

THIS WASN'T HER FIRST LOCKDOWN

Annual Report

and financial statements

2020–2021

**Our response
to a profound year**

2020-21

A profound year

There every step of the way

Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline contacts up 64%

Website visits increase sevenfold

We keep domestic abuse in the media

We campaign with our sector partners for emergency government funding

Huge support from the public and our partners

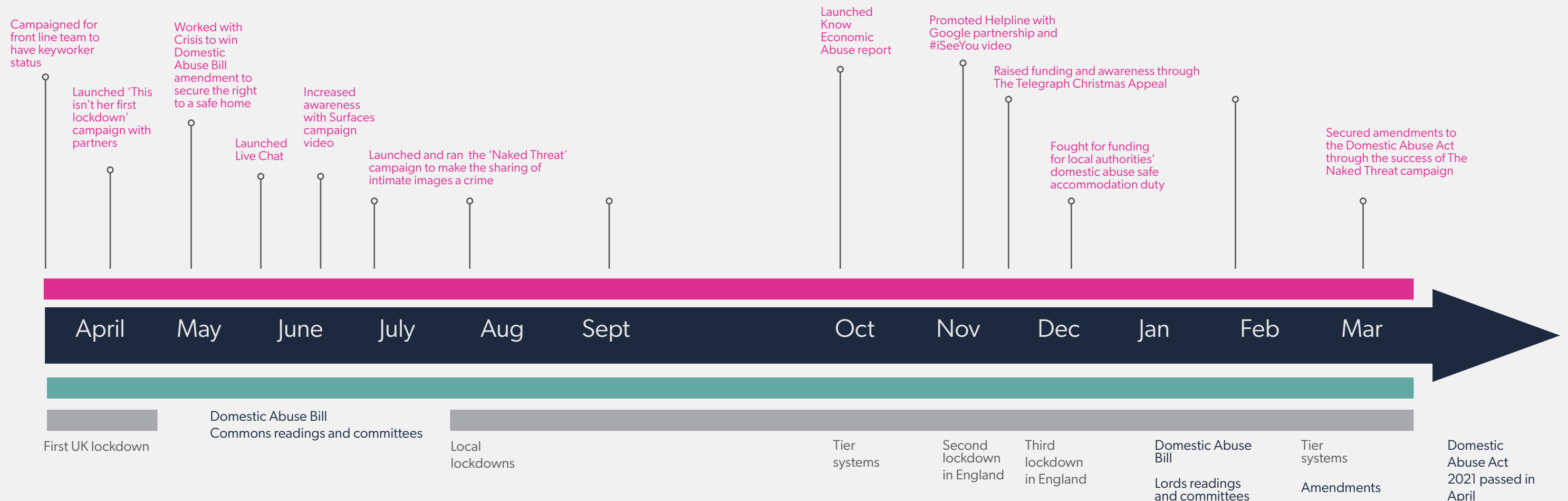
All our services remain open throughout the year



Our staff and volunteers continue to:

- run our vital services
- work with sector partners
- raise public awareness
- secure support and funding
- push for policy reform

The Naked Threat campaign anticipates each stage of the Domestic Abuse Bill's progress through parliament, raises public awareness and secures phenomenal support.



2020-21

A profound year

This annual report captures our work during a year like no other. It shows what we've experienced, learnt and influenced along the way. And it celebrates the resilience of everyone at Refuge, the commitment of our amazing supporters and partners, and the profound courage of the survivors we are privileged to work with.

Front cover graphic kindly reproduced from one of our 2020-2021 campaigns designed pro-bono by BBH



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A profound year



How we responded

For women and girls experiencing domestic and other forms of abuse, home has never been a safe place. In England and Wales, 1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse during their lifetime.¹ Two women a week are killed by a current or former partner².

During this year, as women were forced into close confinement with their abusers, their isolation was compounded and their exposure to abuse increased. From March 2020, **reports of domestic abuse rose** in what the UN called a 'shadow pandemic'. **Refuges, telephone and online support services, and community-based services all reported an increase in demand.**

Our **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** experienced a **64%** increase in calls and contacts, incoming and outgoing. Refuge worked tirelessly to secure funding to keep this vital, 24-hour lifeline running.

Visits to our Helpline website increased sevenfold.

And we knew how hard it would be for a woman trapped at home with her abuser to pick up the phone. So we launched Live Chat on **www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk**. This allows women to receive support from our Helpline advisors online and in silence.

Across our refuges and community-based services, we supported 10,724 women and their 14,709 children. When so many others had no choice but to close their doors, we kept ours open.

We acted fast and stepped up the pressure on key issues. We quickly ensured our frontline refuge workers were granted key worker status. We asked the government to let survivors know that they would not be penalised for breaking lockdown if they tried to leave. In partnership with our colleagues across our sector we successfully campaigned for tens of millions of pounds of emergency funding for domestic abuse and sexual violence services. We campaigned for COVID-19 testing for our specialist staff, to keep them and our services safe. And we called for an urgent, joined-up strategy to protect women and girls and prevent abuse.

We worked hard to influence and shape the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Alongside daily COVID-19 domestic abuse awareness raising we drove three major campaigns. **The Naked Threat** highlighted the pernicious practice of perpetrators threatening to share intimate imagery and successfully campaigned for the criminalisation of this form of tech abuse. **This Isn't Her First Lockdown** went viral, raising huge public support and letting women know our services were open to them. **Know Economic Abuse** illustrated how prevalent economic abuse has become across the UK.

We worked around the clock to ensure women knew they were not alone, constantly sharing messages of support, and partnering with the government to build its #YouAreNotAlone campaign. And we've been there for women and children during each period of lockdown, knowing their isolation and the abuse experienced would be exacerbated. We've been ready for women whenever they had the chance to reach out for help.

We are an amazing team. Committed staff and volunteers have supported women day and night on our Helpline. Our expert frontline and operational staff have continued to deliver life-saving services. Our determined policy and communications staff have held our campaigns in the spotlight.

Our innovative fundraising team pulled on every resource to ensure we were able to respond to the outpouring of generosity from those who wanted to support our work at this critical time. Our people, data and finance teams have been the backbone to all our endeavours throughout the pandemic.

The generosity of our supporters, partners and funders has made it possible for us to respond in this way. They've enabled us to fill service gaps created during the last ten years of austerity. And they've positioned us to meet increases in demand as more women were able to identify as experiencing domestic abuse.

November 2021 marks 50 years since we opened the doors of our first refuge in West London – the world's first safehouse for women and children fleeing from abuse. The last twelve months have been unlike any period in our history. Women and children have faced unique challenges. And our staff, volunteers, supporters, partners and funders have worked together with extraordinary dedication throughout this profound year.



Message from our new chair Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

Collaborating through the toughest of times

Refuge never does anything by halves. Since joining last year, I've witnessed the remarkable resilience of our staff and volunteers and their unwavering support for the women and children we're here to help. During a time in which everyone was affected by COVID-19, Refuge faced significant challenges. We knew that lockdown would be catastrophic for women living with abusive partners, so we took immediate action. We prioritised delivering strong services, despite the challenges. And we shared survivor experiences with government, funders and the public to ensure they fully understood the reality for women experiencing domestic abuse and being locked in with their partners.

Our staff demonstrated steadfast leadership and excellence in the toughest of times. They campaigned to keep domestic abuse in the spotlight.

We pivoted to online working, making our services and our culture more inclusive. We stepped up fundraising efforts to enable us to keep our services operational and delivered extra support when people needed it most. Collaborating with partners, our staff worked tirelessly to drive forward vital changes which are now enshrined in the Domestic Abuse Act and led discussions with the National Emergency Trust to secure additional funding for all four national helplines across the UK.

Our own National Domestic Abuse Helpline staff and volunteers have been there throughout, supporting women in critical need. Everyone at Refuge remains committed to ensure that every woman and child who needs our help gets it and that survivors' voices are heard.

The urgency to respond rapidly, at this level and in these circumstances, happened just as our sector was trying to rebuild an infrastructure eroded by years of austerity. Together we face the challenge of working to eradicate an injustice that demands long-term solutions while dependent on short-term government decisions and investment.

I also want to recognise the amazing response of our supporters this year. Their voices have amplified our dialogue with government. Their financial help has boosted our frontline services and our National Domestic Abuse Helpline. Their emotional encouragement has lifted our staff and the women we serve.

The work we do is only possible because of the incredible people who are part of Refuge, and 2020 brought about change for the organisation's leadership. After eight years, former chair Maggie Rae stood down from the Refuge board mid-2020. We thank Maggie for her long service and continued commitment to Refuge, its people, and the women and children we seek to serve. Through Maggie's leadership we have established a board of trustees from a broad range of disciplines, dedicated to Refuge's mission, and work continues to bring much needed diversity to our board. We are embracing transparency and building trust in our governance, reflected in robust subcommittees and open dialogue with Refuge's senior leadership team. Together we are better equipped than ever to engage with our most important stakeholders – the women and children we serve and our staff.

After 37 years, Dame Sandra Horley DBE stepped down from her role as Refuge's chief executive. We are all truly grateful to Sandra for her deep commitment to helping women and children experiencing domestic abuse and for the vital role she played in building the organisation. Special thanks go to Carole Easton OBE who joined

Refuge in mid-2020 as interim chief executive. Her commitment gave Refuge much needed calm and supportive leadership during a year of uncertainty caused by COVID-19 and was very much welcomed by the board and the Refuge team alike.

I am delighted to welcome Ruth Davison as Refuge's new chief executive. Ruth brings a wealth of experience from within the voluntary sector with deep expertise in building strong and strategic organisations, and a personal drive for justice, diversity and equality. Her passion, commitment, and outstanding leadership have already been noted by the staff and board and we're very excited to have her with us in this next phase of Refuge's journey.

As we step into our 50th year, we are thinking through our priorities for the years ahead. Our work on the Domestic Abuse Act is far from done. There is more to campaign for, including the lack of funding for migrant women. We need to influence the government shoulder to shoulder with the voices and experiences of the survivors we are privileged to work with. We are calling on the tech industry to recognise the prevalence of technological abuse when making their design decisions.

I end this message with a particular reference to the importance of embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in Refuge. True to our values, no one at Refuge will rest until we can, hand on heart, say that we have a truly inclusive and diverse organisation and culture, and we have stamped out overt and implicit prejudice and racism in everything we do and say.

The challenges of COVID-19 are not over. We need to remain resilient and alert to the extra pressures that women and children will continue to bear in the year ahead. But, for now, I want to celebrate the incredible progress that Refuge has made this year and thank everyone who has helped make it happen.



Message from our new chief executive

Ruth Davison

Working even harder towards justice for women

When I joined Refuge this year, I already knew I was inheriting a portfolio of high quality frontline work. But I also knew it was under resourced. 50 years since Refuge started, women's voices still go unheard. Their experiences of domestic abuse are underestimated. And adequate funding for the services they need is still not prioritised. Refuge continues to challenge this.

Women and children deserve high-quality support. When they are in danger or need help to escape abuse, they need to be able to access the services that could save – and will definitely change – their lives. I am so proud to be leading an organisation of staff and volunteers who are prepared to do the

emotionally demanding work required to make that happen.

This year, COVID-19 has added even more challenges. Like everyone else, our whole organisation had to learn to work in a different way. And we faced additional pressures, knowing that increased numbers of women were locked in with their abusers. When their personal health was at risk, when their children's schooling was suddenly their own responsibility, when they were worried about their families, our staff and volunteers continued to put women and children first. And they did more, driving the changes and innovations that women needed from us this year.

Our teams worked around the clock to keep our National Domestic Abuse Helpline running and introduced a new Live Chat service to enable us to respond to even more women. After years of lobbying, advocacy and campaigning – by Refuge and so many others across the sector – the Domestic Abuse Act passed into law, with the powers needed to criminalise forms of abuse that were previously unacknowledged, just at the time when they are becoming more possible and prevalent due to everyday digital technology.

This has been a brutally hard year for everyone. But it has also been a watershed moment. Awareness of domestic abuse – and of the need for greater support for women and children – has never been higher. In public and political circles, more people now understand that domestic abuse is serious and has to stop. There is a growing recognition that we all share the responsibility to make this happen. Many, perhaps for the first time in their lives, have imagined themselves in the shoes of a woman locked down with a perpetrator. The outpouring of public support and generosity has been amazing. We are deeply grateful for the practical and financial help from our supporters – both new and old. I want to thank each and every one of you for enabling our staff to continue to meet the needs of those facing domestic abuse and for helping us keep the needs of these brave survivors in the public and political eye.

50 years on, Refuge is needed more than ever. We have a committed board of trustees and incredible staff and volunteers who want to do even better for the women we serve. And the momentum behind our three-part mission, focused on provision, protection and prevention is stronger than ever. We will continue to provide vital frontline services, to protect women and children by raising awareness and shifting attitudes and, ultimately, to help prevent domestic abuse by challenging the structures and systems that allow it to continue.

As the largest provider of high-quality, specialist services for those facing domestic abuse, I am very aware that we carry a responsibility to set standards and to continue to fight for adequate funding for all frontline services. In the year ahead we will invest even more in our policy and advocacy work to ensure that the Domestic Abuse Act is fully implemented and to push for the protection that women need. We will build on our strengths as a campaigning organisation to raise awareness and be part of ending domestic abuse for good. Our feminist values are needed more than ever. And we will use them to forge the strongest possible links between these priorities, sharing the voices of domestic abuse survivors to change policy and challenge attitudes.

Refuge is an amazing group of people and it is my privilege to lead them. My priority in the year ahead is to make sure everyone at Refuge feels supported, engaged, valued and able to bring their whole selves to their work. Our staff and volunteers have done something exceptional in this unbelievable year. And I know they will continue to support the women and children we serve with incredible dedication.



Refuge at a glance

This year we continued to support the women and children who need us



“ *I no longer label myself as a victim, I see myself as a survivor. I can see and feel the passion my outreach worker has in her job – this shines through her support and advice. I thank her for lifting my spirits and helping me on my journey of finding myself again.*

We maintained our life-changing services at full pace, supporting 25,433 women and children

- **2,027** women and children accessed our refuge provision
- **23,406** survivors and their children were supported in our community-based services

Calls and contacts to and from our National Domestic Abuse Helpline shot up from January – March 2020

- **13,400** average per month, up 64%
- **72%** of calls with women seeking information and support
- **9%** with police, social workers and healthcare staff
- **11%** with concerned friends, family members or neighbours
- **24/7** support in all languages

Thousands more women turned to our digital support

- **73,600** average website visits per month, a seven-fold increase from January-March 2020
- **6,331** live chats since our May launch
- **75%** of live chatters we surveyed reported accessing our Helpline for the first time
- **13%** were concerned friends, family members or neighbours

Amelia* fled to one of our refuges with her children during lockdown to escape her abusive husband.

“ *I fled an abusive relationship which had been hell on earth, but there was a normality in that abuse and it was only when it got worse and my children were obviously suffering that I had to flee. The thought of a refuge and the unknown was at times even more frightening, but I plucked up courage and left.*

I was met by warm and friendly staff who understood what we had been through. They were able to provide my children and me with support and guidance with housing and counselling, and support with my court cases. I cannot thank them enough for helping me to turn this nightmare around, giving me the confidence to start again and rebuild my children's and my life again.

*All names have been changed to protect identity



Refuge at a glance

We responded
to the complex
risks and
trauma women
and children
experience



“ Before I got to the refuge everything was dark. I couldn't see a future. I couldn't see a plan. I didn't think I was entitled to happy days. That's what abuse does. But now I know we are all entitled to have happy days because I have them now.

We supported women and children with complex needs

- 19% of survivors had mental health difficulties
- 14% disclosed needs related to prescription medication, 3% to drugs and 4% to alcohol
- 10% said they were feeling suicidal by the time they reached out to us
- 7% had no recourse to public funds

The types of abuse women disclose remained similar to previous years

- One third were injured when they accessed our services
- More than 40% had their lives threatened by their abuser
- 64% had experienced physical abuse
- 27% sexual violence
- 86% psychological violence
- 39% economic abuse

And many faced increasingly challenging situations

- 59% also experienced abuse involving technology
- 392 women were dealing with complex immigration cases, up 30% from last year
- 112 were victims of modern slavery, up 75%, of whom 94 had experienced multiple forms of abuse

Helen* left her abusive husband during the first lockdown and moved into refuge accommodation. She has since found a new home and is rebuilding her life.

“ Refuge was life-saving for me when I had nowhere to go. I felt safe in the refuge - the accommodation had everything I needed. The staff gave me the space and understanding I needed to overcome the trauma of being abused.

*All names have been changed to protect identity



Refuge at a glance

We kept going
to support
women and
children
through the
risks and
isolation of
lockdown



“ *It's so nice to have such a supportive team on my side when for ages the system has been so hard (almost impossible) to navigate, and I felt I would never get anywhere. I wish everyone had this level of support, I feel it has literally saved my life at times, so thank you.*

We continued to make a difference to women's safety and wellbeing

- **96%** of survivors said they felt safer as a result of our services
- **92%** achieved the changes they wanted in their lives
- **91%** were supported to find a safe new home
- **94%** said their quality of life had improved
- **96%** said they were no longer living in fear
- **46%** reported an end to all abuse and controlling behaviour
- **99%** felt confident they knew how to access help in future

We maintained a place of safety for women and children

- **48** refuges
- across **22** local authorities
- with **348** units of accommodation

And, despite COVID-19 restrictions, we delivered results alongside other professionals

- **109** risk assessments attended
- **519** perpetrators charged
- **157** guilty verdicts

Sue* is currently living in one of our refuges. She arrived during the second lockdown after fleeing her abusive partner. She was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder after suffering severe coercive and controlling behaviour.

“ *Finding accommodation in a refuge was a blessing in disguise. I was in a horrible situation, but I can honestly say that Refuge saved me. The staff here are so supportive and helpful. I received support to find a therapist very quickly, which is not easy during the pandemic. The staff helped me with everything from sorting my benefits and registering with a GP, to supporting me through the daily struggle of rebuilding my life.*

*All names have been changed to protect identity



Working to end domestic abuse

> PROVISION

Provide. Protect. Prevent.

We know that domestic abuse will end only when our government adopts a fully funded national strategy committed to provision, prevention and protection.

This is the approach we use in our own work. We provide high-quality services for women and children who experience domestic abuse. We protect women by advocating for a strong criminal justice response to perpetrators. And we work to prevent future violence through education, training, campaigning and awareness raising.

- > — PROVISION
- > — PROTECTION
- > — PREVENTION



Provision

This year women and children have faced challenges at a level we never imagined.

And while many other vital frontline organisations were forced to reduce the help they could offer, or close their doors altogether, the incredible response of our supporters and staff enabled us to keep ours going. We moved quickly to remote working and continued to support survivors and their children.

Despite this year's difficulties, we've delivered even greater value to society. Our frontline services not only save and change the lives of woman and children, we also save state funding, especially in the areas of health and safety. This year the New Economics Foundation (NEF) found that for every £1 Refuge spends on services, it generates an average of £8.24 of social value.

NEF estimates the total social value generated by Refuge's specialist services at £86 million per year. These powerful metrics show that we have nearly doubled the social return on investment we achieved four years ago.

“The social value generated by Refuge's services is eight times greater than the amount of money invested in them, demonstrating the vital support Refuge provides for survivors of violence. Yet violence against women remains widespread with devastating impact on survivors, their children and the wider society. This study is a clear indication of the need for long-term, sustainable funding for specialist domestic abuse services, which reflect the social value they generate.”

Beti Baraki, author of Refuge Social Return on Investment, NEF, 2021.

working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION

Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline

In the summer 2019 we won the contract to run the National Domestic Abuse Helpline as the sole provider. So, in the early days of the pandemic, we were ready – just in time.

Calls and contacts to and from the Helpline shot up dramatically, from 270 per day in January-March 2020 to over 400 per day in April 2020-February 2021. We acted fast securing funding to ensure our Helpline advisers and volunteers could support more women. And we invested in IT equipment and cybersecurity to keep this vital, 24-hour lifeline running.

During this first lockdown, visits to our Helpline website increased sevenfold from an average of 10,500 to 73,600 per month. And we knew only too well how hard it would be for a woman trapped at home with her abuser to pick up the phone. So, in May 2020, we launched our Live Chat service. This allows women to communicate with our Helpline advisers, Monday to Friday from 3pm to 10pm online, in real time and – most importantly – in silence.

“Refuge has been a huge support to me. The police suggested I contact their Helpline – but I just couldn't imagine being able to pick up the phone and talk about what I was experiencing – it felt too raw and too risky. Being able to access support via Live Chat, knowing there was a quick exit button I could use if I needed to, helped me enormously and meant I could type out my words rather than speaking them, which took such an emotional burden off me. I feel like I can now talk about my experiences without fear – I know I am not alone as Refuge continues to support me.

<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en/Chat-to-us-online>



We needed to grow our response quickly. And we couldn't do it without support. So we focused our media campaigns to raise awareness of our National Domestic Abuse Helpline and drive donations to fund it.

A campaign created free of charge by ad agency BBH was run by us and our partners throughout the pandemic, in parallel with the government's 'You Are Not Alone' campaign. In one week, in May 2020, our 41 influencers reminded their audiences 'This isn't her first lockdown'. Their 58 posts achieved a reach of 62 million. The media stepped up, donating TV, print, digital and physical advertising space. We worked round the clock so women knew our services were open and we were there to support them. And we called on the public to support our work.

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women fell during the second lockdown. With the generous support and reach of Google, Denise Lewis OBE and others, we were ready with our

THIS WASN'T HER FIRST LOCKDOWN

Refuge's 24 hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline supports women trapped at home with their abuser.

Donating £10 will help keep this vital Helpline running.
donate.refuge.org.uk/helpline

#YouAreNotAlone



Refuge is a charity registered in England and Wales (277424)

#iSeeYou video campaign, getting our Helpline number out just as women found themselves isolated again.

How do we support women?

The Helpline lets women know they are not alone, whatever their abuser tells them – we listen, believe, validate, and support them to plan the next best steps for them.



working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION

Our refuges and outreach

With health and safety measures in place, we kept our refuges open and safe.

We found food for families during the shortages. We worked tirelessly with local authorities and other partners to keep services accessible. And we advocated for safe housing for women and children to move to.

At the height of COVID-19, around 7,000 women and children were using our refuges and outreach services on any given day, up from around 6,500 this time last year.

“*Staff who were vulnerable were working from home and this meant that meetings and key work sessions were conducted over the phone. It was really difficult not being able to sit in the same room with a client and read their body language and comfort them.*”

“*My refuge outreach worker helped me understand I didn't have to allow my ex to still control me and manipulate me. She reminded me there was no need to carry fear. I'm free, I'm starting to find myself again, I'm starting to build my confidence, I am able to smile again. I still have bad days, when these days arrive I know I can talk with my worker who really helps me remember how far I've come today.*”



Supporting children

Our child support workers help children overcome the trauma they have experienced. Their work is much needed and greatly underfunded. But they were ready for the new difficulties that lockdown created.

“*Residents were restricted from going out, which caused more problems for the families in the refuge. This needed extra and very careful managing.*”

We were able to respond rapidly to support survivors as they cared for and taught their children for large periods of the year. We helped mothers access the school provision they needed to support their children's study and development. And we quickly developed an excellent resource guide, with suggested timetables, activities and tips on how to manage screen time and online safety.

Natasha, one of our child support workers, began supporting Lucy and her six-year-old son James*. Having witnessed domestic abuse towards his mother, James exhibited behavioural problems when he first came into the refuge. As lockdown restrictions eased, and their one-to-one sessions moved from online to face-to-face, James began to trust Natasha.*

Natasha quickly recognised that James would benefit from counselling sessions with a professional. James and Lucy have now started counselling, which runs alongside Natasha's continued one-to-one sessions with James. While James meets with Natasha, Lucy benefits from the support James receives and is able to have an hour to spend with her newborn baby, take the time to make dinner for herself and her children, or meet with her own key worker.

Thanks to Natasha's support, James' behaviour has improved, he is a lot calmer and his relationship with his mother is improving.

*All names have been changed to protect identity

working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION



Independent advocacy

Navigating the criminal justice system leaves most people feeling marginalised and disempowered.

This experience is worse for survivors of domestic abuse and was compounded further by the pandemic as the criminal courts closed and case progression saw long delays. Virtual hearings, in criminal and civil courts, have improved accessibility for some and created additional barriers for others. Access to injunctions and court orders has increased. But the number of perpetrators charged and convicted has dropped significantly.³

Our independent domestic and gender violence advocates have adapted to these changes. They've prepared survivors for virtual hearings and supported them through the process. And they've advocated on their behalf to prioritise domestic abuse cases, reduce adjournments and improve the accessibility and safety of courts.

While living with her perpetrator, Annette asked for help to escape before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the UK. One of our outreach workers provided emotional support, including discussing the myths and realities of domestic abuse. She helped Annette understand her housing options. She listened to Annette's worries about child arrangements and what to do if the perpetrator attempted to take their child away.*

When lockdown began, Annette decided to stay. She was unable to escape to her mother's house due to her mother being classed as 'high risk'. We kept in touch with Annette by text and phone to make sure she was safe.

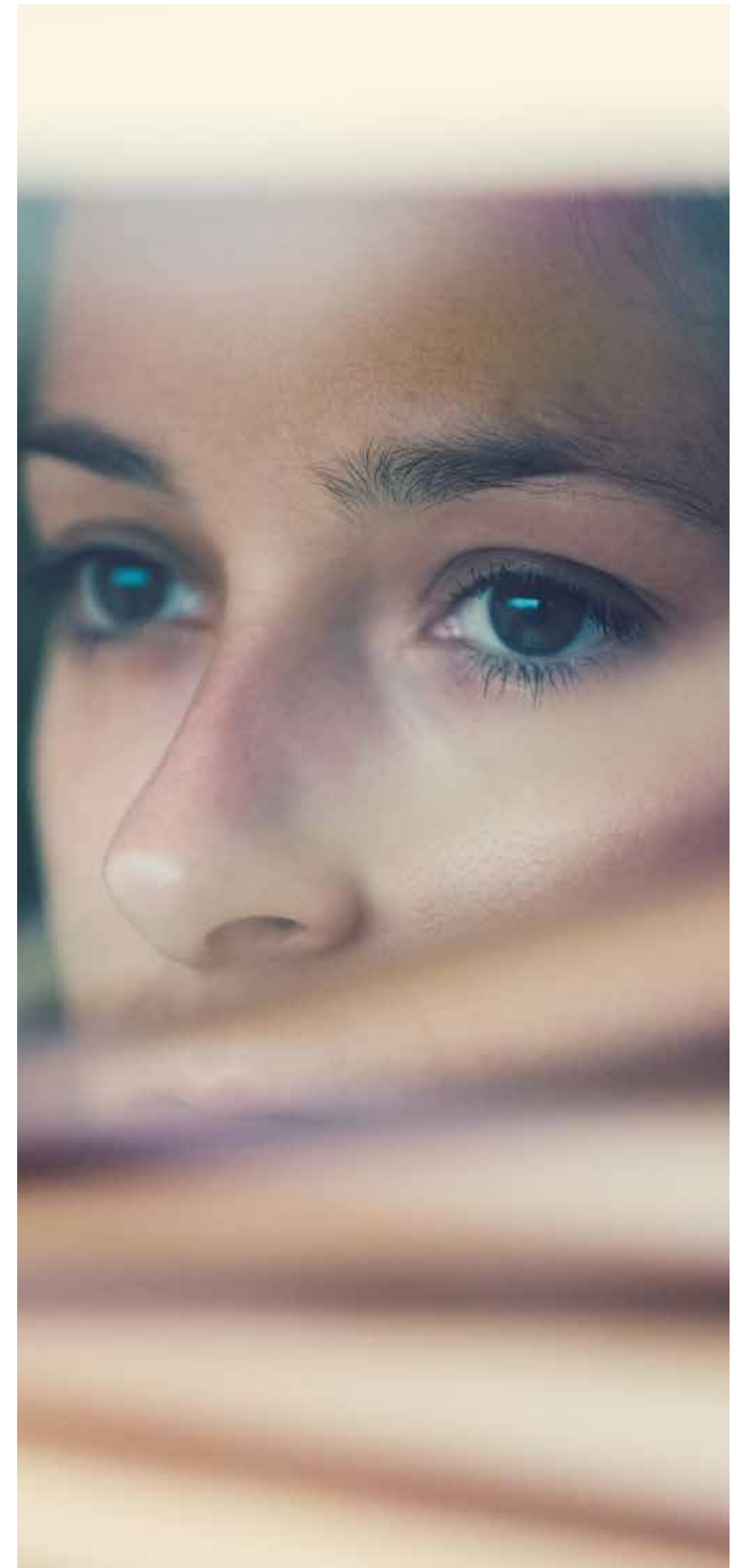
When Annette's partner was furloughed, the emotional abuse became worse and more frequent.

Annette was unable to speak to us as he was always there. She had to wait for him to go for his daily run before she could call for support.

In June, she decided that she could not remain with her perpetrator any longer. She asked for our help to identify injunctions and sever financial ties. We helped her find a solicitor who was still operating and explained the different injunctions that Annette could obtain to remove the abuser from the property.

Annette decided to pursue the injunctions, with emotional support and guidance from our outreach worker. With our support, Annette felt empowered to leave.

*All names have been changed to protect identity



³ ONS (2020), 'Domestic abuse during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, England and Wales: November 2020'.

working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION



Escaping economic abuse

The pandemic has compounded the barriers that survivors face on a daily basis. Many women experience their partner taking complete control of their finances.

They find themselves with no money or bank accounts in their name. When they escape, setting up a bank account is a crucial first step to gaining financial independence. Lockdown made this very difficult, with women having to travel much further to get to their nearest open branch.

In response to these challenges, our pioneering tech and economic abuse services have become even more of a priority this year. We're exploring new ways to enhance our support, collaborating with banks, credit rating agencies and government.

“Refuge was life-saving for me when I had nowhere to go and had been deeply financially and psychologically affected by domestic abuse. The staff helped me with sorting out my paperwork with financial institutions and creditors, claim for benefits and registering with a new GP.”

Blocking technological abuse

Our tech abuse service has been a priority for us this year. As the needs of survivors escalated with each lockdown, we helped women check that their devices were secure.

We launched our accessibility project and built safe digital channels to deliver our services.

We translated our Tech Safety Tool into Polish, Spanish and Urdu. And we worked to develop our tech abuse website, designed to share our expertise with survivors and professionals.

“The streets are quieter because of lockdown, but the danger to my client is greater than ever. A mother of three, she has suffered relentless psychological abuse and coercive control by her partner. He has even installed spyware on her mobile phone so he can track her movements and contacts. I've arranged to give her a second-hand 'burner' phone, along with a charger and a SIM.”

For our lines of communication to stay open, we've had to plan our secret meetings down to every last detail – from setting her phone to flight mode and lying about losing the signal, to ensuring she has something tangible to give the perpetrator as 'proof' of her whereabouts. Still, no matter how much you plan, there's always a risk that a perpetrator might show up. It's terrifying, but sadly, cases like these are not unusual.

One of our independent domestic violence advocates, London.



working to end domestic abuse



PROVISION



Supporting survivors of modern slavery

Modern slavery survivors have complex and intense needs. They require expert therapeutic, trauma-informed support.

And the situation for many became more desperate during the pandemic. Abandoned during the lockdown by many legal and illegal employment sectors, women who had faced years of exploitation now experienced destitution, rough sleeping, insecure immigration status, and exacerbated mental and physical health issues, with no recourse to public funds.

Our frontline staff responded to a 75% increase in demand. They tackled language barriers and boosted technical literacy to help survivors reach services that shifted to phone and online. And they provided extensive, comprehensive support to ensure critical access to immigration advice, housing, benefits, government assistance, health care and mental health services.



When there's nowhere else to turn

We are experts in understanding the needs of women in complex situations and in finding the right support for them.

We put our expertise to work even more this year, as coercive control and violence from perpetrators escalated the needs of the most marginalised members of our society.

We delivered a 29% increase in support to survivors with no recourse to public funds, women and children whose immigration status excludes them from welfare benefits. Through our intensive, culturally specific, independent expertise we helped many of these survivors access immigration advice and safe accommodation.

Linh* left Vietnam for China in 2005. Instead of the expected factory job, she faced the choice of prostitution or having her organs removed. In 2015 she was trafficked to the UK and moved from place to place. Her captors threatened that the police would imprison her if she communicated with them. Linh believed this and was scared.

A police raid enabled her escape but left Linh unsure of where to turn. By approaching Vietnamese women in the street, she learnt about our Vietnamese and Chinese Modern Slavery Outreach Service. Linh couldn't believe that a Refuge worker would see her, all for free. We provided her with clothes, food and safe accommodation. We found a solicitor able to see her immediately. And we referred her to a specialist counselling service. Linh is now living in her own accommodation. She has been granted leave to remain under asylum and refugee status.

Meeting a support worker gave me a spark of hope. I told her about what I had been through. She believed me. Refuge's services helped me with so many things. I feel like a human and a woman again. Refuge has helped me find my own identity.

*All names have been changed to protect identity

Working to end domestic abuse



PROTECTION



Protection

Our policy and public affairs team communicates the voices of survivors to the highest levels of government.

We collaborate across the violence against women and girls (VAWG) sector.

And we share our expertise – together and with government – to influence policy and law, to fight for the needs of women and children, and to secure funding for our specialist services.

We continued to submit evidence to government. We reported the experiences of survivors to the Women and Equalities Committee and the Home Affairs Committee and attended the Prime Minister's Hidden Harms summit.

Our work with the Home Office led to:

- The launch of the government's national awareness-raising campaign #YouAreNotAlone
- Confirmation, and reassurance, that leaving the home to flee abuse was not a breach of lockdown rules
- An increase to the Universal Credit standard allowance and basic element of Working Tax Credit by £20 a week for one year
- An increase to the Local Housing Allowance so that it covers 30% of rents in the area
- An extension to the parameters of legal aid evidence to include letters provided by independent domestic abuse and sexual violence advisors

We asked survivors about their experiences during the early months of the pandemic. This shaped our priorities for October's second national lockdown: access to benefits, housing, the courts, survivors' mental and physical wellbeing, child contact arrangements and the prevalence of tech abuse.

Responding to COVID-19

As the government announced the first national lockdown in March 2020, we were already collaborating across the sector.

Our immediate priority was to ensure that the government's response centred on the protection of women and girls and the prevention of violence against them, given the highly foreseeable increased workload for organisations like ours.

We co-ordinated a joint letter to the Prime Minister calling for:

- A cross-departmental strategy to protect women and girls during the pandemic
- Strong public messaging and guidance on violence against women and girls
- The direct involvement of VAWG experts in crisis planning and coordination
- Additional resources for specialist support
- Equal protection for migrant survivors

And together we succeeded in:

- Getting our refuge workers recognised as key workers so they could continue to support women and send their children to school
- Winning £28 million in emergency funding for specialist domestic abuse and sexual violence support services across the sector
- Securing emergency funding for Refuge

working to end domestic abuse



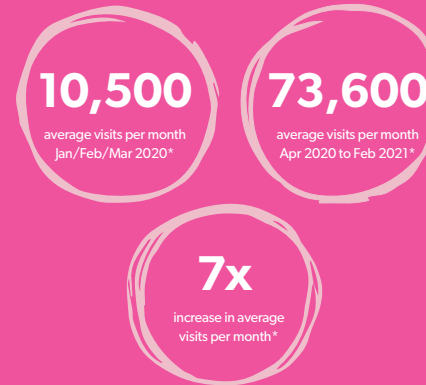
PROTECTION

Covid

Domestic abuse, a crisis within a crisis...

Since the country went into lockdown, more and more women have reached out for support from Refuge's 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline and its supporting services.

www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk



* visits to www.nationaldahelpline.co.uk



We collaborated across the sector and with politicians from all major parties, influencing successfully for several critical changes to the Bill. In partnership with Crisis, we achieved the extension of priority need for homelessness assistance to all survivors of domestic abuse. We succeeded in securing £124 million to back the new legal duty for domestic abuse safe accommodation. And we supported numerous other campaigns led by our colleagues across the VAWG sector, including making non-fatal strangulation a criminal offence, explicitly recognising children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right, and extending the ban on cross-examination to the criminal, family and civil courts. We continue to be inspired by working collaboratively with our colleagues across the VAWG sector.

Some of the amendments we pushed to be made to the Domestic Abuse Act were not accepted by government: improving the Universal Credit system for survivors of domestic abuse, ensuring equal access to support and protection for migrant survivors, and recognising the gendered impact of domestic abuse as part of the definition of domestic abuse. We will continue to progress these strands of work.

Responding to COVID-19

In January 2021, England moved out of the regional tier system and into a third national lockdown.

We worked with the Domestic Abuse Commissioner to make the case for frontline domestic abuse workers to gain priority access to vaccinations. We worked closely with government to keep our services running safely and effectively. And we continued to share the experiences of survivors going through the family and criminal courts, reporting the significant and ongoing delays during the pandemic.

The sudden increase in activity on our National Domestic Abuse Helpline at the start of the pandemic had encouraged the Home Office to give an additional £2 million to helplines and online domestic abuse services.

From March and into June, as the easing of lockdown was announced, calls and contacts remained high, yet there were no plans for an extension to the government's emergency funding. This placed the Helpline in a vulnerable position, dependent on fundraised income to continue the level of support we had managed to provide during the pandemic.

Shaping the Domestic Abuse Act

This year we grasped a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform the national response to domestic abuse.

As the Domestic Abuse Bill continued its passage through parliament, we lobbied MPs and peers on our priorities for the Bill:

- A gendered definition of domestic abuse
- Reforms to the Universal Credit system
- Equal protection and support for migrant survivors of domestic abuse
- Extending priority need for homelessness assistance to all survivors of domestic abuse, including single women
- Adequate funding to back local authorities' legal duty to assess the need for and to commission safe accommodation
- Criminalising threats to share intimate images

We successfully campaigned for the criminalisation of threats to share intimate images with the intent to cause distress by launching a Refuge-led campaign, supported by the Victims Commissioner and Domestic Abuse Commissioner.

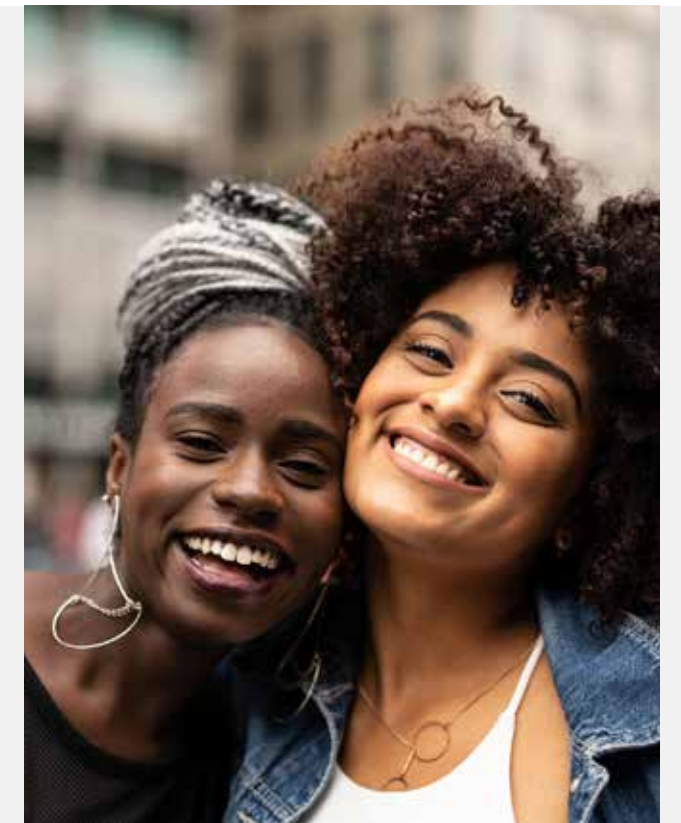
Our research showed that 1 in 7 young women (aged 18-34) in England and Wales had experienced threats to share. We won cross-party political support and secured the generous help of top London creative agency AMV BBDO. In July 2020 we launched The Naked Threat campaign, mobilising 45,000 supporters to send e-letters to government to coincide with critical Bill hearings and announcements. Our hard-hitting 'Dear Priti Patel' video appeal achieved over 180,000 Instagram views and our work became a key theme in the House of Lords.

We will monitor the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act in the coming months, particularly the roll out of the criminalisation of the threat to share intimate images, the implementation of the duty to assess need for and commission domestic abuse safe accommodation services, Domestic Abuse Protection Orders and Notices, and the extension of homelessness rights to all survivors of domestic abuse.

working to end domestic abuse



PROTECTION



Understanding economic abuse

Through our partnership with The Co-operative Bank, we learnt that 1 in 6 adults identify as having experienced economic abuse within a current or former relationship. 1.6 million experienced it for the first time during the pandemic.

When those subjected to behaviours indicating economic abuse are taken into account, this figure rises to 39%. Many are left with long-term debt, a damaged credit rating and limited access to financial products and services long after leaving their abusive partner. Economic abuse lands survivors in over £3,000 debt, on average, with one in four owing over £5,000.

So, in October 2020, we launched 'Know Economic Abuse' with The Co-operative Bank. We created a five-point plan of action for government, banks and credit ratings agencies. We partnered with Experian to review the processes in place for survivors to repair their credit reports.

And we presented the Know Economic Abuse campaign to over 100 people from the VAWG and banking sectors at a virtual event hosted by Surviving Economic Abuse.

In February 2021, we started work to establish a cross-sector Commission on Online Banking. Its work will continue throughout 2021 and into 2022 and will include recommendations to make online and digital banking safer for survivors. We continue to work with the government, advocating reforms to Universal Credit that will make the benefit system safer for survivors. And we are working on a cross-government fund for survivors who are experiencing financial hardship.

Sharing our expertise

The Domestic Abuse Act and our response to COVID-19 stand out in 2020-2021. But our policy and public affairs team briefed and consulted on many other live issues that impact the experiences of survivors.

We worked with MPs, peers and ministers to shape government policy on refuge funding, Universal Credit, economic abuse, migrant women, rape prosecutions, domestic homicide prosecution and sentencing, Domestic Abuse Protection Order/Notice guidance and polygraph testing of domestic abuse perpetrators.

We commented on the issues surrounding the death of Sarah Everard, including the lack of proportionate public attention given to the deaths and disappearances of Black and minoritised women.

We responded to government and legal consultations on the Comprehensive Spending Review, local authority funding allocation, employers' roles in responding to domestic abuse, harmful communications, making misogyny a hate crime, and the Ofsted inspections of Cafcass.

We provided evidence for the cross-government strategy on violence against women and girls, collaborated to forge joint sector principles for the strategy submission, and shared written briefings on the Domestic Abuse Bill.

working to end domestic abuse



PREVENTION



Prevention

Staying in the spotlight

Our media presence is a service in its own right. We must reach survivors so they recognise domestic abuse and know where to turn to for support.

We owe it to them to share our Helpline and frontline services everywhere. To shout the message that domestic abuse is a crime. And to show the support we're ready to give.

Every individual who understands a little more about domestic abuse is better equipped to help: to notice the hidden signs, to challenge others' attitudes, to reach out to a survivor. Every person who cares enough to donate may be willing to tell their friends, share our posts, write to their MP.

The increased public understanding of domestic abuse during lockdown led many women to identify their partner's behaviour as controlling for the first time. As awareness of the issue grows, so too does the number of women who recognise their abuse in other survivors' stories.

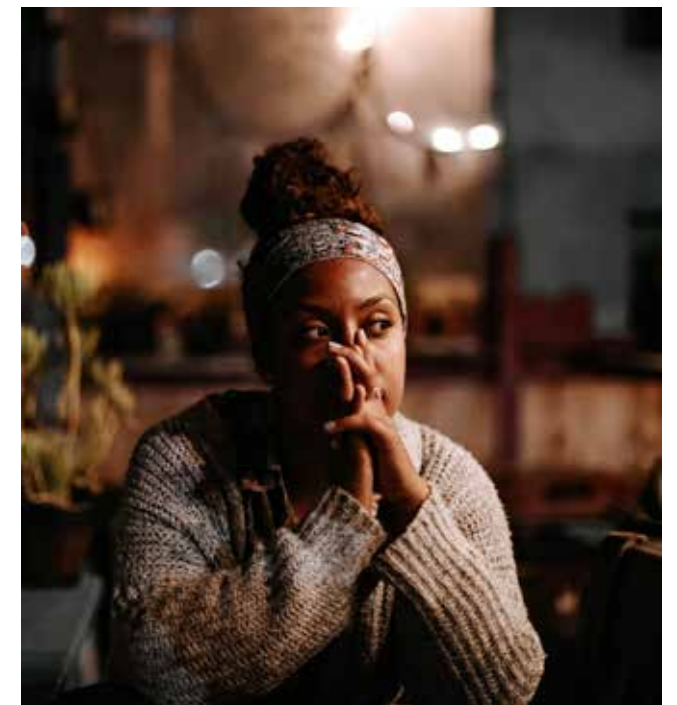
This year, we've worked incredibly hard to keep domestic abuse in the headlines, shape public opinion, bring in donations and influence government policy. With the generous support of influencers, talent and creative agencies, our media presence has been big, bold and strategic.

Extending our digital reach

Last year we put in the groundwork, fine tuning our Twitter, Facebook and Instagram presence to reach more women and secure more supporters.

This year, we extended our visual identity to grab even more attention. And it's working. The Naked Threat campaign engaged 45,000 responses and secured 30,000 new supporters. Our TikTok video on feminism went viral and achieved 47,000 views. We got out there. Just when women needed to know, more than ever, how to reach us. And our supporters were ready to help us.

- Twitter up 21% to 55,000 followers
- Facebook up 63% to 50,500 followers
- Instagram up 250% to 31,000 followers
- LinkedIn up 161% to 10,000 followers



working to end domestic abuse

> PREVENTION

Getting our message heard 'Surfaces'

Last year we began creating our own audio-visual content.

This year, in response to the rise in domestic abuse during the first UK lockdown, award winning agency McCann-Bristol generously wrote and produced Surfaces, a shocking yet hopeful 11-minute short film featuring Maxine Peake, longstanding Refuge supporter. A 30-second trailer and media campaign drove traffic to the full film, shown on multiple channels.

The results were overwhelming. The campaign reach was 65.7 million and the film received over 8.4 million views. The government took up our campaign, boosting it with 350 influencers, and using 'Surfaces' in local government educational programmes. The campaign was shortlisted for the prestigious London Shorts award.



The Naked Threat

This campaign had one clear objective, to protect women from emerging image-based abuse.

We knew this meant pushing for a change in the law, to criminalise the threat to share intimate images. And the Domestic Abuse Bill was our opportunity.

The public was right behind us. We mobilised 45,000 supporters to send e-letters to government. We grabbed attention with the generous help of top London creative agency AMV BBDO, celebrity influencers, ambassadors and survivors. And our hard-hitting 'Dear Priti Patel' video appeal achieved over 180,000 Instagram views.

By dialling the campaign up and down in line with the Bill's progress through parliament, the government could not avoid our call, and in March they announced the key amendment. This is a huge win for Refuge – our multifaceted campaign changed the law, giving millions of women and girls the protection they so desperately need.



working to end domestic abuse



PREVENTION



Know economic abuse

For decades, our sector has been supporting survivors to deal with the impacts of economic abuse.

Our research generated the evidence we needed to raise public awareness and influence banks, credit ratings agencies and government. Together with The Co-operative Bank we launched a sustained campaign, sharing our findings with the press, TV, radio, MPs, peers, officials and key stakeholders.

We reached an audience of 20.6 million. Our social media activity achieved over 6.3 million impressions with nearly 20,000 engagements. The Co-operative Bank took our work to its heart, rolling the campaign out across its branches and updating support materials to help staff with conversations around economic abuse.

We have used our findings and policy recommendations to continue advocating with the government for changes to the benefits system that survivors need to keep safe. And together with The Co-operative Bank we are planning the next phase of our campaign which will research the impact of online banking on survivors, create recommendations for change, and help educate survivors and concerned friends and family to spot the signs of economic abuse.

“I feel proud to work for a business that’s campaigning for this important cause. And I’m looking forward to supporting those suffering from this form of abuse.”

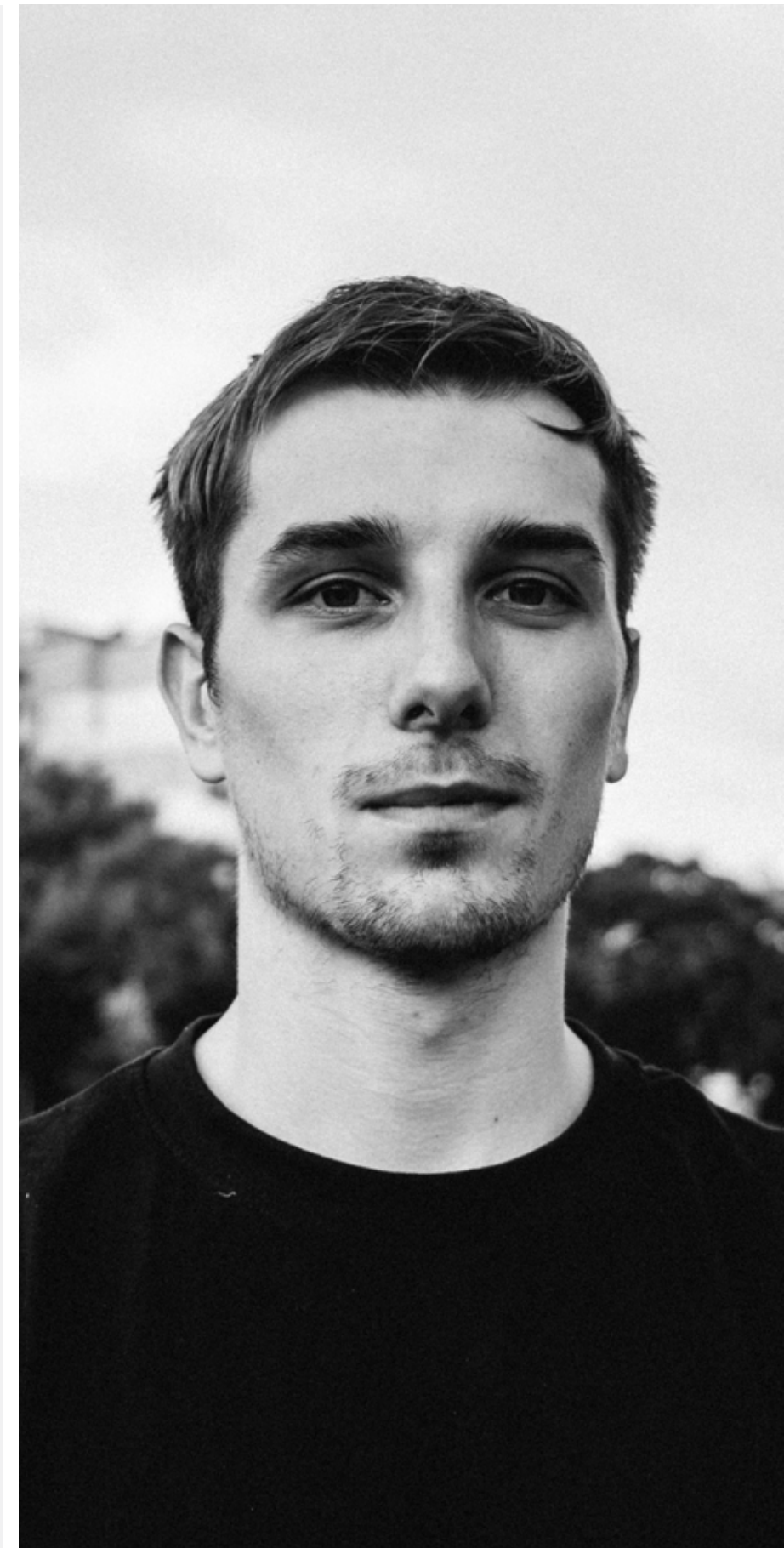
Choose to challenge

We teamed up with British GQ to reach their predominantly male audience.

Uniquely positioned to drive awareness and challenge attitudes among their audience of 10.4 million a month across print, digital and social, their 10-page feature shone a light on domestic abuse, complementing the International Women’s Day 2021 global theme.

“My aim was to make men better understand these issues. I also wanted them to think about the part they can play – in relationships, families, peer groups and society as a whole – in the effort to stop violence against women and girls, and to ask them to #ChooseToChallenge themselves about attitudes and behaviour that are prevalent across all walks of life.”

George Chesterton, British GQ political editor



working to end domestic abuse



PREVENTION

Appealing for public support

For its 2020 Christmas Appeal, The Telegraph chose four charities that needed support more than ever before.

We were one of them. With our share of the £836,692 raised, we were able to provide the equivalent of more than 3,850 nights of refuge accommodation for a family.

The financial support was just part of the picture. During the three critical appeal months, we worked with The Telegraph to publish 23 articles to an audience of around 600,000. Victoria Derbyshire, David Morrissey, Jo Brand, Baroness Nicky Morgan, Dr Nicola O'Leary and our new chair Hetti Barkworth-Nanton generously shared their experiences and insights, raised awareness around our priority messages and promoted our Helpline, Live Chat and specialist services.





Unique difficulties, extraordinary responses



Very different challenges

In May 2020, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government announced a £10 million emergency fund so that safe accommodation services in England could continue to give the most vulnerable the extra support they needed.

The £827,000 we received kept our life-saving refuges open when many had to close. Women and their children have been able to enter and exit our service in the same way they could before the pandemic.

And, after a decade of austerity, the income we generated from fundraising meant we could start to rebuild our frontline services. We could return to doing more to support women, children and our staff through the most challenging and difficult of years.

We turned our refuges into home schools, with laptops, tablets, books and a stable environment for children to learn in.

We have been a constant face for the children in refuge, so they felt safe and supported. It was really challenging to explain to the children that they could not come too close to us. Usually, they want us to play with them one to one. This was the hardest part of lockdown for us and them.”

We overcame the extra barriers to support that many women faced, maintaining equal access to our refuge services. This meant we responded to the immediate needs of women with no recourse to public funds, those furloughed, and those in employment who could not afford high rents.

We provided a ‘move on’ fund for 165 survivors so that:

- 26 women were able to pay for their deposits or rent in advance
- 115 bought the furniture and white goods they needed
- 19 could organise their travel and removals
- 4 reduced their rent arrears and eliminated this barrier to their new home

Domestic abuse, a crisis within a crisis...

In England and Wales, 1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse during their lifetime and two women a week are killed by a current or former partner.

For women and girls experiencing domestic abuse and other forms of violence, home has never been a safe place.

In lockdown, as they were forced into close confinement with their abusers, women's isolation was compounded and their exposure to violence increased.



Please visit our website www.refuge.org.uk to find out more about our services and how you can support us. www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

We created a new housing advocacy role to help women moving on and give our refuge staff more knowledge about housing options and greater confidence in their advocacy.

This new role also monitors demand for refuge spaces and identifies suitable and safe temporary accommodation.

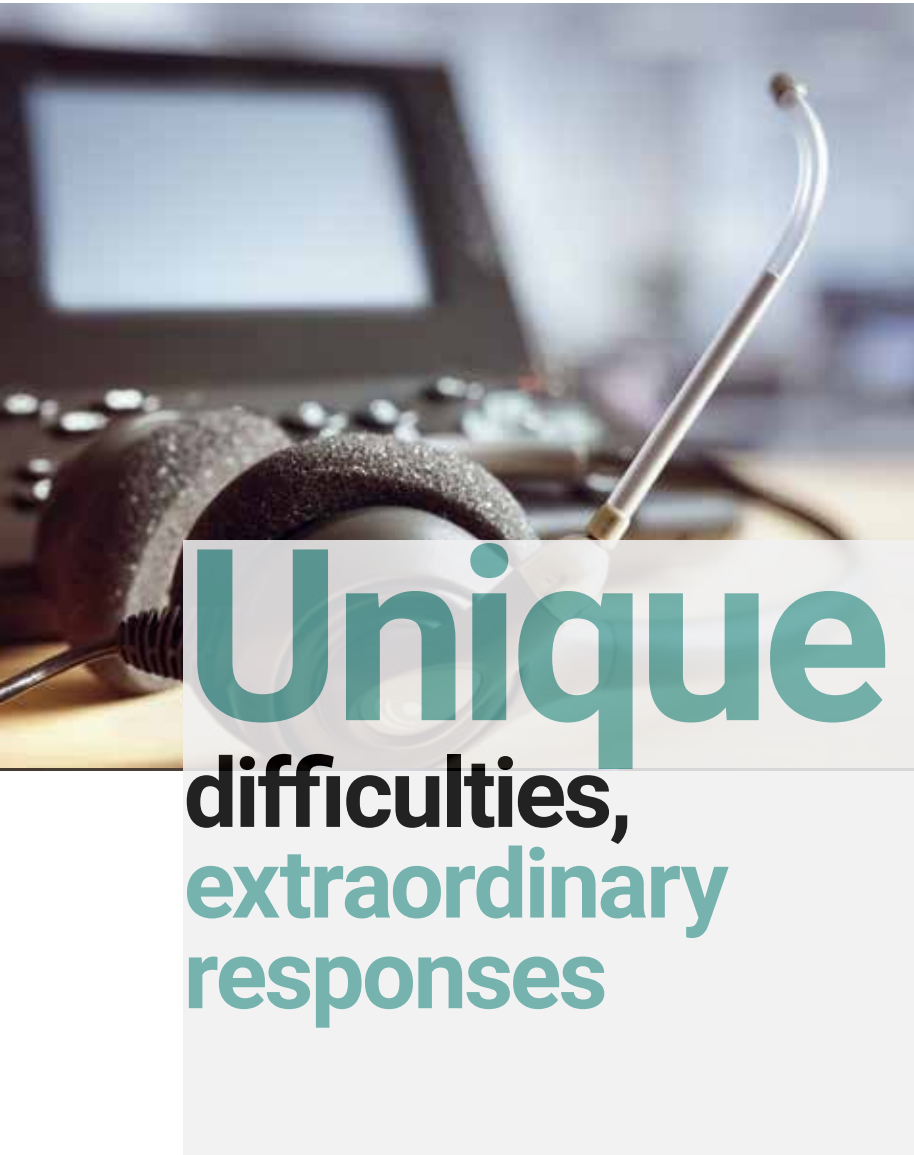
During the year our new housing advocate progressed 130 referrals:

- 70% successfully moved on within 3 months of support
- 25 were women who had been in a refuge for around one year or more

Sometimes the cost of someone's safety is £150”

Julia, Refuge service manager





Unique difficulties, extraordinary responses



Our dedicated team

We are an amazing team. The staff in our frontline services work alongside our head office staff with outstanding dedication.

Like many organisations, we reacted very quickly to the impact of the pandemic and its lockdowns. Not only were we determined to keep our services up and running, we found new ways to respond to the extra difficulties, constraints and dangers that many women and their children faced.

And everyone rose to the challenge. Our frontline staff continued to deliver our much-needed specialist services. We put in place careful cleaning and PPE measures to make sure face-to-face work could be carried out safely. And we equipped our teams to work from home where possible.

But the year has taken its toll on everyone. So we've given special attention to the welfare of our staff, increasing supervision and providing more support sessions. We offered wellbeing courses to our staff and volunteers and extended our employee assistance programme to include all volunteers. And we set up a staff forum – our commitment to continuing the two-way communication and engagement that has been so vital during this year. We want our staff to use the forum to give us open and honest feedback and influence the things that matter to them at work.

This year has been life-changing in so many ways. In the wake of the death of George Floyd, our staff established an Anti-Racism Working Group and we undertook a review of equality, diversity and inclusion across Refuge. These critical insights have fed into a detailed action plan that we will implement in the year ahead to develop a culture of inclusivity and transparency.

I want to pay tribute to each and every member of staff and volunteer at Refuge, all of whom have stepped up in these terrible and challenging times.”

Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair of Refuge



Phenomenal support

It has been a truly transformative year for fundraising at Refuge.

Our team acted quickly in the early days of the pandemic, asking our supporters to help keep our services running. And, as we shone the spotlight on domestic abuse through each lockdown, individuals and businesses responded in huge numbers, donating over £17 million to support all areas of our vital work. After the decade of austerity Refuge has faced, their support placed us in the fortunate position of being able to grow much needed critical specialist services and invest in infrastructure that had reached breaking point.

We built on the success of the ambitious three-year fundraising strategy we started in 2020, driving income and awareness of our services. And we innovated. We were the first charity to run a Facebook fundraiser during the pandemic. And we launched a high-value and a digital appeal, both of which exceeded their targets.

Our dedicated supporters and partners are at the heart of this success. Here are just some of the ways they've helped us do even more to support women and children this year.

Our loyal supporters A growing band

As the UK went into the first national lockdown, we worked hard to mobilise all opportunities to raise funds.

The public responded with a huge surge of support for our work. And we were ready. With our new donation page and email platform, launched in 2019, we were equipped to engage our regular supporters and recruit new ones, flexibly and at low cost. So when COVID-19 hit, we immediately responded with extra digital dexterity. We let our existing supporters know about the increase in need we were seeing. And we recruited new supporters to fund this demand, working closely with our digital and media team.

Public response was incredible. We raised over £2.8 million and grew our email list from around 4,000 to over 77,000 people. Engaging this many people in our work is vital. It means we can continue to raise the funds we need to support women and children. And, just as important, it helps us amplify awareness of our services, challenge attitudes and continue to campaign for a world where domestic abuse is not tolerated.





Unique difficulties, extraordinary responses

Virtual challenge events

We introduced a new programme of virtual challenge events. Our supporters took on a month-long challenge: doing 3,000 squats, walking 62 miles or running 100 miles. Tens of thousands of our supporters took part. Connecting with each other in our Facebook community, they raised awareness and over £1.3 million for our work.

The programme came to a climax with our first ever Refuge Fest. During our weekend-long celebration of International Women's Day 2021, our celebrity

ambassadors, industry leaders and passionate supporters shared their skills, time, wisdom and insight.

Communities coming together

We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of individual and community support in the first two months of lockdown. With everything from car washes to front door photos, cycling challenges to fancy dress, individuals, company teams and university groups raised an incredible £600,000.

The London Marathon

Thank you so much for all the time and vital support you give in your roles as workers and volunteers. You are truly superstars! As a previous Refuge resident, who needed a safe refuge twice, I know how important the work you do is.

”

In April 2020, as the iconic main event was postponed, Team Refuge took on its very own virtual London Marathon relay. Each Refuge team member ran a virtual mile, completing the 26.2 miles together. Our brilliant team then completed the virtual London Marathon in October 2021, raising over £23,000.

Wow! You are truly amazing for investing your time in helping those people that are really in need. It is such a compassionate and caring thing to do, and you are so strong and selfless for choosing this path. I am really in awe of you, and want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart and also on behalf of all of those people that need someone to support and help them.

”

Our generous partners

National Emergencies Trust

In response to the increase in calls for help from women affected by domestic abuse, the National Emergencies Trust funded a pioneering £1.4 million partnership between Refuge and our partners in the devolved nations: Scottish Women's Aid, Welsh Women's Aid and NEXUS NI. Their Coronavirus Appeal helped us to expand capacity on our National Domestic Abuse Helpline and make it more accessible to women. A particular highlight was working in partnership with expert charity SignHealth to create a British Sign Language interpretation strand for Deaf women seeking support from our Helpline advisers.

We are pleased to have worked with Refuge to build a consortium of partners across the UK to respond to rising demand for domestic abuse helplines and support those in great need, wherever they are. Through creative and thoughtful planning, Refuge navigated the challenges created by the COVID-19 crisis and extended the existing expert support available to survivors through the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, ensuring that survivors' changing needs remained the highest priority at all times.

”

Mhairi Sharp, chief executive, National Emergencies Trust

Barclays

With Barclays' generous investment, we set out to meet the challenges of increasing demand, remote service provision, client safety, and staff resilience and wellbeing. With their help we've:

- Strengthened our cybersecurity IT infrastructure so our National Domestic Abuse Helpline team and office staff could work remotely and safely
- Extended our pioneering tech abuse service by launching www.refugetechsafety.org in May 2021 – a new digital platform to raise awareness of tech abuse and survivor safety
- Publicised our National Domestic Abuse Helpline nationwide through cashpoint machines and high-profile advertising space in Westminster Underground station
- Given our modern slavery service the extra funding it needed
- Started a transformative HR project to give our staff and volunteers a boost to their wellbeing and resilience

Chelsea Football Club

The Chelsea Football Foundation, the club ownership and their dedicated fans raised crucial awareness and funds during the early stages of lockdown. Their video campaign, featuring players from the men's and women's teams, raised £572,000. Special thanks go to the Women's Football Team and MHC Services.

Hitchin Belles Football Club

We are hugely grateful for our partnership with the Hitchin Belles. With players from under 5s through to adults, their teams regularly raise funds to support our work. And we are enormously proud that their Under 8 and Under 10 teams play in kits featuring the Refuge logo.



Unique difficulties, extraordinary responses

Avon Cosmetics

As soon as the crisis hit, our long-term partner Avon knew that the need for our work would become more urgent. Creating a new hand sanitiser in April 2020, Avon immediately pledged a phenomenal £150,000 from sales, going on to raise a total of almost £290,000.

The Co-operative Bank

Long-term partner The Co-operative Bank has continued its transformational

financial support, underpinning our strategic work on economic abuse with the publication of the Know Economic Abuse report. With a donation of over £88,000 through the Everyday Rewards scheme, The Co-operative Bank has made a real difference in helping us withstand the extraordinary challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

John Lewis Partnership

John Lewis Partnership stepped up in style with three great contributions: Virtual Beauty Masterclasses, Waitrose Community Matters Online, and Style with Purpose, a capsule collection available online and through their flagship stores nationwide. Together the Partnership raised more than £110,000, as well as vital awareness of our National Domestic Abuse Helpline and Live Chat.

ICAP Charity Day

We were one of the fortunate charities chosen for ICAP's legendary £3.6 million Charity Day 2021. ICAP's first ever virtual event was a huge success, supported by Refuge ambassadors including Sir Patrick Stewart, Olivia Colman, David Morrissey, Billie Piper and Julie Etchingham. ICAP's donation supported our tech advocacy service, empowering survivors to use technology positively and safely and take back control of their lives.

Alighieri

Rosh Mahtani's innovative jewellery brand, inspired by Dante Alighieri's 'Divine Comedy', partnered with us this year. After a generous initial donation, Rosh designed The Glimmer of Light necklace, the first of five pieces marking 50 years of Refuge, generously donating 100% profits. The Glimmer of Light represents the first safe house, a window of hope for women and their children experiencing domestic abuse.

Thank you

To all our loyal supporters and generous partners. To the families of those who left a gift in their will. And to our ambassadors and donors. Your ongoing commitment to Refuge is phenomenal. And, in this extraordinary year, the hard work carried out by our dedicated Refuge team could not have been achieved without your help.

Advent International
Akin Gump
Albert Hunt Trust
Alighieri Ltd
AMV BBDO
Armando Iannucci
Avon Cosmetics Ltd
Bain Capital
Barclays
Baroness Helena Kennedy QC
BBC Children in Need
BBH
Beck Fitzgerald
Bergqvist Charitable Trust
Bloomberg L. P.
Brian Woolf Family Trust
Cambridgeshire Community Foundation
Cecil and Hilda Lewis Charitable Trust
Central England Co-operative Limited
Chelsea Football Club Foundation
Cherie Blair CBE QC
CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP
Comic Relief
CVC
Dame Helen Mirren DBE
Danego Charitable Trust
David Dudding and Catherine Williams
Dr Sarah Wood
Farebrothers
Fiona Bruce
Fleishman Hilliard
Foundation Derbyshire
Fraser Muggeridge and Jeremy Deller
Ghalia and Omar Al-Qattan
Gwyneth Forrester Trust
Hazel Mackay
Jenny Smith
Jo Brand
John Coates Charitable Trust
John Lewis & Partners
John Simister
Julia and Hans Rausing

Kathleen Beryl Sleigh Charitable Trust
Latham and Watkins
Lily Safra
Lord Barnby Foundation
Lund Trust
Mark Haddon and Sos Eltis
McCaan Erickson Bristol
Morrisons Foundation
Nathan Kirsh Foundation
National Emergencies Trust
National Lottery Community Fund
Olivia Colman CBE
Olivia Hall
PA Consulting
Peter and Krystyna Holland
Picturehouse Cinemas
Procter & Gamble
Pye Foundation
Rayne Foundation
Sandy Gumm
Schroder Charity Trust
Schroders
ShareGift
Sir Patrick Stewart OBE
Stratford Town Trust
Sweaty Betty
Telegraph Christmas Appeal
TFT Consultants
The Alan Edward Higgs Charity
The Atkin Foundation
The Banham Foundation
The Barratt Foundation
The Brook Trust
The Co-Operative Bank
The David Family Foundation
The Gloag Foundation
The Permira Foundation
TP ICAP
Tracy Marshall and Sian Bonnell
Two Magpies Fund
VIC London
Weil Gotshal & Manges LLP
Winkworth Sherwood LLP

Looking ahead

Doing even better. Doing even more.

November 2021 marks 50 years since we opened the doors of our first refuge in West London – the world's first safehouse for women and children fleeing domestic abuse.

But our work is not done.

2020-2021 has been a profound year for everyone, one of extraordinary challenge, learning and change. For Refuge, the year has tested all three parts of our strategy: provide, protect, prevent. And it's put additional pressure on a sector already struggling to maintain vital services after ten years of funding cuts.

Despite these difficulties, we're more ready than ever for the work ahead, having:

- Created ways of working that are fit for the future
- Welcomed our new chief executive
- Enhanced our governance
- Moved towards best practice in our leadership
- Responded to a significant number of tenders from commissioners
- Raised funds to invest in services impacted by years of austerity
- Championed equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work

- Started the transition from our COVID-19 response towards the 'new normal'
- Engaged staff, volunteers, survivors, stakeholders and supporters as we set our course for the decade ahead

As we go into our 50th year, we are working out how we can support more women and children who are experiencing domestic abuse. Building on the increased awareness during the pandemic, we want to sustain our current provision and meet increases in demand as more women reach out for support.

To focus our resources on this vision, we have published a one-year business plan with pragmatic priorities to:

- Ensure that we deliver high-quality services for women and children facing domestic abuse
- Focus on ensuring our workforce is happy and healthy
- Agree a clear and ambitious strategic focus for Refuge to 2027
- Continue to strengthen our governance and leadership
- Continue to develop our equality, diversity and inclusion programme of work
- Galvanise society to realise our vision by developing our external engagement strategy



Refuge is committed to a world where domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is not tolerated. We start our 50th year with even greater determination, tested and strengthened by the challenges of delivering through COVID-19. We are more grateful than ever for the phenomenal work of our whole Refuge team, which could not be achieved without the commitment of our supporters, funders and partners. And we celebrate the profound courage and resilience of the women we work with.

As a survivor of domestic abuse, know you are not alone. You are so strong for making a change and getting away from it. I've done it for my children, so they did not grow up to see it happening.

25 years down the line and my children are grown up and happy, as I am too. Think of what you can achieve, not being held back, to do what you have always wanted to do. Nobody to stop you thriving. Be strong and you will get through this.

”



Administrative details

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

Principal office:

International House, 1 St Katharine’s Way, London E1W 1UN

Auditors:
Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Devonshire House, 60 Goswell Road, EC1M 7AD

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

Investment Managers:
Charles Stanley & Co, 70-72 Chertsey Street, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4HL
CCLA, Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4ET

Solicitors:
Weil Gotshal and Manges LLP, 1 South Place, EC2M 2WG
C M Murray LLP, 1 Canada Square, E14 5AA
Bindmans LLP, 236 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1X 8HB
Bates Wells, 10 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BE
CMS Cameron McKenna LLP, 78 Cannon Street, EC4N 6AF
Shearman and Sterling LLP, 9 Appold Street, EC2A 2AP
Winckwoth Sherwood LLP, Minerva House, 5 Montague Cl, London SE1 9BB

Trustees, officers and advisers

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

It is a charity with a registered office at International House, 1 St Katharine’s Way, London E1W 1UN.

On 13 August 2012 Refuge became a Registered Provider of Social Housing regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency. A council of management (whose members are also directors of the charitable company) oversees Refuge’s policies and the execution of its activities. Members are elected upon a resolution of the council of management and may resign their membership by notice in writing to the company.

The members of the council of management who held office during the year were:

Board:

Hetti Barkworth–Nanton (Chair)
Andrea Daniels
Elizabeth Edwards
Katie Farrington
Christine Higgins
Carolyn Pearson
Jon Rowney (appointed 6 July 2021)
Selina Sagayam
Ruth Smith
Kirsten Walkolm
James Watson O’Neill (appointed 6 July 2021)

Ambassadors:

Cherie Booth CBE QC
Jo Brand
Fiona Bruce
Olivia Colman CBE
Baroness Helena Kennedy QC
Dame Helen Mirren
Dame Stella Rimington (stepped down 28th September 2020)
Sir Patrick Stewart OBE

Chief Executive

Sandra Horley CBE (retired 31 October 2020)
Carole Easton (appointed as Interim CEO 23 June 2020 – Resigned 21 April 2021)
Ruth Davison (appointed 6 April 2021)

Company Secretary

Sandra Horley CBE (resigned 9 August 2020)
Osbert Klass (appointed 9 August 2020 resigned 6 July 2021)
Lornette Pemberton (appointed 6 July 2021)

Governing document

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

Recruitment and appointment of council of management

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under Refuge’s Articles are known as members of council of management. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association one third of the members of council of management are required to retire at each annual general meeting. Those longest in office since co-option or election retire first and are all eligible for re-election.

Council of management induction and training

All new members of council of management receive an induction pack containing detailed information about Refuge, its organisation and its work. They also spend time with the Chief Executive, Chair and senior staff to familiarise themselves with Refuge’s activities and their role and responsibilities as a charity trustee. Training opportunities are offered to introduce trustees to their legal and governance duties. There are regular visits to services, opportunities for specific training and presentations by staff at board meetings. All trustees have received a copy of the Charity Commission publication ‘The Essential Trustee’.

Organisation

Council of management is responsible for the overall governance of Refuge. Council of management has a maximum of 12 members. Members of council of management have a range of skills and experience including legal, financial, property, business, social care and communications that support Refuge in the delivery of its objectives. The charity’s council of management meets regularly to manage its affairs. Refuge’s chief executive Ruth Davison, is responsible for the day to day management of the charity and the implementation of policy, supported by a highly dedicated and professional team of staff and volunteers.

Partnership

In pursuit of its charitable aim of providing safe accommodation for women and children escaping domestic abuse Refuge works in partnership with a number of different housing associations and local authorities.

Housing associations:

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

Statutory partners:

The London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Ealing, Hackney, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston on Thames, Lewisham, Lambeth, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond, Southwark, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth and Westminster.
The counties of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, East Sussex and Warwickshire. The city of Derby and the borough of Warrington.

Police Crime Commissioners (PCC):
Derbyshire.

Objectives

The objects of the company are:-

To provide for the relief of women and their children or other victims who have been subject to:

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

To provide specialist supported housing and social housing and any associated amenities in England, designed to meet the needs of women and children who are the victims of domestic abuse and/or other gender-based abuse, and other services designed to facilitate their onward progression; and

To advance public education, research and training on understanding of the issues of domestic abuse and gender-based abuse throughout the United Kingdom and abroad.

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

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

Public benefit statement

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

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to Refuge’s core principles and are reflected in our service provision, our diverse workforce and in the way in which we work. Refuge seeks to achieve this by advocating fairness, consistency and equality of opportunity in its organisational decision making and by establishing fair policies and procedures that are consistently applied. Refuge respects and values people’s differences and seeks to create a culture where people feel comfortable to be themselves and have a sense of belonging. Refuge recognises its responsibilities and commitment to these principles and challenges discrimination in all its forms. To this end, Refuge is committed to creating a positive and safe working environment for all its employees, volunteers, trustees and contractors.

Fundraising

At Refuge, we are conscious of the trust that supporters place in us when they donate towards our work. We are members of the Fundraising Regulator and abide by their Fundraising Promise and the Code of Fundraising Practice, and Refuge is a member of the Institute of Fundraising. We are deeply committed to protecting the data and privacy of our supporters and adhere to all relevant legislation and best practice in the sector.

The significant upsurge in support for Refuge in the wake of the pandemic demonstrated huge generosity on the part of the public and the private sector. In order to ensure the changing circumstances did not impact on our supporters, and to keep them at the heart of our programme, this year we strengthened our procedures. This included keeping up to date with any regulatory announcements by the Fundraising Regulator and ensuring teams across the organisation were trained in our policy on Supporting People in Vulnerable Circumstances.

We are committed to providing the highest levels of supporter care and value any feedback we receive regarding our fundraising activities. In 2020/21 we received 19 complaints, which were resolved without any being escalated to the Fundraising Regulator. We responded to all complaints within three working days.

In 2020-21, we worked with three professional fundraising organisations for payroll giving recruitment. We aim to ensure any agencies we employ also observe the highest standards in terms of fundraising practice, and we ensure that the work of the suppliers is regularly monitored.

We also work with companies across a variety of sectors to build mutually beneficial partnerships. Our Corporate Partners contractually commit to a minimum guaranteed level of £25,000 of funds (net of any VAT payable under commercial participation regulations) per partnership year; this can be raised through a range of mechanisms including commercial participation, staff or customer fundraising, events and company donations. We are also grateful for the support of a number of corporate supporters and donors which fund us through one off or regular donations.

We conduct due diligence as part of our research process in relation to both proactive and reactive fundraising from businesses, trusts, foundations and high net worth individuals. This is to ensure alignment with our ethical policy as well as assess potential risks by association.

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

Financial review

The results for the year to 31 March 2021 show an improved performance with income rising an unprecedented 93%, to £34m (2020: £17.5m). This was a combined result of increased campaigns and fundraising during COVID-19.

The increase in income was observed in two income areas Grants and Donations. The Grant income increased to £6.1m (2020: £2.5m) mainly due to £891k Emergency Fund from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and £1.4m National Emergencies funding a partnership between Refuge and partners in the devolved nations, both COVID-19 and lockdowns relate.

The Donations income increased from £3.4m in 2020 to £15.6m in unrestricted funds due to a fantastic response to Refuge’s appeal for funds through various methods, Virtual Challenges, Christmas appeals, general appeals and came from all types of funders, individuals, groups and corporates.

Total expenditure increased by 23% to £22.3m (2020: £18m) the main large increase was in the National Domestic Helpline through grant funding. Other areas showed a slight increase.

The gains on investment were due to the recovery of the market during the year after the initial downward market movement as a result of the effect of COVID-19.

The total increase in funds was £11.8m (2020: deficit £0.61m) after net gains on investments of £134k (2020: losses £75k).

The closing Fund balances amounted to £15.4m (2020: £3.6m) of which £14.3m were held as general unrestricted reserves and £1.1m as restricted reserves.

Refuge is managing the large funding increase which resulted in a large increase in free reserves in conjunction with a strategic review to ensure that the funds raised are utilised to their full.

The cash balances at the end of the year were healthy £16.4m (2020: £4.4m) with net assets of £15.4m (2020: £3.6m)

Principal risks

The Council of management is responsible for establishing and monitoring internal control systems within Refuge. The council of management reviews the major risks which may impact on the operations of Refuge on a regular basis and are satisfied that the system of internal control currently in place is sound and effective, whilst recognising that it is designed to manage rather than eliminate risk. The council of management agree that the following are the principal risks that Refuge faces:

- Safeguarding. The nature of Refuge’s work leads to a high risk of safeguarding issues. There are strong policies, processes and ways of working to meet our high safeguarding standards including comprehensive external reviews of services where issues have been raised.
- Continuity of services. There are a number of significant contracts due for recommissioning during 2021. In order to maintain and extend contracts a local engagement and ‘win’ strategy is prepared for each service. Maintaining good relations with commissioners, negotiating contract extensions where possible and tight budgeting and control of costs are priorities. If contracts are lost staff are covered by TUPE arrangements.

- The National Domestic Advice Helpline – The level of unmet need is at the forefront of Refuge’s direction. Given the increased level of funding, there are plans to restructure the team to provide better support during shifts, better capacity and better management.
- Strategic Direction – The strategic direction Refuge will be taking will affect long term planning, senior team recruitment and fundraising. The work on the strategic review has begun and will engage a wide range of stakeholders over the next few months. The review will also address any lack of agreement on values which affects messaging both internally and externally.
- Senior staff changes can unsettle an organization and staff morale. Staff changes and plans are being communicated to all in the organisation as soon as possible with support and discussion with affected teams.
- Following on from senior staff changes delegated authority across the organization needs to be clear to avoid duplication of work, frustrated staff and inappropriate authorizing. A review is currently underway which will give clarity and better control.
- Current IT connectivity and Head office air quality issues are restricting and affecting how staff are working and how any return to office may work. There is a review of the air quality being undertaken with the landlord and work is underway to migrate databases and strengthen networks and improve equipment for staff.

Investment powers and policy

The Articles of Association contains powers for the council of management to invest funds in any investments, securities and properties.

Reserves policy

Total funds at the year-end are £15.4m of which £1.1m are restricted reserves and £14.2m are unrestricted reserves. The board further designated £3.8m out of the unrestricted reserves for strategic development work. The fund should be fully utilised in the next three years depending on the outcome of the strategic review.

Free reserves excluding fixed assets of £0.2m and designated reserves total £10.4m. The council of management, having referred to the Charity Commission’s revised guidance CC19, reviewed

Refuge’s existing reserves policy and agreed a new policy at the Board meeting in July 2021. The original reserves policy stated that unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets should equate to six months of core running costs plus the running costs of a quarter of services for three months. The new free reserves policy, as agreed by the board, include; Head office expenditure and helpline costs for 6 months. The calculation is based on the 2021-22 budget figures and is expressed as a range to reflect any increase/decrease in actual results for that year.

The calculation gives a range of £6.7m to £10m as a free reserves target. The year-end free reserves figure is £10.4m, £0.4m over the maximum figure. In addition, we are now forecasting a further surplus for 2021/22 following the success in raising funds to support services since the lockdown. A strategic review is currently underway and it is anticipated that this will result in further investment to enable Refuge to maintain and enhance the increased capacity of services delivered during the lockdown bringing reserves within the free reserves target range.

The impact of COVID-19 and going concern

COVID-19 and the ensuing lockdown brought many challenges to Refuge but all of our services remained operational throughout lockdown

Due to the raised profile of domestic abuse Refuge’s fundraising team was able to bring forward strategies to provide move options to enable the public to support our cause. The public, corporates and trusts responded with great generosity which meant that fundraising targets were exceeded. This provided vital funds to increase capacity to provide services during the lockdown.

Refuge’s forecast reserves through 2021/22 means that the council of management consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for the 2021 Annual Report and Financial statements and is confident of Refuge’s ability to remain as a going concern for the foreseeable future.

Statement of the council of management responsibilities

The council of management (whose members are also directors of Refuge for the purposes of company law) is responsible for preparing the trustees’ report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the council of management to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the outgoing resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the council of management is required to:

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

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

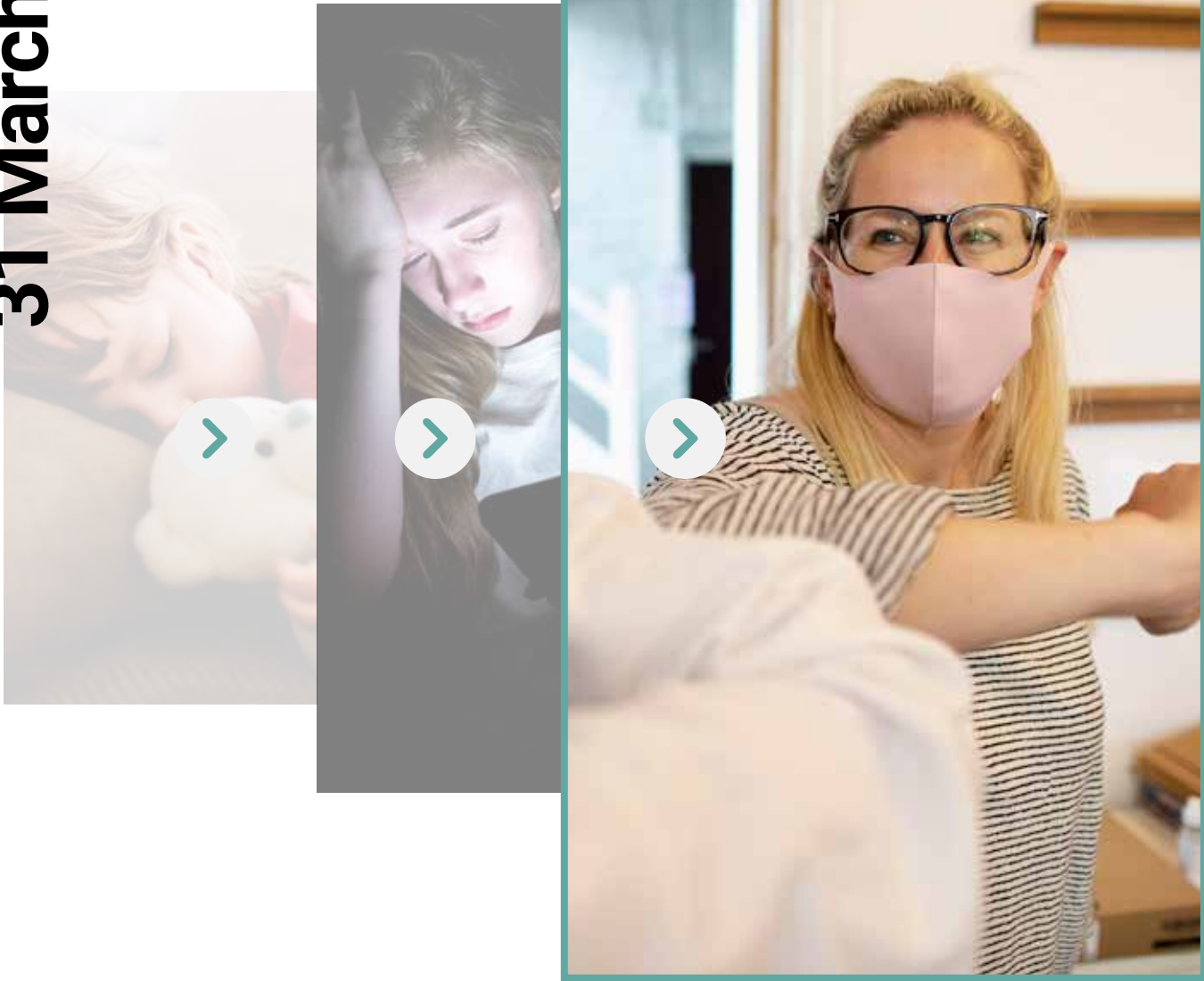
- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company’s auditor is unaware; and
- The council of management has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information
- The board reviewed the procurement of external audit services in 2016 as part of its governance responsibilities.

On behalf of the council of management

Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair

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

Financial statements for the year to 31 March 2021



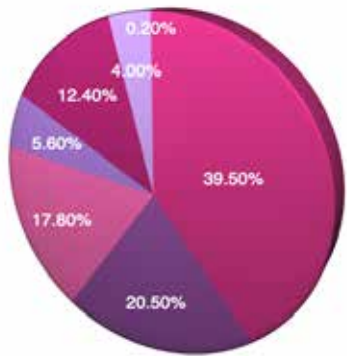
2020-21

Financial overview



Income

- Donations and legacies 48.9%
- Contracts for support services 18.7%
- Housing management 14.5%
- Grants and contracted income provided for services 17.8%
- Investments 0.1%



Charitable activities expenditure

- Refuge provision 39.5%
- Advocacy 20.5%
- Integrated services 17.8%
- Outreach and floating support 5.6%
- Domestic Violence Helpline 12.4%
- Public information 4%
- Specialist services 0.2%

2020-21 has been an unprecedented year for Refuge. The COVID-19 pandemic shone a spotlight on domestic abuse more than ever before, which generated an extraordinary outpouring of support for our work.

The income generated during this period is in stark contrast to the decade of austerity Refuge has faced. Because of the financial challenges of the last 10 years, we have put projects on hold, our infrastructure has reached breaking point and, to ensure the continuation of our frontline services, we’ve drawn significantly from Refuge’s charitable reserves.

Thanks to the funds raised in the last financial year we have been in the unexpected position of being able to invest in critical specialist services. In response to the surge in demand for domestic abuse support we have built the capability and capacity of Refuge’s National Domestic Abuse Helpline and its associated services, which act as a gateway to survivors across the country. We have progressed previously stalled projects and invested in frontline services and much-needed infrastructure. Any new commitments we have made have been budgeted to cover a three-year period.

We have also been able to rebuild our depleted reserves to recommended charitable levels.

We recognise that the unparalleled outpouring of support for Refuge’s work was in response to the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19. But we are also aware that the impacts of lockdown will be long lasting. These reserves will ensure that we can continue to be there for the women and children who will need us in the years ahead. The board, senior leadership team and staff at Refuge remain unwaveringly committed to working hard, creatively and innovatively to continue to raise funds into the future to maintain and grow Refuge’s work.

We want to thank all our loyal, long-standing supporters and those who stepped up during the pandemic and stood by us during this testing time. We value your commitment enormously. Your support has protected our work and helped us to support more women than ever before. As we look to the year ahead, Refuge remains steadfast in its commitment to reach yet more women and children who need its life-saving services and life-changing support.

Independent auditors report to the members of Refuge

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Refuge ('the company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice including FRS102 the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 and the Accounting Direction for Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless

the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

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

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, the Accounting Direction for Registered Providers of Social Housing 2019, the Housing SORP and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

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

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty

exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

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

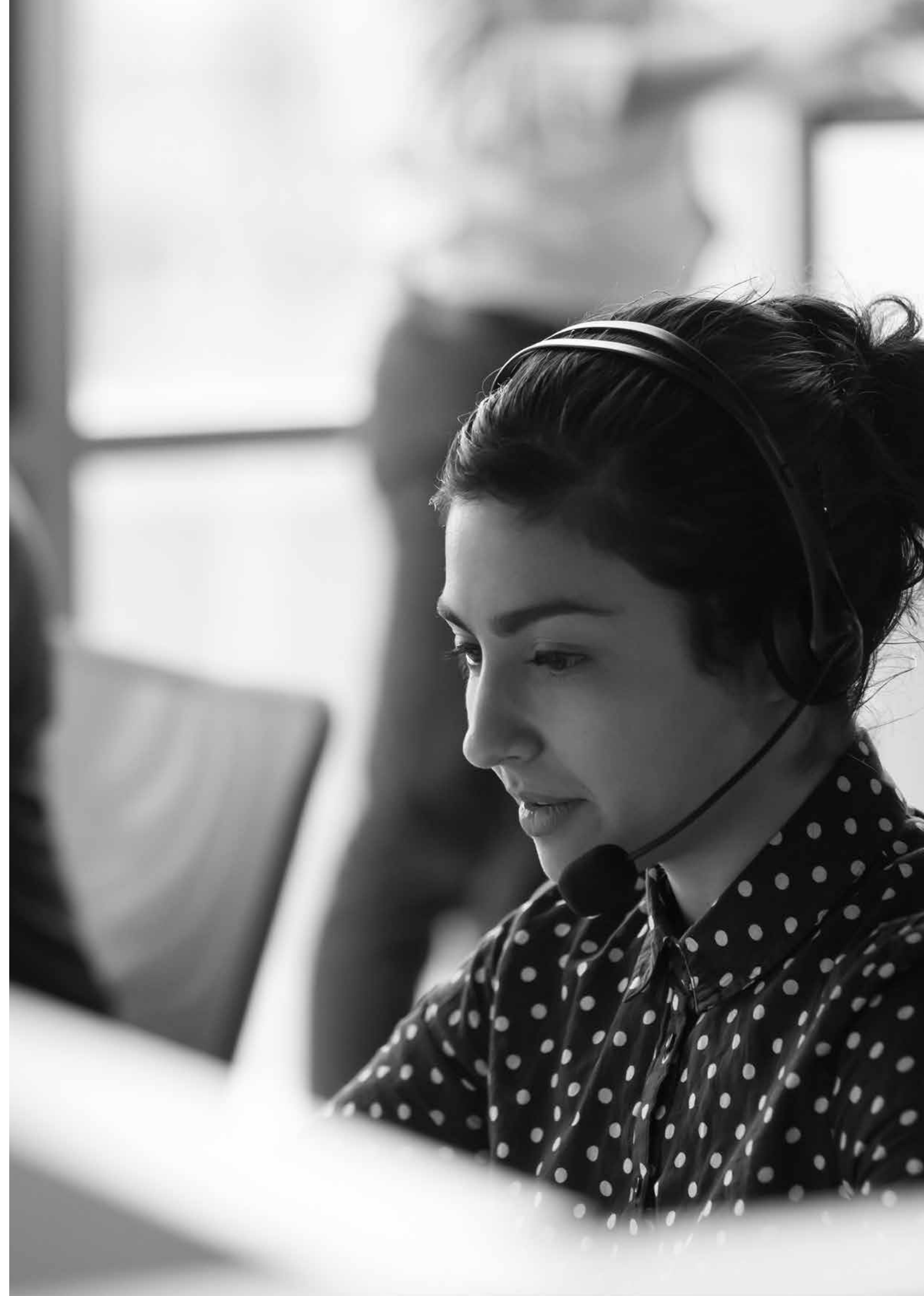
Use of our report

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

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP,
Statutory Auditor

Date: 22 September 2021

Devonshire House
60 Goswell Road
London
EC1M 7AD



Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2021

(incorporating the income and expenditure account)

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Note		2021	2021	2021	2020
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	4	15,621,590	985,970	16,607,559	3,895,809
Operating activities					
Contracts for Support Services	5	6,349,475		6,349,475	6,374,336
Housing Management		4,949,086		4,949,086	4,785,552
Grants	6		6,057,003	6,057,003	2,461,962
Investments	7	17,749		17,749	44,446
Other trading activities	8	2,708		2,708	
Total income and endowments	3	26,940,609	7,042,973	33,983,581	17,562,105
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	9	2,374,009	-	2,374,009	1,218,612
Operating activities					
Refuge provision		6,725,645	1,154,047	7,879,692	6,954,595
Advocacy		2,684,417	1,402,911	4,087,329	4,229,109
Integrated services		3,215,566	342,207	3,557,774	2,994,927
Outreach and Floating Support		129,351	976,495	1,105,847	1,082,063
Freephone 24 Hour National					
Domestic Violence Helpline		516	2,467,386	2,467,902	910,017
Public information		778,301	25,000	803,301	640,881
Specialist support services		3,447	27,358	30,805	72,350
Total Expenditure	3,11	15,911,252	6,395,405	22,306,658	18,102,554
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	15	(2,202)		(2,202)	(1,163)
Unrealised (losses)/gains on investments	15	136,109		136,109	(74,098)
Net income/(expenditure)		11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830	(615,710)
Transfers between funds	20,21			-	-
Net movement in funds		11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830	(615,710)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward		3,087,976	525,834	3,613,810	4,229,520
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2021	20, 21,22	14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,640	3,613,810

Approved by the council of management on 20th September 2021

Hetti Barkworth- Nanton

Christine Higgins

Notes 1 to 24 form part of these financial statements.

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

Register Company number 1412276

Balance sheet as of 31 March 2021

	Note	2021	2021	2020	2020
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	13		93,130		132,666
Intangible assets	14		277,398		12,126
Financial Investments	15		694,667		561,086
			1,065,195		705,878
Current Assets					
Debtors	16	2,701,150		2,098,442	
Cash at bank and in hand		16,367,480		4,366,349	
		19,068,630		6,464,791	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	(4,339,185)		(3,186,859)	
Net Current Assets			14,729,445		3,277,932
Total Assets less Current Liabilities			15,794,640		3,983,810
Provisions for liabilities and charges	19		(370,000)		(370,000)
Net Assets			15,424,640		3,613,810
Represented by:					
Unrestricted Funds					
General	20		10,414,172		2,750,903
Designated			3,837,072		337,073
			14,251,244		3,087,976
Restricted Funds					
	21		1,173,396		525,834
Total Funds	22		15,424,640		3,613,810

Approved by the council of management on 20th September 2021

Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

Christine Higgins

Notes 1 to 24 form part of these accounts.

Register Company number 1412276

Cash-flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Statement of Cash Flows			
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities	1	12,384,516	(1,070,156)
- Investment income	7	17,749	44,446
Capital Expenditure and financial investment			
- Payments to acquire Tangible Fixed Assets	13	(128,619)	(163,739)
- Payments to acquire Intangible Fixed Assets	14	(272,842)	
- Payments to acquire Financial Investments	15	(107,095)	(63,940)
- Investment disposal proceeds		104,600	75,154
Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	11,998,309	(1,178,235)
Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows			
1. Reconciliation of Changes in Resources to Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities			
Net movement in funds		11,810,830	(615,709)
Depreciation		168,155	99,670
Amortisation		7,570	10,261
Investment income		(17,749)	(44,446)
Unrealised/Realised losses/(gains)		(133,907)	75,262
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other Debtors		(602,709)	(23,101)
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other Creditors		1,152,326	(602,093)
Increase in provisions			30,000
		12,384,516	(1,070,156)
2 Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movements in Net Funds			
Increase in Cash and Cash at Bank in the year		11,998,309	(1,178,235)
(Decrease)/Increase in net funds		11,998,309	(1,178,235)
Net funds at 1 April 2020		4,401,884	5,580,119
Net funds at 31 March 2021		16,400,193	4,401,884
Reconciliation of net funds to cash at bank and in hand			
Net funds		16,400,193	4,401,884
Cash held with investment managers		(32,713)	(35,535)
Cash at bank and in hand		16,367,480	4,366,349

Notes 1 to 24 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The accounts are prepared on the historical cost convention of accounting and in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and in compliance with The Accounting Direction for Private Registered Providers of Social Housing 2015, Housing SORP 2014, the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting for Registered Social Providers", the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with "The Financial Reporting Standard Accounts applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") issued on 16 July 2014, The Charities Act 2011 and the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. The charity is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102.

Going concern

These financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis. The funding received by the company has increased significantly during and following lockdown following increased awareness of the effects of domestic abuse. The council of management therefore have a reasonable expectation that the company will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future based on budgets, forecasts and projections for the following year and up to 12 months from the date the financial statements are approved. The council of management are not aware of any material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt upon the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Tangible Fixed Assets - Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £500, except items of high wear and tear for refuges, have been capitalised and recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over their estimated useful lives or the length of the contract/project for which the fixed assets were acquired.

Leasehold improvements	7 years straight line
Freehold buildings	50 years straight line
Fixtures and fittings	1 - 4 years straight line
Motor vehicles	1 - 4 years straight line
Office equipment	1 - 4 years straight line

Intangible Fixed Assets - Amortisation

Intangible assets costing more than £500 are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets over their useful lives on the following bases:

Software	1 - 4 years straight line
Website	1 - 4 years straight line

Income

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

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

Fundraising income is shown gross except for small fundraising events where the cash is received net of expenditure.

Investment income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

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

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

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

Costs of raising funds

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

Governance Costs

Governance costs comprise all expenditure not directly related to the charitable activity or fundraising ventures including audit fees.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

1 Accounting Policies (Continued)

Provisions

Provisions include the council of management's estimate of the present cost of cyclical maintenance of properties and office dilapidations that Refuge is directly responsible for.

Bad debts

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

Investments

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

Stocks

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

Cash and cash equivalents

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

Financial instruments

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

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

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

Basic financial assets

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

Other financial assets

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

Trade debtors, loans and other receivables that have fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market are classified as 'loans and receivables'. Loans and receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

Interest is recognised by applying the effective interest rate, except for short-term receivables when the recognition of interest would be immaterial. The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a debt instrument and of allocating the interest income over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the debt instrument to the net carrying amount on initial recognition.

Impairment of financial assets

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

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

Derecognition of financial assets

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

1. Accounting policies (Continued)

Classification of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the company after deducting all of its liabilities.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including trade and other payables, bank loans, loans from fellow group companies and preference shares that are classified as debt, are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade payables are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Other financial liabilities

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the company after deducting all of its liabilities.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when, and only when, the company's obligations are discharged, cancelled, or they expire.

Pension Funds

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

Operating Lease Agreement

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

Research and Development

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

Fund Account

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

Status

Refuge is a registered social landlord with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The register number is 4730.

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

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

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

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

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies (Continued)

Critical judgements

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

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

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

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

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

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

2. Comparative statements of financial activities

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	Note	2021 £	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £	2020 £
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	4	15,621,590	985,970	16,607,559	3,398,472	497,337	3,895,809
Operating activities		-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracts for Support Services	5	6,349,475	-	6,349,475	6,374,336	-	6,374,336
Housing Management		4,949,086	-	4,949,086	4,785,552	-	4,785,552
Grants	6	-	6,057,003	6,057,003	-	2,461,962	2,461,962
Investments	7	17,749	-	17,749	44,446	-	44,446
Other trading activities	8	2,708	-	2,708	-	-	-
Total income and endowments	3	26,940,609	7,042,973	33,983,581	14,602,806	2,959,299	17,562,105
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	9	2,374,009	-	2,374,009	1,218,612	-	1,218,612
Operating activities							
Refuge provision		6,725,645	1,154,047	7,879,692	6,494,209	460,386	6,954,595
Advocacy		2,684,417	1,402,911	4,087,329	3,319,813	909,296	4,229,109
Integrated services		3,215,566	342,207	3,557,774	2,891,049	103,878	2,994,927
Outreach and Floating Support		129,351	976,495	1,105,847	195,680	886,383	1,082,063
Freephone 24 Hour National							
Domestic Violence Helpline		516	2,467,386	2,467,902	216,355	693,662	910,017
Public information		778,301	25,000	803,301	628,881	12,000	640,881
Specialist support services		3,447	27,358	30,805	586	71,764	72,350
Total Expenditure	3, 11	15,911,252	6,395,405	22,306,658	14,965,185	3,137,369	18,102,554
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	15	(2,202)	-	(2,202)	(1,163)	-	(1,163)
Unrealised gains/(losses) on investments	15	136,109	-	136,109	(74,098)	-	(74,098)
Net income/(expenditure)		11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830	(437,640)	(178,070)	(615,710)
Transfers between funds	20, 21	-	-	-	(19,239)	19,239	-
Net movement in funds		11,163,263	647,567	11,810,830	(456,879)	(158,831)	(615,710)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances brought forward		3,087,976	525,834	3,613,810	3,544,855	684,665	4,229,520
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2021		14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,540	3,087,976	525,834	3,613,810

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

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

	2021 Turnover	2021 Operating Costs	2021 Operating Surplus/ (deficit)	2020 Turnover	2020 Operating Costs	2020 Operating Surplus/ (deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Social housing lettings	4,949,086	4,817,068	132,018	4,785,553	4,710,237	75,316
Other social housing activities:						
Contracts for Support Services	2,467,218	2,466,541	677	2,388,643	2,435,420	(46,777)
Other grants and donations	1,230,658	1,230,658	-	545,702	545,702	-
	8,646,962	8,514,267	132,695	7,719,898	7,691,359	28,539
Non-social housing activities	25,336,619	13,792,391	11,544,228	9,842,207	10,411,195	(568,988)
Total:	33,983,581	22,306,658	11,676,923	17,562,105	18,102,554	(540,449)

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

	2021 £	2020 £
Social housing income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charges	2,058,139	2,048,348
Service charges receivable eligible for Housing Benefit	3,008,328	2,848,313
Service charges receivable ineligible for Housing Benefit	271,709	260,881
Rent losses due to voids	(389,090)	(371,989)
Turnover from social housing lettings	4,949,086	4,785,553
Expenditure on social housing lettings		
Services	1,304,237	1,324,738
Management	1,691,151	1,628,539
Routine maintenance	202,641	167,812
Planned maintenance	123,389	113,675
Bad debts	122,831	98,879
Lease charges	1,372,135	1,375,910
Property depreciation	684	684
Operating costs on social housing lettings	4,817,068	4,710,237
Operating surplus/(deficit) on social lettings	132,018	75,316
Social housing units		
The number of supported housing units under management at the end of the period:	2021	2020
Owned and managed	8	8
Not owned but managed	348	347
	356	355

4. Donations and legacies

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

5. Contracts for support services

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

Contracts for support services are awarded to Refuge as the Service Provider by the Administering Authority (Local Authority/Borough) with approval of the Commission Body "(a partnership of local housing, social care, health and probation statutory services)".

Outreach and floating support

Outreach and Floating Support services are awarded by contract for the provision of support to vulnerable service users who are in their own homes. The aims of empowering the service user towards maintaining independence are equally inherent in all outreach support service provision.

6. Grants

	2021 £	2020 £
	Restricted	Restricted
Bain Capital	19,801	
BBC Children in Need	35,974	35,775
Big Lottery Fund	290,161	292,227
Cambridgeshire Community Foundation	5,000	
Cambridgeshire County Council	135,435	145,929
Charles Hayward Foundation		25,000
Comic Relief	77,091	87,738
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport		35,678
Department for Work and Pensions	972	8,200
Derby City Council	56,002	153,360
Derbyshire Community Foundation	4,890	
East Sussex County Council		103,797
HMRC Furlough	1,533	
Home Office	803,303	355,327
John Coates Charitable Trust	5,000	
Kingston Council	17,477	

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

6. Grants (continued)

	2021 £ Restricted	2020 £ Restricted
London Borough Barking and Dagenham	133,155	4,000
London Borough of Hackney		47,831
London Borough of Hounslow		93,017
London Borough of Lambeth		5,400
London Borough of Lewisham	143,278	54,982
London Borough of Redbridge	29,711	20,349
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Wandsworth	244,533	223,205
London Borough of Southwark		4,000
London Councils	127,613	93,974
London Stock Exchange Group Foundation	10,000	
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	890,597	
Ministry of Justice (London Community Foundation)	153,454	
Morrisons Trust	24,724	
National Emergencies Trust	1,443,378	
NHS Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group	100	
Permira Foundation	75,300	
Rugby Borough Council	29,409	
Shroder Charity Trust	10,000	
Sir John Priestman Charitable Trust	2,000	
Southwark Council	5,000	
Standard Life Foundation	25,000	12,000
Standing Together Against Domestic Violence	73,843	64,228
Stratford Town Trust	18,333	6,667
The Alan Edward Higgs Charity	6,320	
The Albert Hunt Trust	5,000	
The Brian Woolf Trust	5,000	
The Evan Cornish Foundation		10,000
The Leri Charitable Trust		85,000
The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	500,000	
The Mayor's Young Londoners Fund	49,277	12,399
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire	173,628	5,357
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire	78,214	
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire	45,633	
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire	76,085	
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire	32,120	
The Singer Foundation		1,000
The Violet Melchett Children's Trust	5,000	5,000
Tides Foundation	65,000	260,000
Warwickshire County Council	123,659	209,522
Others		1,000
	6,057,003	2,461,962

6. Grants (continued)

In 2020/21 Refuge received two grants from Big Lottery Fund totalling £290,161. The first grant of £153,858 is part of three year award of £499,935, towards general running cost and salaries for Eastern European Independent Gender Violence Advocacy service. The second grant of £136,303 is a one year award towards the general running cost of LEAP project Caseworkers for Victims of Domestic Violence in Lambeth. During the year £ 292,446 of the grants was expended as disclosed in note 21.

In accordance with section 37 of the Local Government Act 1989 the grant from London Councils of £127,613 was used in respect of the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, as follows:
Towards general running costs and salaries of the 24 hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline. **£127,613**
The grant was fully used.

7. Investment income

	2021 £	2020 £
Listed investments	11,170	15,417
Interest receivable	6,579	29,029
	17,749	44,446

8. Other trading activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Merchandise	2,708	-

9. Costs of raising funds

	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs	956,184	707,434
Depreciation and amortisation	2,415	2,415
Other costs	1,415,410	508,763
	2,374,009	1,218,612

10. Governance costs

	2021 £	2020 £
Auditors' remuneration (net)	19,750	15,100
Auditors' remuneration non-audit (net)	2,350	2,079
Irrecoverable VAT/accruals	4,420	4,636
Total auditors' remuneration inclusive of VAT	26,520	21,815
Legal advice and recruitment of trustees	47,804	51,744
Tax review		
Total governance costs	74,324	73,559

Governance costs for the year which are included in support cost in note 11 are £74,324 (inclusive of irrecoverable VAT) (2020 - £73,559) representing less than 1% of our total costs.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

11. Total expenditure (continued)

2021

	Cost of Raising Funds £	Refuge Provision £	Advocacy £	Integrated services £	Floating Support and Outreach £	24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline £	Public Information £	Specialist Services £	2020/21 Total £
Direct Costs including Operational Support	2,152,833	6,770,363	3,733,536	3,343,588	977,850	2,275,248	579,976	27,358	19,860,752
Support Costs*	221,176	1,109,329	353,793	214,185	127,997	192,654	223,325	3,447	2,445,905
	2,374,009	7,879,692	4,087,329	3,557,774	1,105,847	2,467,902	803,301	30,805	22,306,658

*Support costs include governance costs of £74,324 incl. VAT

2020

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

*Support costs include governance costs of £73,559 (2020)

Expenditure Analysis	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs	12,525,831	10,693,621
Temporary staff	371,984	416,448
Consultants	316,261	313,941
Other staff costs	376,518	381,273
Property costs	2,473,371	2,491,079
Equipment costs	15,988	19,990
Telephone	465,775	408,126
Audit	23,700	19,320
Depreciation and amortisation	175,725	109,931
Other costs	5,561,504	3,248,825
	22,306,658	18,102,554

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

12. Staff Costs

	2021	2020
	£	£
Wages and salaries	10,806,971	9,200,875
Staff benefits	46,268	37,823
Social security costs	1,077,403	916,505
Pension costs	595,189	538,419
	12,525,831	10,693,622

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

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
Refuge provision	82	76
Advocacy	73	76
Integrated Services	57	49
Outreach and Floating Support	22	22
24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline	28	16
Public information	8	7
Specialist services	1	1
Other Refuge services	58	55
	329	302

Redundancy and termination payments

	2021	2020
	£	£
	93,060	71,827

12. Staff Costs (continued)

The number of employees whose remuneration (including benefit in kind but excluding employers' National Insurance and employers' pension contributions was in excess of £60,000.

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	-	2
£70,001 - £80,000	4	3
£80,001 - £90,000	-	1
£90,001 - £100,000	1	-
£200,001 - £210,000*	1	-
£210,001 - £220,000*	-	1

* Includes keyman health cover and pension supplement from 2017

	2021	2020
	£	£
Pension contributions in respect of the highest paid employees above	33,834	31,346

Emoluments to key management personnel

	2021	2020
	£	£
The remuneration paid to the key management personnel of Refuge (the Chief Executive, the Director of Operations, the Director of Fundraising, the Director of Communications and External Relations, the Head of Finance and IT, the Head of HR, the Head Of People And Transformation and the Head of Development) was:		
Emoluments (including pension contributions, employers National Insurance and benefits in kind)	784,385	786,405
Emoluments (excluding pension contributions) paid to the highest paid member of key management personnel	202,439	217,517
The highest paid member of key management personnel has a personal pension to which Refuge contributed:	-	-

During the year members of the council of management received reimbursement of expenses totalling £312 (2020 - £2,486). No members of the council of management received any remuneration during the year (2020 -£Nil).

Remuneration Policy

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

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

Any changes are discussed by the chief executive and the chair of the council of management, before the remuneration is agreed.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

13. Tangible Fixed Assets

2020/21	Freehold Property £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Motor Vehicles £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost					
At 1 April 2020	34,173	436,352	-	256,072	726,597
Additions		49,347	-	79,272	128,619
Written off	-	(80,957)	-	(84,490)	(165,447)
At 31 March 2021	34,173	404,742	-	250,854	689,769
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2020	15,734	397,125	-	181,072	593,931
Charge for the year	684	70,858		96,613	168,155
Written off		(80,957)		(84,490)	(165,447)
At 31 March 2021	16,418	387,026	-	193,195	596,639
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2021	17,755	17,716	-	57,659	93,130
At 31 March 2020	18,439	39,227	-	74,999	132,665

In the opinion of the council of management, the value of the company's freehold property is considerably in excess of its book value. Due to the costs involved, it is not considered practicable to quantify the difference.

14. Intangible Fixed Assets

2020/21	Website £	Software £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2020	22,060	126,367	148,427
Additions	272,842		272,842
Disposals			-
At 31 March 2021	294,902	126,367	421,269
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2020	19,006	117,295	136,301
Charge for the year	2,215	5,355	7,570
Disposals			-
At 31 March 2021	21,221	122,650	143,871
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2021	273,681	3,717	277,398
At 31 March 2020	3,054	9,072	12,126

15. Financial Investments

	2021 £	2020 £
Investments at market value at beginning of the year	525,552	612,028
Additions at cost	107,095	63,940
Disposal proceeds	(104,600)	(75,155)
Realised/unrealised (losses)/gains	(2,202)	(1,163)
Unrealised/unrealised gains (losses)	136,109	(74,098)
Cash held with investment managers	32,713	35,534
Market value at end of the year	694,667	561,086
Comprising:		
Global fixed interest	118,346	99,782
UK equities and funds	208,662	184,754
Overseas equities and funds	287,858	201,282
Property	5,379	5,660
Alternatives	41,709	34,073
Cash	32,713	35,535
	694,667	561,086
Historic cost at end of the year	561,087	542,178

All investments are listed on a recognised stock exchange.

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

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

16. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade Debtors	760,669	962,472
Bad debt provision		
Prepayments	515,497	418,444
Rent deposit	202,977	201,396
Other Debtors	1,222,007	516,130
	2,701,150	2,098,442

	2021	2020
	£	£
Financial assets that are debt instruments at amortised cost	2,185,653	1,679,998

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade Creditors	1,710,889	1,171,588
Accruals	975,512	662,715
Deferred income (note 18)	1,056,820	981,106
Other taxes and social security	342,741	266,300
Other Creditors	253,222	105,150
	4,339,185	3,186,859

	2021	2020
	£	£
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	2,939,623	1,939,453

18. Deferred Income

	At 31 March Released 2021	At 31 March Released 2020
	£	£
Deferred income	(726,503)	1,056,821

	At 31 March Released 2020	At 31 March Released 2020
	£	£
Deferred income	(909,023)	981,106

19. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2021	2020
	£	£
Provision at beginning of the year	370,000	340,000
Created during the year		30,000
Balance at the end of the year	370,000	370,000

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

20. Unrestricted Funds

	1 April 2020	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers *	31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
General	2,750,903	27,076,717	(15,913,454)	(3,500,000)	10,414,166
Designated	337,073			3,500,000	3,837,073
	3,087,976	27,076,717	(15,913,454)	-	14,251,239

	1 April 2019	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers *	31 March 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
General	3,030,266	14,602,806	(15,040,446)	158,277	2,750,903
Designated	514,589			(177,516)	337,073
	3,544,855	14,602,806	(15,040,446)	(19,239)	3,087,976

General funds

These funds are available for Refuge's general purposes

Designated funds

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that the council of management have set aside to support innovations in service delivery, the strengthening of support infrastructure, diversification of income streams and to provide for sinking fund repairs of leased and owned properties. The funds are expected to be utilised over the next three financial years.

Transfers* 2020/21

During the year transfer of £3,500,000 between general and designated funds has taken place. This transfer represents Refuge's investment into innovations in service delivery and the strengthening of support infrastructure.

Transfers* 2019/20

Part of the designated fund was set up to support diversification into new services and to support new contracts. During the year transfer of £177,516 between general and designated funds has taken place. This transfer represents Refuge's investment into modern slavery £65,799 and 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline £111,717. Transfer of £19,239 from unrestricted to restricted reserves represents the covering of expenditure relating to specialist support service provision.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

21. Restricted Funds

	1 April 2020 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	31 March 2021 £
Refuge provision	458,705	1,238,605	(1,154,047)	-	543,263
Outreach and Floating Support	23,424	993,406	(976,495)		40,335
Integrated Services	2,577	367,573	(342,207)		27,943
Big Lottery Fund	5,714	290,161	(292,446)		3,429
Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline		2,795,201	(2,467,386)		327,815
Public information		25,000	(25,000)		-
Specialist Services		27,358	(27,358)		-
Advocacy	35,414	1,305,669	(1,110,465)		230,618
	525,834	7,042,973	(6,395,405)	-	1,173,401

	1 April 2019 £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers * £	At 31 March 2020 £
Refuge provision	459,815	459,276	(460,386)		458,705
Outreach and Floating Support	32,247	877,560	(886,383)		23,424
Integrated Services	2,577	103,878	(103,878)		2,577
Big Lottery Fund	3,490	292,227	(290,003)		5,714
Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline	53,908	639,754	(693,662)		-
Public information		12,000	(12,000)		-
Specialist Services	3,801	48,722	(71,762)	19,239	-
Advocacy	128,827	525,882	(619,295)		35,414
	684,665	2,959,299	(3,137,369)	19,239	525,834

21. Restricted Funds (continued)

Refuge provision

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

Advocacy

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

Big Lottery Fund - Eastern European Independent Gender Violence Advocacy Service

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

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

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

Integrated services

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

Outreach & Floating Support

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

24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline

Used to fund the 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline

Specialist Services

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

Transfers* 2020/21

Transfers* 2019/20

Part of the designated fund was set up to support diversification into new services and to support new contracts. During the year transfer of £177,516 between general and designated funds has taken place. This transfer represents Refuge's investment into modern slavery £65,799 and 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline £111,717. Transfer of £19,239 from unrestricted to restricted reserves represents the covering of expenditure relating to specialist support service provision.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

22. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Analysis of Net Assets between Funds 2021	Unrestricted	Restricted	
	Funds	Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	83,361	9,769	93,130
Intangible fixed assets	78,734	198,664	277,398
Financial Investments	694,667		694,667
Net current assets	13,764,477	964,968	14,729,445
Provisions	(370,000)		(370,000)
	14,251,239	1,173,401	15,424,640

Analysis of Net Assets between Funds 2020	Unrestricted	Restricted	
	Funds	Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	112,686	19,980	132,666
Intangible fixed assets	12,126	-	12,126
Financial Investments	561,086	-	561,086
Net current assets	2,772,077	505,855	3,277,932
Provisions	(370,000)		(370,000)
	3,087,975	525,835	3,613,810

23. Commitments

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

	2021 Land and Buildings £	2021 Other	2020 Land and Buildings £	2020 Other £
Up to one year	320,960	10,689	931,954	11,318
Between one and five years	587,981		662,023	2,985
Later than five years				
	908,941	10,689	1,593,977	14,303

Operating lease costs in the year amounted to £870,549 (2020: £896,425) in respect of land and buildings and £15,362 (2020: £19,508) in respect of other leases.

24. Related Party Transactions

During the year trustees received reimbursement of expenses totalling £312 (2020 - £2,486)

Donations from trustees during the year were:

	2021 £	2020 £
	30	10

Our response to a profound year

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