff nurture a culture that is free from judgment, where survivors are believed. Our staff speak over 40 languages - many of the women we support do not speak English as a first language, which contributes to their isolation in wider society.

Over the year we supported more than 300 women with complex immigration cases. Many of the women we work with come from Asian countries, some from the Middle East and some from North and West African countries. We work closely with local solicitors and together submit “destitute domestic violence” applications to the Home Office. When granted, these applications provide temporary access to welfare benefits, and a three-month period in which to access legal advice and submit applications to remain in the UK. During this time a lot of intense work is required to gather evidence to meet Home Office requirements.

Positive outcomes included women being granted indefinite leave to remain in the UK who have since been rehoused and now live independently; while others are being supported to find accommodation.

Refuge staff are experts in understanding the needs of women in complex situations and in finding the right support. Our policy team continues to advocate for migrant women with no recourse to public funds who experience domestic abuse to ensure they have access to state support.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Our child support workers provide support to children to help them overcome the trauma they have experienced. This work is much needed and greatly underfunded.

One of our wonderful child support workers gives an account of a week in her world, taken from a feature published in The Guardian on 23 December.



Monday

Mothers are often overwhelmed when they come into our refuge. My job as a child support worker is about giving families the confidence they will be safe here. Survivors of domestic abuse have had so much taken away from them, so they need to feel their life is still as regular as it can be. Today I have a one-to-one session with an eight-year-old boy. He feels lost without his friends and is directing his anger towards his mum, so I refer him to a counselling support agency. I also meet with the mother to offer parenting support.

Tuesday

Our refuge receives a referral from a mother in distress. Her abusive husband is constantly checking on her and she only has a short window of time where she can talk safely. She's been made to believe that she has nowhere to turn emotionally or financially, and is desperate to protect her two-year-old son. Fortunately, we have a room available, so we arrange a safe place and time to meet the family the following day. We use a code word to ensure continued safety and instruct the mother to turn off the location settings on her mobile phone.

Wednesday

I greet the family following their 90-minute journey to the refuge. The mother is in tears and they've only been able to bring a handful of belongings. I ask what the little boy's favourite toys are and I make up his bed with dinosaur-print bedding. The mother is able to choose some clothes from our donations. She cries and apologises over and over again.

Thursday

I see a six-year-old boy in the afternoon who is very upset. He says they have been making Christmas decorations at school, but as our refuge doesn't have a chimney, he's worried Santa won't be able to reach him. I reassure him that Santa will always be able to find him and spend the afternoon building a makeshift chimney from cardboard boxes and brick wallpaper. The chimney takes pride of place in the communal lounge, with twinkling lights and stockings to hang from the mantle.

Friday

I meet with a new family. The eldest son, a 12-year-old boy, stepped in to protect his mum when she was attacked by her partner. The incident has left the family shaken, but the child is relieved that he doesn't have to worry about his mother being hurt anymore.

“Few of us can imagine what it's like for a young child to see their parent being abused. It disappoints me that there's so little support available to children affected by domestic abuse. More than 300 children are expected to be in our refuges this Christmas and roles like mine are scarce.”

“But I'm glad I can be there for families: I'm a friendly face they can always turn to. Often just talking about the people and the things they miss is enough for the time being. I feel proud of the work we do.”

Refuge child support worker.



YOUNG PERSON'S PEER SUPPORT

Refuge employs a team of five early intervention workers and young person advocates to support young people experiencing, or at risk of, gender-based violence. Our young person workers build a trusting relationship with young people who often face many challenges at a critical period of their life. Some are experiencing abuse from a boyfriend, or a family member; others struggle to cope with living in a household where there is domestic abuse. Others are in relationships with older men and experiencing exploitation that they do not yet recognise or know how to name.

Our young person workers understand the complexities of teenage life and focus on supporting young people with a broad range of issues, from managing self-esteem, friendships and bullying, to recognising and recovering from sexual violence and exploitation. They focus on keeping young people safe, well and in education, giving them a voice in the often complex arena of agencies such as children's services, schools and the criminal justice system.

Our staff are ever aware of the challenges for young people in their use of technology and social media, and this year funding from The Young Londoners fund allowed Refuge to place a youth tech lead in our community service, Athena, in Lewisham. Our youth tech lead works specifically with young people, mothers and the community to reduce risks of technology-facilitated abuse.

We know that for young people, technology is often used by peers, partners, gang-members and family-members to groom, exploit, control and harass them. The youth tech lead provides 1:1 support for mothers and their children in helping them to identify different ways in which technology can be used to facilitate the abuse of young people, as well as supporting them in knowing how to stay safe online.

As well as providing an excellent internal resource as an expert in her field for our team of young person workers, our youth tech lead also provides training and briefings to schools and other relevant agencies.

OUR INDEPENDENT ADVOCATES

We run 11 independent advocacy services across 13 local authorities for survivors who have experienced all forms of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, in particular those who may be at the highest risk of serious harm. We stand alongside victims and keep survivors and their families as safe as possible, advocating on their behalf where appropriate to make sure they get the help they need to live in safety and regain independence.

Our independent domestic violence advocates (IDVAs) and independent gender violence advocates (IGVAs) provide support to survivors who navigate the criminal justice system; an experience which can often leave them feeling marginalised and disempowered. Our staff ensure survivors understand what is happening with their case and give them the power to decide what they want to do each step of the way. Our team facilitates pre-trial visits, liaises with the police and witness care unit to apply for special measures, liaises with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) before trial and will accompany the victim to court. This helps to avoid intimidation and further physical violence from the perpetrator and provides survivors with emotional and practical support around giving evidence.

We also support survivors with civil remedies which most often involve child contact, non-molestation orders, and family and residence orders. We are experts in crisis intervention, risk assessment, safety management plans, SMART individual support plans, emotional support and represent our clients at Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs). By building strong relationships with various agencies we ensure survivors access the services they need. In 2019/20 Refuge attended more than 131 multi-agency risk assessment partnership conferences with other agencies. IDVAs and IGVAs also use their specialist knowledge to help survivors access justice, increase prosecution rates and provide training to key agencies such as the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and healthcare professionals to help identify people at risk.



“ I wanted to write to you, to let you know how amazing my IDVA has been and what a difference she made for me. I am glad it is my IDVA who was the one who helped me and based on my experience I will always be a firm supporter of Refuge and its people. ”

Survivor who accessed our services.

COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES



“ You being there whenever I need to talk is the main thing, the way you’ve gone above and beyond to help with my finances - that’s the thing that stresses me out and you’ve helped me a lot with that. You helped with food when I needed it. Everything that you’ve done has been vital.”

“ I am living in safe place, you helped me with everything - coming to court, helping me move, applying for a grant. It makes me feel emotional to think how my life has improved. The support groups really helped me a lot. You checked on me regularly and that helped. I got a lot of knowledge from Gaia. I would be able to share that with others too.”

Comments from our clients.

We run a number of community-based services around the country – services where women can access a variety of support under one roof. The Gaia service in Lambeth, London, which we have run since 2011, is one such example. Within the service we offer a specialist gender-based violence advocacy service, a specialist service for girls aged 13-17, a sanctuary scheme to improve home safety, an early intervention service for 11-17 year olds and group and peer support, as well as volunteering opportunities. It is a much-needed and respected service.

Our teams also train other professionals who work in the community and come into contact with survivors to improve understanding and provide an appropriate response to domestic abuse. One example is our domestic abuse multi-agency training in Warwickshire which over the course of a month reached more than 250 professionals. Feedback across the board was very positive for example: “I thought today’s session was excellent. Just the right amount of time and content for my/my team’s needs.”



Vietnamese delegation visit hosted by Sandra Horley, CBE, chief executive and Refuge’s expert team

MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The needs of modern slavery survivors are complex and intense, requiring therapeutic, trauma-informed expert support. This year we supported 64 women who were victims of modern slavery.

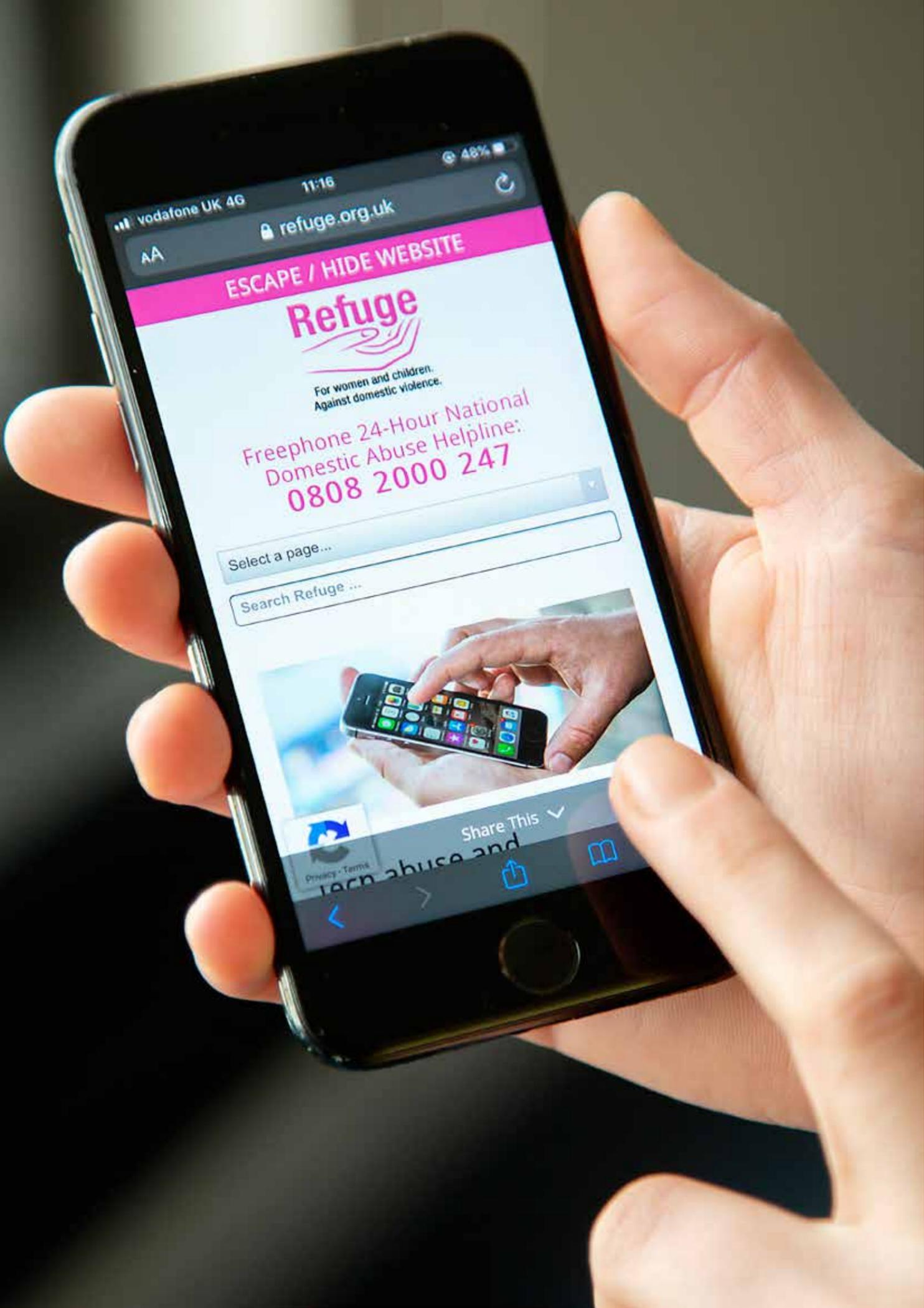
There is a nexus between modern slavery and domestic abuse. The majority of Refuge’s modern slavery clients have experienced exploitation in combination with sexual violence, domestic abuse, forced marriage and/or ‘honour’-based violence. 86% of Refuge’s modern slavery clients had experienced multiple forms of abuse. The ways in which the women who Refuge supports are primarily exploited is through domestic servitude and forced prostitution.

Refuge has developed services and expertise in supporting Vietnamese, Chinese, Middle Eastern and Eastern European victims

in their own language. We provide access to immigration advice, the National Referral Mechanism for modern slavery, and/or justice systems, health advocacy, on-going emotional support, support for children, and support around safe contact with families and help returning home, if requested.

Refuge receives a high number of modern slavery referrals from health services and other charities – our staff meet regularly with community groups and statutory services to ensure professionals who may encounter victims are aware of the support Refuge can offer. Clients often arrive at Refuge having heard about us from a concerned friend or acquaintance. To build trust and reach hard to support women, Refuge has invested significant effort into building links at a community level.





TECHNOLOGICAL ABUSE

Refuge's IMPACT data shows that 54% of women (2,799/5,188 total) who received support from our services in 2019/20 had also experienced abuse involving technology, including online harassment, tracking, cyber stalking, revenge porn/image-based abuse and isolation by abusers.

Developing our tech abuse programme of work is a strategic priority for Refuge. We have trained all our frontline staff to recognise technological abuse and security and privacy issues and in how to empower survivors to safety plan around their devices.

Refuge's technological and economic abuse programme, launched in 2017 specifically to support VAWG victims in negating these threats and harms, has developed unique expertise in this field. We know how perpetrators use technology to amplify abuse, intensify trauma and maintain control. Unlike other agencies, Refuge does not advise women to withdraw from online spaces, instead we empower women to use tech strategically to maintain privacy, increase safety, and reduce isolation. Women need to use tech to enable their everyday lives - to shop, bank, work remotely – but need to do so with the confidence that they can remain safe. In some cases, we work with the women we support to use the same technology to provide evidence of abuse and help bring perpetrators to justice.

At a strategic level we work with the Government to ensure the 2019 Online Harms White Paper recognises the needs and experiences of abused women and that their voices are at the heart of any future legislation.

In an article we contributed to in The Independent, 9 January, Elise*, who accessed one of our refuges, explained how one of Refuge's support workers, when reviewing her phone, discovered her ex had access to her email account because she had her location settings turned on. He had been able to identify her location in real-time, alongside her calendar with the details of all of her appointments with solicitors, doctors, the Jobcentre and more.

Jane Keeper, director of operations, said: "He could see the search history on her maps and also had access to her internet search history. Knowing her location in the refuge was a huge safety risk to her, other residents, and staff. She had to pack her bags and move to another refuge in the middle of the night. Our support worker helped her to close her email account and secure her device. She was given a burner phone, and the support worker also helped her to change all the passwords and account settings for her online banking, as he had also been withdrawing money from her account without her knowledge."

We have also significantly developed our tech, digital and online resources. We launched a Tech Safety resource – a chatbot – which is proving to be an invaluable tool women can access to learn how to keep their devices safe.

This resource is hosted on:

www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

www.refuge.org.uk

**The identity of all survivors has been changed.*

What is economic abuse?

Economic abuse is a common form of domestic abuse, and a powerful tool often used to coerce and control. Economic abuse can involve a current or former partner controlling a woman's ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other economic resources; for example, stopping her from going to work, taking her money, insisting benefits are in their name, preventing her from accessing an own/joint bank account, putting debts in her name, and damaging her possessions which then have to be replaced.

Online economic abuse

Technology can facilitate economic abuse by making it quick and easy for a perpetrator to access a woman's finances and online accounts. Examples of common forms of online economic abuse include:

- Taking out online loans, debts or overdrafts in the woman's name without her consent
- Tracking or hacking into a woman's online bank accounts to control or monitor her activity
- Denying access to a woman's individual or joint online bank account
- Identity theft which can negatively impact a woman's credit rating
- Hacking into a woman's online benefit account to make changes to the account and payments
- Taking out online loans, debts or overdrafts in the woman's name without her consent
- Leaving vexatious negative reviews on a woman's online profiles

Prevalence and how we support

One in five adults has experienced economic abuse in a current or past relationship. 66% of those reporting economic abuse are women. ^[1]

Women are at greater risk of homicide when they experience economic abuse alongside high levels of coercive control. ^[2]

Economic abuse is rarely perpetrated in isolation and usually occurs as part of a pattern of coercive control. 82% of survivors who have experienced economic abuse also experienced other forms of abuse from their partner, including physical, sexual and emotional abuse. ^[1]

Examples of economic abuse where we support women:

- Securing online accounts – including financial accounts
- Reporting online harassment and stalking to tech companies and the police

To develop our economic abuse support further, we partnered with PayPlan to enable women reduce and manage existing debts. Together we agreed to put in place a three-month repayment breathing space when women's debts are frozen, during which time we are able to work with women to find solutions to debt challenges. Refuge and PayPlan are developing their work further by influencing policy and building industry codes of conduct to ensure women are protected and can become financially independent.

^[1] Refuge and The Co-operative Bank, 2015

^[2] Websdale, 1999

Over the course of Sarah's* relationship, her husband gradually became more and more controlling. He would force her to show him her payslips and receipts for shopping. He hacked into a number of her online accounts and used these to apply for loans and credit cards in her name.

After she left him, she found out that he had accrued over £30,000 debt in her name. We supported Sarah to report the fraud to Police and Action Fraud and she was able to successfully challenge the liability of many of the debts.

*The identity of all survivors has been changed.

In July Refuge was awarded the new three-year contract to run the National Domestic Abuse Helpline as sole provider. We had three months to prepare for a greatly expanded 24-hour service with a new name, a new web platform and crucially, a smooth transition for all Helpline callers, staff and volunteers from the former to the current service.

We launched the new improved service on 1 November and on an average day logged 270 calls and contacts. In the first five months of the new service there were 14,717 conversations with survivors of domestic abuse and people supporting them. During that time our staff made 2,439 referrals to refuges from among the callers most in danger or distress.

The new secure web platform, www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk, designed by survivors for survivors, was developed using staff insight and experience, a survey of survivors, consultation with external experts, and with the technical expertise of Mirum, a leading digital creative agency assisting us pro bono. This new service includes a 'contact us form' so women can access our support digitally and offers a more secure alternative to email, allowing survivors to 'book' a safe time to speak to a Helpline worker. In its first five months, from 1 November to 31 March, there were 33,000 Helpline website visits.

To increase the reach and awareness of this national service Refuge, with support of pro bono agency BBH, launched a high profile 'Safety in a Number' campaign with the ambition of making the Helpline 'famous'. The campaign launched on International Women's Day on 8 March. High profile individuals and celebrities including Little Mix, Gillian Anderson and Miranda Hart all changed their Twitter names to the Helpline number that day. The iconic Piccadilly Circus advertising billboard carried the number and Refuge was delighted with the media coverage which saw the number broadcast far and wide.

Little did we realise that we could not have timed the campaign better – two weeks later COVID-19 struck and the country went into lockdown. In the weeks that followed, calls and contacts to our national Helpline began to rise considerably – we are grateful to our Helpline team for rising to meet this unexpected challenge.

Hi Sandra,

We have not met, but I wanted to pass on my thanks to you and your brilliant team. I recently founded a consultancy for people who experience disadvantage (homeless, care leavers, people with a conviction). One of my clients was experiencing domestic abuse, which became much worse very quickly after her child's father lost his job and moved into her family home.

She called me late one evening to tell me that his behaviour was becoming more severe having progressed from verbal threats of violence to physical acts of violence. She and her child needed to find a safe way to get out of her home and somewhere safe to relocate.

I reached out to your Helpline team that night and I received a call early the next morning. The information I was given was second to none. Your Helpline worker explained what other steps this young woman could take to ensure she and her child stayed safe. The information was delivered with a huge amount of empathy and understanding; it was sensible, feasible and practical. Your team do a hard job under normal circumstances; I can't imagine how difficult their work must be as a result of this pandemic.

My client is now in a safe place and has the support she will need to build a life free from violence for her and her little one. As a professional who encounters women in trauma as a result of domestic abuse, the support was invaluable. Please pass on my thanks to your team. I wish I wrote down the name of the woman who returned my call. She was great.

Best wishes,
A



Jess Phillips MP in conversation with Jane Keeper, director of operations, after hosting a briefing event at Refuge to discuss the Domestic Abuse Bill.

POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Refuge communicates the voice of survivors at the highest levels of Government to influence law and policy, to reduce violence against women and girls and ensure the services and support women and children need are provided. Refuge's policy and public affairs work underpins, supports and drives organisational priority areas – in particular making the case for and securing sustainable funding for refuge and specialist service provision.

Domestic Abuse Bill

The Domestic Abuse Bill represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform the national response to domestic abuse. We are working to ensure the Bill leads to change that will bring meaningful support to survivors of domestic abuse. This includes a sustainable funding system for specialist services, a benefits system that supports women, the criminalisation of tech abuse, access to housing and a definition of domestic abuse that states it is a gendered crime where women are overwhelmingly the victims.

In June 2019, we held a briefing event on Refuge's priorities for the Domestic Abuse Bill with Jess Phillips MP and Refuge supporters in attendance.

We were pleased to see the Government propose a legal duty for local authorities to assess need for and provide accommodation-based domestic abuse services, including refuges, in the Domestic Abuse Bill. This could make a real difference in increasing the number of refuges across the country and putting them on a more sustainable financial footing.

We have maintained our media coverage of the Bill and Refuge's asks and have ensured an ongoing presence on social media to support this work. We will be working with the Government to ensure the new legal duty is met with adequate funding as the Bill continues its passage through the House of Lords.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) General Election campaign

During the 2019 General Election campaign, attention turned to keeping violence against women and girls high on the political agenda. Refuge drew up a 10-point manifesto and engaged its supporters by asking them to contact their prospective parliamentary candidates. MPs from across the political spectrum signed up to the pledge to prioritise survivors' needs.

COVID-19

During the crisis Refuge worked closely with the Government and the wider VAWG sector on a range of pressing issues including, emergency funding for domestic abuse charities; ensuring domestic abuse workers were listed as national key workers and could continue to send their children to school; and the need for public communications telling survivors where to access support. Our policy work contributed to the Government awarding £28 million of emergency funding to domestic abuse charities and a national campaign #YouAreNotAlone to increase awareness of the domestic abuse support available for survivors.

Government visits and meetings

Refuge works closely with the government of the day to ensure the needs and concerns of survivors of abuse are communicated directly to decision makers. In 2019/20 we hosted visits and meetings with a number of government ministers including:

- Rt Hon Priti Patel MP, Home Secretary
- Victoria Atkins MP, Minister for Safeguarding and Vulnerabilities
- Rt. Hon Amber Rudd MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
- Will Quince MP, Minister for Universal Credit
- Wendy Morton MP, Minister for Victims

Refuge briefs parliamentarians on a wide range of issues relating to domestic abuse and responds to consultations and inquiries. This year briefings included: domestic abuse and homelessness; domestic abuse, debt and the benefits system; the gendered nature of domestic abuse; and the needs of survivors with no recourse to public funds.

Submissions were made to a wide range of consultations and inquiries including how family courts respond to domestic abuse; online harm; the impact of Universal Credit on survivors of domestic abuse; and the future of refuge funding.



The Rt. Hon. Priti Patel, Member of Parliament for Witham and the Home Secretary, visits our National Domestic Abuse Helpline.

REFUGE IN THE MEDIA

2019/2020 has been a successful year for external communications. We have responded to requests and driven an increasing number of our own home-grown opportunities thanks to our in-house expertise.

A key aim of our work is to reach women and children in need of our services – they need to know domestic abuse is a crime and that Refuge's services are there to support them. Our prevention and awareness raising work is a service in its own right.

At the heart of our work are the voices of the survivors we support – we are hugely indebted to the women in our services, the majority of whom need to remain anonymous, but also to those who time and again lend their voice to our campaigns. Mel, Hollie, Natasha – thank you so much, you are very much part of our team.

Some of our 2019/20 highlights include the extensive coverage we secured for Refuge's most successful Christmas Appeal to date. We have supported the organisational priority to drive awareness of our tech abuse programme, securing high profile national media coverage for the launch of our 'Tech Safety Tool'. This automated service provides information and videos which show how to secure mobile phone devices, protect social media accounts, secure location settings, and keep devices safe. Tech abuse is an increasing problem, and one which Refuge and its specialist team are working hard to address.

Another highlight this year was a special edition of ITV's 'Tonight' show with Julie Etchingham, which took an in-depth look at tech abuse and featured an interview with Jane Keeper, our director of operations, as well as citing Refuge's work and statistics.

The launch of Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline in November was another significant campaign. Changing the name from the National Domestic Violence Helpline to National Domestic Abuse Helpline reflected the reality that domestic abuse is not only about physical violence - it can include emotional, economic, technological, sexual abuse and coercive control. In early 2020 we launched the new website www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk – built for survivors, by survivors.

On International Women's Day, 8 March, we launched a high-profile multi-media campaign to 'Make the Helpline famous'. Over 60 celebrities changed their Twitter name to our National Domestic Abuse Helpline number, 0808 2000 247, leading to over 22.8 million impressions. Sky and the Crime and Investigation Channel ran a Helpline advert voiced by actress Olivia Colman, a patron of Refuge, in advertising breaks throughout the day. The Helpline number also took over the Piccadilly Lights billboard, the largest advertising space in Europe, free of charge.

Throughout the year Refuge has continued to ensure that our Domestic Abuse Bill priority areas remained high on the media agenda. We have sustained Bill media coverage to call for a sustainable funding system for specialist services, a benefits system that supports abused women, access to state funding for migrant women, access to housing and a new definition of domestic abuse, stating that it is a gendered crime with women overwhelmingly the victims. The Bill represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform the national response to domestic abuse.



Lisa King, director of communications and external relations, in front of The Piccadilly Lights on International Women's Day, 8th March 2020.



COVID-19 campaign launches to raise funds for Refuge's Helpline



NATASHA'S STORY

Before she phoned the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, Natasha Saunders endured years of abuse at the hands of her husband, before he was jailed for his crimes.

Natasha says her husband was controlling from day one.

“From the outset, I couldn't see my friends and family, I couldn't work because he said; 'I want to support you'. I wasn't allowed to travel anymore.

“But at the time everything seemed great. He would say; 'why don't you want to spend time with me? I love you so much. The only reason people go out is to look for someone else'. I didn't read into it too much.

“When I was pregnant with our daughter, I remember cradling my bump in the bath and saying; 'we can do this on our own, it's okay'. But it still took me over five years to be able to leave him. I think it shows the power of an abusive partner. I don't class myself as a stupid person. I knew it was wrong, but I felt so trapped.

“The abuse escalated from the moment I became pregnant. But that survival instinct kicks in when you have children.

I was thinking; 'what are the dangers if I leave? Is it easier to keep my head down and shield the children?' There are a million things that go through your head.

“He would say; 'if you leave me, I will get the kids in the car and drive into a lake - you'll have to live with the fact it's your fault'.

“Escaping in a body bag was my reality. I didn't contemplate suicide but there were times I thought 'what's the point? Is this life, is this it?' But the National Domestic Abuse Helpline saved my life.

“The Helpline saved my life. It reminded me I'm not on my own. The Helpline worker told me all my concerns were valid and she gave me the courage to phone the police.”

In 2018, Natasha's now former husband was found guilty on three counts of rape and one count of sexual assault. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison and three on licence, and put on the sex offenders register for life.

Natasha now has a new safe and happy life. In 2020 she decided to share her story publicly and supported our #SafetyInANumber campaign. We are immensely grateful to Natasha.

RAPE TRAUMA I was raped by my husband hours after giving birth - I thought he'd kill me but I want women to know life can get better

WATCH THE VIDEO

A MUM has revealed she was raped by her husband just hours after she gave birth, tearing her stitches and leaving her in agony.

Natasha Saunders, now 31, endured years of abuse at the hands of sick John Chesher, 45, before he was jailed for his crimes two years ago.

www.thesun.co.uk/fabulous/11131719/raped-husband-hours-birth-kill-me-life-better

SOCIAL MEDIA - REACHING MORE WOMEN, SECURING MORE SUPPORTERS

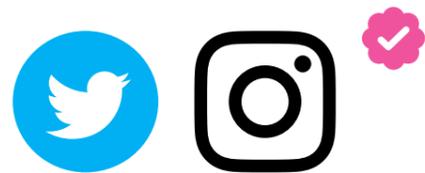
Our social media presence goes from strength to strength. Refuge now has the ability to develop new supporter engagement tools, including creating audio visual content in-house. We produced our first short film, which featured Refuge survivor Natasha Saunders, and this was shared extensively as part of our 'Make the Helpline famous' International Women's Day media content.

We have also developed new online resources to enable supporters to take action. This has contributed both to our public policy work, as well as significantly increasing our supporter lists and facilitating growth in voluntary fundraising.

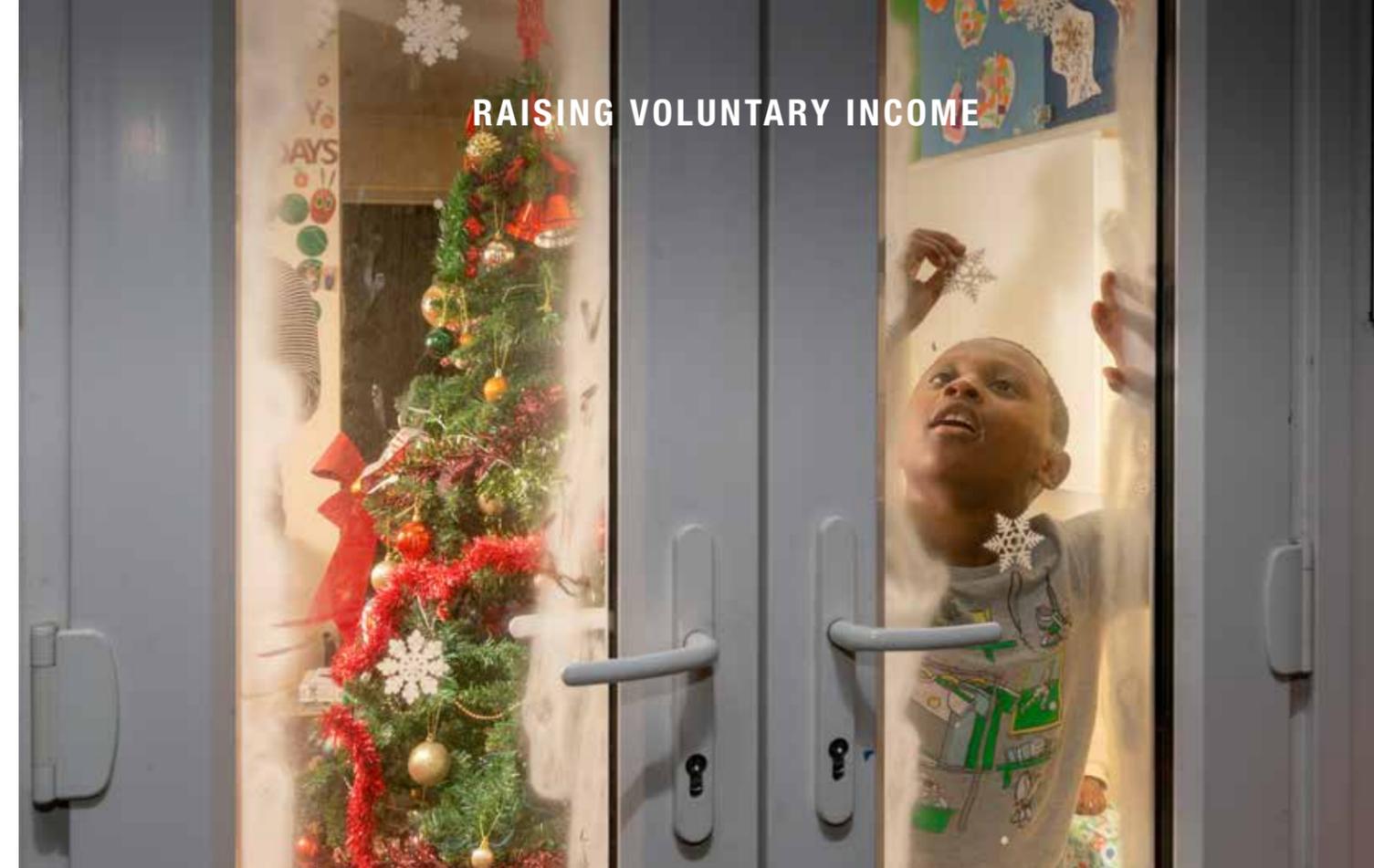
As an example, we were able to use our new email supporter digital communications platform to ask them to share our Violence Against Women and Girls manifesto ahead of the snap General Election.

Through the email platform we urged supporters to contact their MPs, asking them to commit to prioritise addressing Violence Against Women and Girls if they were elected. We had a strong response to this call to action and developed learnings to take forward as we progress our supporter engagement work.

Across Twitter, Facebook and Instagram we have taken a more strategic approach to our communications which has produced positive results. We have created bespoke content and ensured greater engagement by analysing what has performed well with those who follow us.



During this financial year we became verified on Twitter and Instagram, helping more users find us and bringing us extra functionality to elevate fundraising and campaign requests.



During the course of 2019/20 the fundraising team secured £4.3m of voluntary income – an increase of 35% compared to the year before. We have built and grown the fundraising team to galvanise the public to donate their time, money and voice. We have collaborated on strategic partnerships with new and existing companies, brands and institutional funders.

Our fundraising activity builds sustainable funding to underpin our services. We have delivered many successful campaigns and have thousands of people supporting us – and we would like to thank you all for your unswerving support. We are incredibly grateful. A few of our highlights are shared below:

Christmas appeal

This year the Christmas appeal featured the story of Nina, a refuge child support worker, and Poppy, a five-year-old in one of our refuges. The appeal raised an outstanding £195,268, making it the most successful Christmas appeal ever. We contacted new and existing supporters and donors by post, email and social media who were asked to buy a virtual present for a loved one or make a direct donation to the women and children we support.

London Marathon

In April 2019, 28 inspirational Refuge runners crossed the Virgin Money London Marathon finish line, with Team Refuge cheering from the sidelines. Our runners raised an incredible £100,000 between them. One of the runners, Spectator journalist Isabel Hardman, dedicated every mile of the 26-mile run to a woman who had lost her life, tweeting about these women as she completed each mile.

Richard Herring's final International Women's Day campaign

For the third and final year, comedian Richard Herring took on the challenge of reminding Twitter about International Men's Day, whilst raising money for Refuge. This year on International Women's Day, Richard took to live streaming platform Tiltify to answer every tweet that asked; 'when is International Men's Day?' The comedian raised £72,000, bringing the total he has raised single-handedly over three years to an astonishing £400,000.

THANK YOU LIST

Thank you to all our supporters, to the families of those who left a gift in their will and to our patrons and donors for their ongoing support and commitment:

Avon Cosmetics	Olivia Colman CBE, patron
BBC Children in Need	Sir Patrick Stewart OBE, patron
BBH	Picturehouse
Benefit Cosmetics	Pye Foundation
Charles Hayward Foundation	Richard Herring
Cherie Booth CBE QC, patron	Robert Lewis and Catherine Wills Charitable Trust
City of London International Women's Day Committee	Sandy Gumm
Comic Relief	ShareGift
Dunard Fund	Standard Life Foundation
Eric F Sparkes Charitable Trust	Dame Stella Rimington
Euromonitor	Stratford Town Trust
Fiona Bruce, patron	The Atkin Foundation
Golden Charitable Trust	The Brook Trust
Dame Helen Mirren, patron	The Co-operative Bank
Baroness Helena Kennedy QC, patron	The Evan Cornish Foundation
Isabel Hardman	The Gloag Foundation
Jo Brand, patron	The Inner London Magistrates Courts Poor Box Charity
John Lewis, Oxford Street, London	The White Company
Julian Nieman, photographer	Tides Foundation
Julie Etchingham	Two Magpies Fund
Kamlesh Raichura	Violet Melchett Children's Trust
Lily Safra	Wiel, Gotshal & Manges LLP
Merlin's Magic Wand Children's Charity	
Mirum	
National Lottery Community Fund	We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the staff, volunteers and the individuals who support us and whose hard work and dedication result in the delivery of life saving and life changing services to thousands of women and children each year.
Neil Amos	
Nick Darke, designer	

Structure, governance and management reference, and administrative details

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
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

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:

Council of management:

Hetti Barkworth–Nanton (Chair - appointed 14 May 2020)

Andrea Daniels (appointed 6 February 2020)

Barbara Donoghue (resigned 23 September 2019)

Elizabeth Edwards (appointed 6 February 2020)

Katie Farrington

Christine Higgins

Dianne Nelmes (resigned 14 May 2020)

Carolyn Pearson

Maggie Rae (resigned 31 May 2020)

Selina Sagayam

Manel de Silva (resigned 14 May 2020)

Ruth Smith (appointed 6 February 2020)

Amerdeep Somal (resigned 28 July 2020)

Kirsten Walkom

Patrons:

Cherie Booth CBE QC

Jo Brand

Fiona Bruce

Olivia Colman CBE

Baroness Helena Kennedy QC

Dame Helen Mirren

Dame Stella Rimington

Sir Patrick Stewart OBE

Chief executive and company secretary:

Sandra Horley CBE (will retire on 31 October 2020 after 37 years as Chief Executive of Refuge and as company secretary on 9 August 2020)

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 and company secretary, Sandra Horley CBE, was 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 until 23rd June 2020 and company secretary until 9 August 2020 when Ossie Klass, Head of Finance and IT became Company Secretary. An Interim Chief Executive, Dr Carole Easton OBE was appointed on 23 June 2020. The Trustees will be recruiting to the permanent role of Chief Executive later in 2020.

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, Stonham, 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, Redbridge, Richmond, Southwark and Waltham Forest; the counties of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, East Sussex, and Warwickshire; the cities of Coventry and Derby, and the borough of Warrington.

Police Crime Commissioners (PCC): Derbyshire, Hertfordshire and Thames Valley.

Refuge ran the Freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline (NDVH) in partnership with Women's Aid until 31 October 2019. From 1 November 2019 Refuge has been running the Freephone 24 hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline (NDAH) as the sole provider of the service.

STRATEGIC REPORT

Objectives

The objects of the company are:-

- (a) 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 (i) or (ii) above, throughout the United Kingdom and abroad;
- (b) 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
- (c) 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

In 2019/20, we raised £4.3M across a range of income streams, including public fundraising and donations, events, corporate partnerships, trust and major donor gifts, to support the ongoing provision of life-saving and life-changing services to women and children escaping domestic abuse.

We are conscious of the trust that supporters place in us when they donate to Refuge, and we aim to put them at the center of everything we do. 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. Over the last year we have undertaken a review across the Fundraising Team to ensure we are up to date and compliant with the updated Code of Fundraising Practice. This includes a policy to safeguard supporters 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 2019/20 we received two complaints which were resolved without any being escalated to the Fundraising Regulator. We responded to all complaints within three working days.

This year we worked with two 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 regularly monitor the work of the supplier.

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 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. Whilst we generally seek unrestricted funding, we do work with partners and donors who prefer to restrict their support to particular areas of our work.

Employee communication

Refuge believes in the importance of helping each department and individual to understand what we do, why it is being done, and the importance of the role they play in making Refuge’s plans and service delivery happen. We do this by sharing our vision, being open about our goals and honest about our progress, breaking goals down into departmental objectives and ensuring individuals are clear on how their individual objectives feed into those of the team.

As part of our high performance culture, we encourage open and frank feedback. This includes informal conversations, formal feedback, formal appraisals, timely announcements regarding changes and transparent consultation where appropriate.

Financial review

The operating results for the year to 31 March 2020 show an improved performance with income rising by 17% to £17,562,104 (2019 £15,003,949), and total expenditure of £18,102,553 (2019: £15,777,916) giving rise to an operating deficit of £615,710 (2019: £766,990 deficit) after losses on investments of £75,261 (2019: £6,977 gains). The losses on investments were mainly due to a decrease in the value of investments as a result of COVID-19. The deficit is being met from Refuge’s reserves.

Closing funds balances amounted to £3,613,810 (2019: £4,229,520) of which, £3,030,266 (2019: £2,750,903) was held as general unrestricted reserves, £337,073 (2019: £514,589) as designated reserves and £525,834 (2019: £684,665) as

restricted reserves. The sector continues to experience cuts in funding as a result of reduced public sector budgets and there is intense competition in all areas of contract tendering.

The increase in income has come mainly from success in winning a new contract and an increase in funding through grants from MCHLG. Incoming resources from operating activities were up by 12% compared to 2018-19 with contract income for support services showing a reduction of 1.2% and housing management income showing growth of 24.9%. Grant income for 2019/20 increased by 30.8% rising to £2,461,962 (2019: £1,881,675) mainly due to grants from Big Lottery Fund, Tides Foundation, MHCLG and increased funding for the new National Domestic Abuse Helpline. Investment income was down 9.1% to £44,446 (2019: £48,919) reflecting the impact of COVID-19 on investments at the end of the year.

The total expenditure of £18,102,553 for the year represented a 14.7% increase compared to 2018/19 and mainly reflects increased investment in fundraising and the new helpline contract. Expenditure on integrated services increased by 25.2% due to acquiring a new contract, while expenditure on refuge provision increased by 11.8%. There was a 35.6% increase in expenditure on floating support and outreach services reflecting another successful year in obtaining MHCLG funding to support services. Expenditure on the Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline’s expenditure has increased by 100% and reflects the growth required by the new funding agreement which started in November 2019.

Cash balances at the end of the year stood at £4,366,349 (2019: £5,554,703) and total assets less current liabilities at £3,186,859 (2019: £4,569,520).

Principal risks

The Council of management is responsible for establishing and monitoring internal control systems within Refuge. The council of management review 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 agreed that the following are the principal risks that Refuge faces:

- Continued significant public sector cuts which could make future funding more insecure especially if a recession is caused by COVID-19: To mitigate this risk Refuge will continue to maintain a profile with local and central government; participate in government surveys and respond to consultations; continue efforts to keep the profile of domestic abuse high in the media; monitor and influence the Government's Domestic Abuse Bill which may protect refuge services from some cuts; work with bodies such as the National Housing Federation (NHF); make contingency plans; develop innovative service delivery models; focus on diversifying income streams; raise the profile of and increase understanding of specialist domestic abuse provision
- COVID-19 and lockdown adversely affects Refuge's finances, staff, service users and its ability to provide services: To mitigate this risk Refuge ensured that all advice given by the Government and Public Health England was followed; received continual updates on health and safety from an independent health and safety consultant; put procedures in place to support staff working from home; ensured that all activities were risk assessed including return to offices; ensured that all staff are risk assessed to ensure their safety; secured funding from government and local authorities for emergency response to lockdown; benefited from an extremely successful fundraising campaign which strengthened reserves and enabled vital services to continue

- A competitive fundraising environment: The fundraising team has had a successful period at the start of the lockdown; fundraising products that have been successfully trialed during lockdown will now be rolled out and developed; innovative digital fundraising products are being developed as part of a three year strategy; targets are monitored by the senior leadership team monthly and reports monitored by the audit and risk committee and board quarterly
- Significant contracts being retendered: There is ongoing work reviewing costs and introducing innovative ways of delivering services; continual improvements in the tender preparation process and the quality of bids; maintaining strong relations with commissioners in order to understand and respond to local commissioning needs
- Challenges recruiting suitably skilled staff and providing capacity for growth: In response to this Refuge has improved the training of managers and its recruitment process; grown its senior operations management and peripatetic teams and is continually reviewing the organisation structure to ensure that there is adequate management capacity, knowledge and skills for the services being delivered
- Cyber security awareness: Refuge has high level SSL certified encryption for the most sensitive data which is being extended to mobile devices; staff have had IT security awareness and data protection training; policies on IT and data protection have been updated; penetration testing and security audits by independent experts; work underway towards achieving the ISO 27001 standard

Looking ahead

In 2020/21 Refuge will build on the successes achieved in the previous financial year with an ambitious set of activities planned for the year. As social and demographic trends change Refuge will continue to be agile enough to update and improve its response to meet the complex and changing needs of its clients and address the wider abuse against women and girls (VAWG) agenda.

Key areas looking ahead:

- Continue to increase the capacity of the National Domestic Abuse Helpline to reach more survivors through the use of innovative technology to widen access to support services
- Continue to be the UK's largest provider of high quality specialist abuse against women and girls services – listening and responding to the needs of survivors, providing innovative, tailored services
- Expand our leading edge support for women who experience technological and economic abuse to reach more survivors and collaborate with other providers to recognise and support women who experience tech and economic abuse
- Double our voluntary income in order to increase capacity to support the growth in the numbers of survivors seeking support since the onset of the COVID-19 lockdown
- Continue in our journey to become a psychologically informed organisation providing trauma informed practice and ensure the well being of staff and volunteers
- Build on our existing modern slavery and trafficking work to identify and support more individuals, expand our services and awareness raising work
- Run high profile media campaigns which ensure Refuge reaches women in need of its services whilst challenging and changing negative social attitudes
- Develop a program of activity focused on culture and behaviours, to ensure that Refuge is a great place to work and volunteer, that internal communications are effective and to develop further understanding of improved practice in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion

These are ambitious plans, and the success of our fundraising team has provided the seed funding to develop more innovative ways to provide support to survivors to escape abuse and rebuild their lives.

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 £3,613,810 of which £525,834 is restricted and £3,087,976 (of which £337,073 is designated) is unrestricted reserves. The council of management, having referred to the Charity Commission's revised guidance CC19, has examined the charity's requirement for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation and has decided 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.

Free reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of Refuge and to allow for the development of new initiatives. Council of management is confident that at this level Refuge would be able to continue its current activities in the event of a significant reduction in funding. Free reserves at 31 March 2020 were £2,606,111.

The free reserve target based on budgeted costs for 2020/21 is £3,615,861 and Refuge was £1.0M below the target at 31 March 2020, however, the council of management have approved a budget for 2020/21 which once again achieves the reserve target. There are sufficient reserves to address the risk to vulnerable beneficiaries that could arise should funding cease and cause unplanned closure of services.

The reserves policy is currently being reviewed and a new policy will be implemented for the 2020/21 accounts.

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. There was the challenge of maintaining the helpline, refuges and other frontline services while providing staff with the means to work remotely. Where appropriate, staff were advised to work from home and new health and safety practices were implemented for both staff and service users. Refuge's independent health and safety consultant provided updates as soon as new guidance was published by the Government and Public Health England. Refuge's frontline staff were given the status of 'key workers' by the Government which enabled them to travel during the lockdown where necessary. Frontline staff continued to provide support remotely by phone with refuge staff visiting properties occasionally for health and safety checks and matters of emergency. The National Domestic Abuse Helpline (NDAH) continued to provide support to a growing number of service users while working remotely.

Initially, fundraising events had to be cancelled and some corporate partners were unable to continue their support due to the lockdown. However, as the Government acknowledged the impact the lockdown would have on domestic abuse survivors Refuge's communications team was able to raise awareness around our work. Due to the raised profile of domestic abuse Refuge's fundraising team was able to bring forward strategies to provide more 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 development team also reached out to government and local authority partners which provided funding to enable the provision of equipment for remote working, personal protective equipment, increased cleaning materials, deep cleans and resources to enable children to continue their learning during lockdown. These vital sources of funding have enabled Refuge not only to maintain services but to expand them in some areas for the benefit of service users. There have been savings in office and travel costs and additional costs of PPE and cleaning and equipment for remote working have been met by fundraising and grants.

Refuge will continue to follow the advice of the Government and Public Health England while performing its own risk assessments to determine the timing and extent to which staff will return to their places of work over the coming months. Risk assessments will also inform the way services are delivered going forward.

Local authority partners have continued to honor the funding of their contracts and there are no indications that funding will be reduced in the medium term. The Domestic Abuse Bill currently passing through the House of Commons and House of Lords will place a statutory duty on local authorities to provide domestic abuse services which will ensure that demand for Refuge's service will continue to be funded into the future. The increased profile of domestic abuse and the success of the fundraising team during the lockdown has meant that the growth of voluntary income is happening earlier than expected providing vital resources for service provision in the future. COVID-19 has had the impact of reducing the value of share investments and investment income but they are not significant enough to affect going concern.

The success in raising funds to support services since the lockdown has meant that Refuge is forecasting a surplus for the year 2020/21 with improved reserves. These reserves are necessary to enable Refuge to maintain the increased capacity of services delivered during the lockdown, especially for the NDAH. 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 2020 Annual Report and Accounts 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.

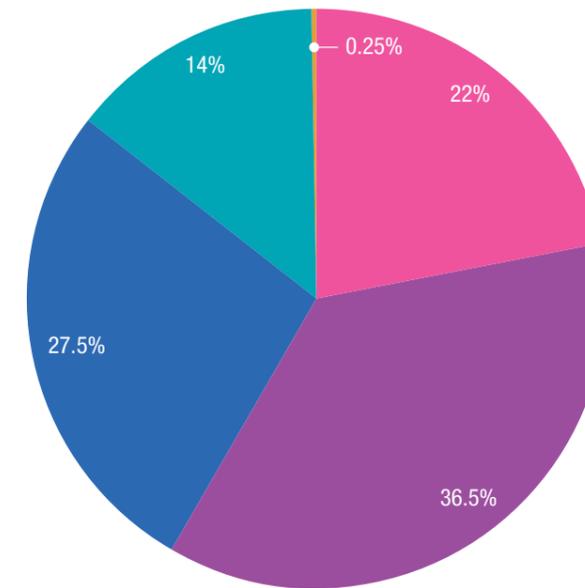
On behalf of the council of management



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair

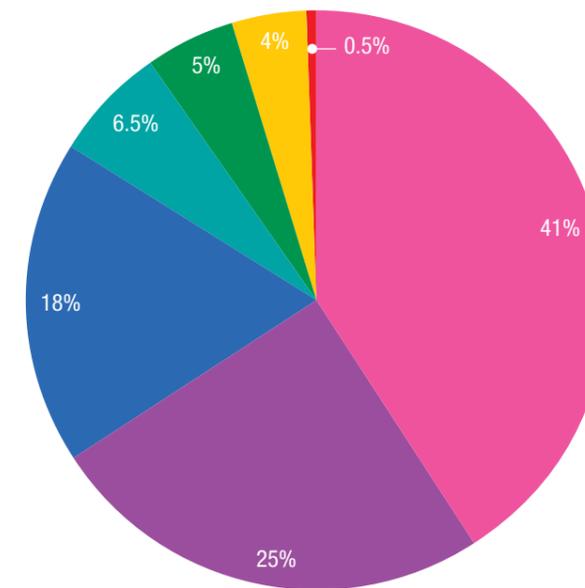
This report acts as a directors' report for the charitable company as required by s415 of the Companies Act 2006 and includes the Strategic Report which has been approved by the Council of Management in their capacity as company directors.

Financial overview



Income 2019-20

- Donations and legacies 22%
- Contracts for support services 36.5%
- Housing management 27.25%
- Grants and contracted income provided for services 14%
- Investments 0.25%



Charitable Activities Expenditure 2019-20

- Refuge provision 41%
- Advocacy 25%
- Integrated services 18%
- Outreach and Floating Support 6.5%
- 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Abuse Helpline 5%
- Public information 4%
- Specialist services 0.5%

Refuge has had a challenging but improved year with income 17% higher than the previous year at £17.6m (£15.0m) resulting in an improved deficit of £615k (£767k deficit in the previous year). During the year Refuge was successful in accessing MHCLG grant funding, won two new contracts and was also successful in winning grant funding to become the sole provider of the National Domestic Abuse

Helpline. Grant Income increased by 30.8% to £2.4m (£1.9m in the previous year). Refuge has continued to invest in fundraising and the total of restricted and unrestricted fundraising was 20% higher than the previous year at £4.3m (£3.7m in the previous year). Our reserves at 31 March 2020 were £3.6m (£4.3m in the previous year) of which £3.1m (£3.5m in the previous year) was unrestricted.

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 2020 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 2020 and of its outgoing 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, the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2015, and the Statement of Recommended Practice for registered social housing providers 2014.

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

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

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

Other information

The 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, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, the Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2015, and the Statement of Recommended Practice for registered social housing providers 2014 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 on page 41, 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:

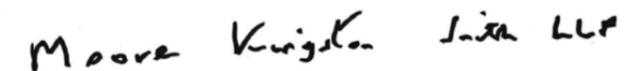
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting 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.

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.



Neil Finlayson (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

Devonshire House
60 Goswell Road
London EC1M 7AD

September 2020

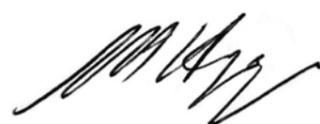
Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2020
(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2019 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	4	3,398,472	497,337	3,895,809	2,791,186
Operating activities:					
Contracts for support services	5	6,374,336	-	6,374,336	6,451,514
Housing management		4,785,552	-	4,785,552	3,830,655
Grants	6	-	2,461,962	2,461,962	1,881,675
Other trading activities					
Investments	7	44,446	-	44,446	48,919
Total income and endowments	3	14,602,806	2,959,299	17,562,105	15,003,949
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	8	1,218,612	-	1,218,612	817,793
Operating activities:					
Refuge provision		6,494,209	460,386	6,954,595	6,223,343
Advocacy		3,319,813	909,296	4,229,109	4,354,89
Integrated services		2,891,049	103,878	2,994,927	2,392,914
Outreach and floating support		195,680	886,383	1,082,063	797,759
24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline		216,355	693,662	910,017	452,493
Public information		628,881	12,000	640,881	691,404
Specialist support services		586	71,764	72,350	47,320
Total expenditure	3,10	14,965,185	3,137,369	18,102,554	15,777,916
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	14	(1,163)	-	(1,163)	207
Unrealised gains/(losses) on investments	14	(74,098)	-	(74,098)	6,770
Net income/(expenditure)		(437,640)	(178,070)	(615,710)	(766,990)
Transfers between funds	19,20	(19,239)	19,239	-	-
Net movement in funds		(456,879)	(158,831)	(615,710)	(766,990)
Fund balances brought forward		3,544,855	684,665	4,229,520	4,996,510
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2020 19,20,21		3,087,976	525,834	3,613,810	4,229,520

Approved by the council of management on 16th September 2020



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton



Christine Higgins

The notes on pages 49 to 68 form part of these accounts. 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.

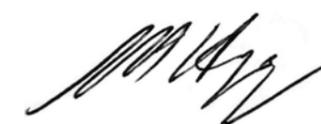
Balance sheet as at 31 March 2020

	Note	2020 £	2020 £	2019 £	2019 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	12		132,666		68,597
Intangible assets	13		12,126		22,388
Investments	14		561,086		637,443
			705,878		728,428
Current Assets					
Debtors	15	2,098,442		2,075,341	
Cash at bank and in hand		4,366,349		5,554,703	
		6,464,791		7,630,044	
Creditors:					
Amounts falling due within one year	16	(3,186,859)		(3,788,952)	
Net Current Assets			3,277,932		3,841,092
Total Assets less Current Liabilities			3,983,810		4,569,520
Provisions for liabilities and charges	18		(370,000)		(340,000)
Net assets			3,613,810		4,229,520
Represented by:					
Unrestricted Funds					
General	19		2,750,903		3,030,266
Designated			337,073		514,589
			3,087,976		3,544,855
Restricted Funds					
	20		525,834		684,665
Total Funds	21		3,613,810		4,229,520

Approved by the council of management on 16th September 2020



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton



Christine Higgins

The notes on pages 49 to 68 form part of these accounts.

Cash-flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2020

	Note	2020 £	2019 £
Statement of Cash Flow			
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities	1	(1,070,156)	(1,225,498)
- Investment income	7	44,446	48,919
Capital expenditure and financial investment			
- Payments to acquire Tangible Fixed Assets	13	(163,739)	(55,405)
- Payments to acquire Intangible Fixed Assets	14	-	(9,000)
- Payments to acquire Financial Investments	15	(63,940)	(86,448)
- Investment disposal proceeds		75,154	100,442
Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	(1,178,235)	(1,226,990)

Notes to the statement of cash-flow

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

Net movement in funds	(615,709)	(766,990)
Depreciation	99,670	51,371
Amortisation	10,261	18,269
Investment income	(44,446)	(48,919)
Unrealised/realised losses/(gains)	75,262	(6,977)
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other debtors	(23,101)	(434,211)
Increase in trade and other creditors	(602,093)	(38,040)
Increase in provisions	30,000	-
	(1,070,156)	(1,225,497)

2. Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movements in Net Funds

Increase in Cash and Cash at Bank in the year	(1,178,235)	(1,226,990)
Increase in net funds	(1,178,235)	(1,226,990)
Net funds at 1 April 2019	5,580,119	6,807,109
Net funds at 31 March 2020	4,401,884	5,580,119

	2020 £	2019 £
Reconciliation of net funds to cash at bank and in hand		
Net funds	4,401,884	5,580,119
Cash held with investment managers	(35,535)	(25,416)
Cash at bank and in hand	4,366,349	5,554,703

The notes on pages 49 to 68 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

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 2012, the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting for Registered Social Providers 2010", the Statement of Recommended Practice 2005 on Charity Accounts, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") 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 council of management have a reasonable expectation that the company will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future based on budgets, forecasts and projections for 2020-21 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.

In preparing these financial statements and the forecasts referred to above the Council has considered the impact on the company of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures taken to contain it. The company has been impacted to some degree as a result for instance because of staff needing to work from home. However the funding received by the company has increased during and following lockdown for a number of reasons including increased awareness of the effects of domestic violence as disclosed in the Strategic Report. As a result the pandemic does not affect the ability of the company 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

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
Websites	1 - 4 years straight line

Income

Donations and legacies includes 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

Legacies are recognised as income where there is entitlement, probability of receipt and measurability of the legacy.

Grants received

Grants are recognised when the entitlement to the grant is confirmed. 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.

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.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

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 probability of collection.

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 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 instruments

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 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'. Loan 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 carry 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.

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.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including trade and other payables, bank loans from fellow group companies and preference shares that Basic.

Financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including trade and other payables, bank 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 rate 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.

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 all publications in the period they are incurred.

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 England Agency. The registered 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 the cost of building maintenance, uncertainty over the timing of the cost of reinstatements and the discount rate. Management estimates these factors in determining the dilapidation provision in the balance sheet. The assumptions reflect historical experience and current trends. See note 19 for the disclosures relating to the dilapidation provisions.

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 annual 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 asset.

2. Comparative statement of financial activities

	Note	Total Funds 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £	Total Funds 2019 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	4	3,895,809	2,412,740	378,446	2,791,186
Operating activities:					
Contracts for support services	5	6,374,336	6,451,514	-	6,451,514
Housing management		4,785,552	3,830,655	-	3,830,655
Grants	6	2,461,962	-	1,881,675	1,881,675
Other trading activities					
Investments	7	44,446	48,919	-	48,919
Other income	8	-	-	-	-
Total income and endowments	3	17,562,105	12,743,828	2,260,121	15,003,949
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	9	1,218,612	817,793	-	817,793
Operating activities:					
Refuge provision		6,954,595	5,916,664	306,679	6,223,343
Advocacy		4,229,109	3,500,702	854,188	4,354,890
Integrated services		2,994,927	2,314,929	77,985	2,392,914
Outreach and floating support		1,082,063	301,740	496,019	797,759
24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline		910,017	40,454	412,039	452,493
Public information		640,881	691,404	-	691,404
Specialist support services		72,350	13	47,307	47,320
Total expenditure	3, 11	18,102,554	13,583,699	2,194,217	15,777,916
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	15	(1,163)	207	-	207
Unrealised gains/(losses) on investments	15	(74,098)	6,770	-	6,770
Net income/(expenditure)		(615,710)	(832,894)	65,904	(766,990)
Transfers between funds	20,21	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(615,710)	(832,894)	65,904	(766,990)
Fund balances brought forward as restated		4,229,520	4,377,749	618,761	4,996,510
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2019	20,21,22	3,613,810	3,544,855	684,665	4,229,520

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

	2020 Turnover	2020 Operating Costs	2020 Operating Surplus/ (deficit)	2019 Turnover	2019 Operating Costs	2019 Operating Surplus/ (deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Social housing lettings	4,785,553	4,710,237	75,316	3,830,655	3,800,085	30,570
Other social housing activities:						
Contract for supporting services	2,388,643	2,435,420	(46,777)	1,981,383	1,803,153	178,230
Other grants and contracts	545,702	545,702	-	333,262	332,152	1,110
Total social housing	7,719,898	7,691,359	28,539	6,145,300	5,935,390	209,910
Non-social housing activities	9,842,207	10,411,195	(568,988)	8,858,649	9,842,526	(983,877)
Total:	17,562,105	18,102,554	(540,449)	15,003,949	15,777,916	(773,967)

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

	2020 £	2019 £
Social housing income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charges	2,048,348	1,712,588
Service charges receivable eligible for Housing Benefit	2,848,313	2,187,316
Service charges receivable ineligible for Housing Benefit	260,881	222,801
Rent losses due to voids	(371,989)	(292,050)
Turnover from social housing lettings	4,785,553	3,830,655
Expenditure on social housing lettings		
Services	1,324,738	1,140,779
Management	1,628,539	1,368,106
Routine maintenance	167,812	115,295
Planned maintenance	113,675	74,307
Bad debts	98,879	38,005
Lease charges	1,375,910	1,062,909
Property depreciation	684	684
Operating costs on social housing lettings	4,710,237	3,800,085
Operating surplus/(deficit) on social lettings	75,316	30,570
Social housing units		
The number of supported housing units under management at the end of the period:	2020	2019
Owned and managed	8	8
Not owned but managed	347	300
	355	308

4. Donations and legacies 2020

Donation and legacies income was received during the year from trusts, corporate and private donors.

5. Contracts for supporting 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 entitlements and how to apply, as well as 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 are awarded by contract for the provision of services to vulnerable service users living 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

	2020 £ Restricted	2019 £ Restricted
BBC Children in Need	35,775	48,638
Big Lottery Fund	292,227	245,819
Cambridgeshire County Council	145,929	152,928
Charles Hayward Foundation	25,000	-
Comic Relief	87,738	106,296
Derby City Council	153,360	87,163
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	35,678	136,538
Department for Work and Pensions	8,200	3,303
East Sussex County Council	103,797	43,788
Fenland District Council	-	10,141
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	50,000

continued...

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

6. Grants (continued)

	2020 £ Restricted	2019 £ Restricted
Home Office	355,327	311,900
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham	4,000	-
London Borough of Hackney	47,831	4,370
London Borough of Hounslow	93,017	57,755
London Borough of Lambeth	5,400	-
London Borough of Lewisham	54,982	40,652
London Borough of Redbridge	20,349	6,549
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames	223,205	92,168
London Borough of Southwark	4,000	-
London Community Fund Sergio	-	4,540
London Councils	93,974	68,294
London Stock Exchange	-	-
Ministry of Justice	-	50,000
Rugby Borough Council	-	-
Stand Together Against Domestic Violence	64,228	-
Standard Life Foundation	12,000	-
Stratford-on-Avon District Council	-	-
Stratford Town Trust	6,667	7,500
The Evan Cornish Foundation	10,000	10,000
The Leri Charitable Trust	85,000	40,000
The Peter Minet Trust	-	-
The Police & Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire	5,357	-
The Singer Foundation	1,000	-
Tides Foundation	260,000	303,333
Violet Melchett Childrens Trust	5,000	-
Warwickshire County Council	209,522	-
Young Londoners Fund	12,399	-
Others	1,000	-
	2,461,962	1,881,675

In 2019-20 Refuge received two grants from Big Lottery Fund totalling £292,227. The first grant of £166,296 is part of a three year award of £499,935, towards general running cost and salaries for the Eastern European Independent Gender Violence Advocacy service. The second grant of £125,931 is a one year award towards the general running cost of the LEAP project of caseworkers for victims of domestic violence in Lambeth. During the year £290,003 of the grants were expended as disclosed in note 21

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

In accordance with section 37 of the Local Government Act 1989 the grant from London Councils of £93,974 was used in respect of the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, as follows:

	£
Towards general running costs and salaries of the free phone 24 hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership with Women's Aid - the grant was fully used.	93,974

7. Investment income

	2020 £	2019 £
Listed investments	15,417	18,983
Interest receivable	29,029	29,936
	44,446	48,919

8. Costs of raising funds

	2020 £	2019 £
Staff costs	707,434	457,736
Depreciation and amortisation	2,415	2,616
Other costs	508,763	357,441
	1,218,612	817,793

9. Governance costs

	2020 £	2019 £
Auditors' remuneration (net)	15,100	13,700
Auditors' remuneration non-audit (net)	2,079	800
Irrecoverable VAT/accruals	4,636	2,900
Total auditors' remuneration inclusive of VAT	21,815	17,400
Legal advice and recruitment of trustees	51,744	92,916
Tax review	-	12,000
Total governance costs	73,559	122,316

Governance costs for the year which are included (inclusive of irrecoverable VAT) in support costs (note 10) are £73,559 (inclusive of irrecoverable VAT) (2019 - £122,316) representing less than 1% of our total costs.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

10. Expenditure

2020	Cost of raising funds £	Refuge provision £	Integrated services £	Floating support and outreach £	Advocacy £	24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline £	Public information £	Specialist services £	2019-20Total £
Direct costs including operational support	1,025,815	5,918,936	2,810,710	962,496	3,858,904	782,753	435,617	68,857	15,864,088
Support costs*	192,796	1,035,658	184,216	119,567	370,205	127,264	205,264	3,496	2,238,466
	1,218,611	6,954,594	2,994,926	1,082,063	4,229,109	910,017	640,881	72,353	18,102,554

*Support costs include governance costs of £73,559

2019	Cost of raising funds £	Refuge provision £	Integrated services £	Floating support and outreach £	Advocacy £	24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline £	Public information £	Specialist services £	2018-19Total £
Direct costs including operational support	680,568	5,159,665	2,202,766	673,607	3,875,176	349,481	470,145	38,900	13,450,308
Support costs*	137,225	1,063,678	190,148	124,152	479,714	103,013	221,259	8,419	2,327,608
	817,793	6,223,343	2,392,914	797,759	4,354,890	452,494	681,404	47,319	15,777,916

*Support costs include governance costs of £122,316 (2019).

	2020 £	2019 £
Expenditure analysis		
Staff costs	10,693,621	9,325,840
Temporary staff	416,448	288,665
Consultants	313,941	29,790
Other staff costs	381,273	478,212
Property costs	2,491,079	2,193,981
Equipment costs	19,990	17,785
Telephone	408,126	381,957
Audit	19,320	16,440
Depreciation	109,931	69,639
Other costs	3,248,825	2,975,607
	18,102,554	15,777,916

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

11. Staff costs

	2020 £	2019 £
Wages and salaries	9,200,875	8,121,021
Staff benefits	37,823	26,016
Social security costs	916,505	821,301
Pension costs	538,419	357,502
	10,693,622	9,325,840

The average number of employees (full time equivalents), analysed by charitable activities, during the year was:

	2020 No.	2019 No.
Refuge provision	76	60
Floating support and outreach	22	19
Integrated services	49	41
Advocacy	76	85
24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline	16	8
Public information	7	6
Specialist services	1	1
Other Refuge services	55	45
	302	265

The number of employees whose remuneration (including benefit in kind but excluding employer's National Insurance and employer's pension contributions) was in excess of £60,000 during the year was:

	2020 No.	2019 No.
£60,001 - £70,000	2	1
£70,001 - £80,000	3	1
£80,001 - £90,000	1	2
£210,001 - £220,000*	1	1

*Includes keyman health cover and pension supplement

	2020 £	2019 £
Pension contributions in respect of the highest paid employees above	31,346	27,295

Redundancy and termination payments	2020 £	2019 £
	71,827	5,614

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

11. Staff costs (continued)

	2020 £	2019 £
Emoluments of key management personnel		
The remuneration paid to key management personnel of Refuge (the chief executive, director of operations, director of communications and external relations, head of development, head of HR, director of fundraising and head of finance and IT) was:		
Emoluments (including pension contributions, employer's National Insurance and benefits in kind)	786,405	754,226
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 £2,486 (2019 - £Nil).

No members of the council of management received any remuneration during the year (2019 -£Nil).

Remuneration policy - key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel is set in accordance with policy developed by Refuge's Remuneration and Nominations committee. Remuneration is set having regard to:

- the nature, including scale and complexity of the work at Refuge
- the ability to attract, retain and motivate executive management of the quality required to manage Refuge successfully

The policy is set having regard to pay and employment conditions across Refuge and after obtaining reliable, up to date information about remuneration in other charitable organisations of comparable scale and complexity. The remuneration policy is reviewed regularly and the next review is planned for 2020/21.

12. Tangible fixed assets

2019-20	Freehold Property £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Motor Vehicles £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost					
At 1 April 2019	34,173	377,224	-	166,953	578,350
Additions	-	74,620	-	89,119	163,739
Disposals	-	(15,492)	-	-	(15,492)
At 31 March 2020	34,173	436,352	-	256,072	726,597
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2019	15,050	356,577	-	138,126	509,753
Charge for the year	684	56,040	-	42,946	99,670
Disposals	-	(15,492)	-	-	(15,492)
At 31 March 2020	15,734	397,125	-	181,072	593,931
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2020	18,439	39,227	-	75,000	132,666
At 31 March 2019	19,123	20,647	-	28,827	68,597

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.

13. Intangible fixed assets

2019-20	Websites £	Software £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2019	30,700	126,367	157,067
Addition	-	-	-
Disposals	(8,640)	-	(8,640)
At 31 March 2020	22,060	126,367	148,427
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2019	24,881	109,798	134,679
Charge for the year	2,765	7,497	10,262
Disposals	(8,640)	-	(8,640)
At 31 March 2020	19,006	117,295	136,301
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2020	3,054	9,072	12,126
At 31 March 2019	5,819	16,569	22,388

14. Investments

	2020 £	2019 £
Investments at market value at the beginning of the year	612,028	619,044
Additions at cost	63,940	86,448
Disposal proceeds	(75,155)	(100,441)
Realised gains/(losses)	(1,163)	207
Unrealised gains/(losses)	(74,098)	6,770
Cash held with investment managers	35,534	25,415
Market value at the year end	561,086	637,443
Comprising:		
Global fixed interest	99,782	105,500
UK equities and funds	184,754	259,712
Overseas equities and funds, property and alternatives	241,015	246,815
Cash	35,535	25,415
	561,086	637,443
Historic cost at the year end	542,178	543,376

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.

15. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £	2019 £
Trade Debtors	962,472	1,294,298
Prepayments	418,444	380,871
Rent deposit	201,396	198,222
Other debtors	516,130	201,950
	2,098,442	2,075,341
	2020 £	2019 £
Financial assets that are debt instruments, at amortised cost	1,679,997	1,694,470

16. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £	2019 £
Trade Creditors	1,171,588	1,221,441
Accruals	662,715	898,368
Deferred income (note 17)	981,106	1,364,235
Other taxes and social security	266,300	223,378
Other creditors	105,150	81,529
	3,186,859	3,788,952
	2020 £	2019 £
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	1,939,453	2,201,339

Refuge currently has one registered charge against its assets in the sum of £161,228, which relates to the current lease of its head office.

17. Deferred income

2020	At 1 April 2019 £	Created £	Released £	At 31 March 2020 £
Deferred income	1,364,236	525,893	909,023	981,106
2019	At 1 April 2018 £	Created £	Released £	At 31 March 2019 £
Deferred income	1,538,560	836,275	(1,010,599)	1,364,236

18. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2020 £	2019 £
Provision at beginning of the year	340,000	340,000
Created during the year	30,000	-
Balance at the end of the year	370,000	340,000

The provision of £370,000 relates to the council of management's estimate of the present value cost of dilapidations work of £300,000 that will be required to be undertaken on expiry of and in accordance with the terms of the company's lease of, on the premises at Head Office and possible future deficits concerning Refuge's Admitted Body Status of Hertfordshire Constabulary LGPS scheme of £70,000.

19. Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2019 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	At 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

	At 1 April 2018 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	At 31 March 2019 £
General	3,704,581	12,750,805	(13,583,698)	158,578	3,030,266
Designated	673,167	-	-	(158,578)	514,589
	4,377,748	12,750,805	(13,583,698)	-	3,544,855

General funds: These are funds 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, diversification of income streams and to provide for sinking fund repairs of leased and owned properties. During the year a net transfer of £177,516 between the general and designated funds has taken place. This represents Refuge's investment in modern slavery services of £65,799 and Freephone National Domestic Abuse Helpline of £111,717. A transfer of £19,239 from unrestricted to restricted reserves represents expenditure relating to specialist support provision of childrens workers.

Transfers *

2018-19: Transfer of 158,579 from unrestricted to restricted reserves represents the covering of expenditure relating to specialist support service provision.

20. Restricted funds

2020	At 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 - Eastern European (IDVA)	3,490	292,227	(290,003)	-	5,714
24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline	53,908	639,754	(693,662)	-	-
Public information	-	12,000	(12,000)	-	-
Specialist services	3,801	48,722	(71,764)	19,239	-
Advocacy	128,827	525,882	(619,293)	-	35,414
	684,665	2,959,299	(3,137,369)	19,239	525,834

2019	At 1 April 2019 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	At 31 March 2020 £
Refuge provision	458,705	307,789	(306,679)	-	459,815
Outreach and floating support	-	507,347	(475,100)	-	32,247
Integrated services	4,523	76,039	(77,985)	-	2,577
Big Lottery Fund - Eastern European (IDVA)	14,986	245,819	(257,315)	-	3,490
24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline	23,662	442,285	(412,039)	-	53,908
Specialist services	697	50,411	(47,307)	-	3,801
Advocacy	116,189	630,430	(617,792)	-	128,827
	618,762	2,260,121	(2,194,217)	-	684,665

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.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

Refuge provision

Housing benefit and support 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 setting up and maintaining a home, and making links with community groups and organisations; 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.

Floating support and outreach

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 organisations; 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.

Big Lottery Fund - Eastern European Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service

Used to fund support and information to Eastern European women experiencing domestic abuse across three London boroughs.

Big Lottery Fund - Safe@RAADA

Used to fund support and information to women and children experiencing domestic abuse in Redbridge.

Big Lottery Fund - LEAP Caseworkers for Victims of Domestic Abuse in Lambeth

Used to fund support and information to women and children experiencing domestic abuse in Lambeth.

24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline

Used to fund the 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Abuse Helpline.

Specialist services

Used to fund support workers to improve outcomes for women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

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.

Integrated Services

Refuge runs a number of services which combine outreach and refuges services. These services provide a single point of access to support for those who have experienced domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault, prostitution, stalking, trafficking, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and so-called 'honour based violence'.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

21. Analysis of net assets between funds

2020	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted 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)
	3,087,976	525,834	3,613,810

2019	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	66,867	1,730	68,597
Intangible fixed assets	22,388	-	22,388
Financial investments	637,443	-	637,443
Net current assets	3,158,157	682,935	3,841,092
Provisions	(340,000)	-	(340,000)
	3,544,855	684,665	4,229,520

22. Commitments

At 31 March 2020 the company had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below:

	2020 Land and Buildings £	2020 Other £	2019 Land and Buildings £	2019 Other £
Operating leases which expire in less than one year	931,954	11,318	890,110	8,922
Operating leases which expire within one to five years	662,023	2,985	1,235,218	4,919
Operating leases which expire over five years	-	-	-	-
	1,593,977	14,303	2,125,328	13,841

Operating lease costs in the year amounted to £896,425 (2019: £906,148) in respect of land and buildings and £19,508 (2019: £15,282) in respect of other leases.

23. Related party transactions

During the year trustees received reimbursement of expenses of £2,486 (2019 - Nil).

Donations from trustees during the year were:

	2020 £	2019 £
	10	-



For women and children.
Against domestic violence.

Head Office: Refuge, 4th Floor, International House,
1 St Katharine's Way, London E1W 1UN

Office Telephone: 020 7395 7700
www.refuge.org.uk

Freephone 24 hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline,
run by Refuge: 0808 2000 247
www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

The photography in this report is of real Refuge service users, staff
or associates, taken by Julian Nieman, pro bono, and used with
permission. No stock photographs have been used.

All photography ©Julian Nieman 2020 www.juliannieman.co.uk



Refuge


For women and children.
Against domestic violence.