



For women and children.
Against domestic violence.

Our call for commitment

Domestic abuse is everyone's problem

Annual report and
financial statements

2023-2024

In this report

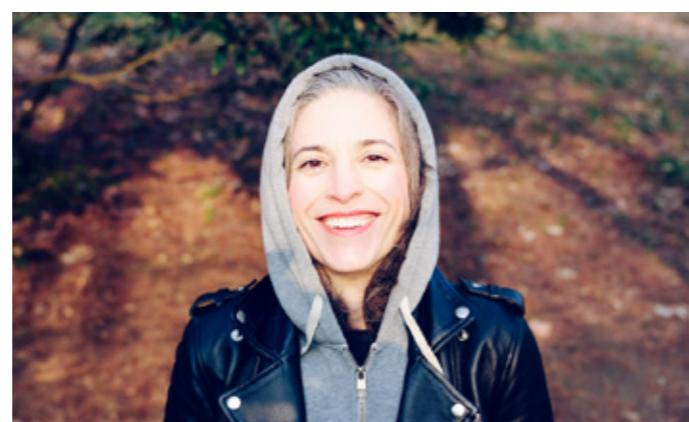
01.	WHY WE'RE HERE	03
	2023/2024 at a glance	05
	Message from our chair and interim chief executive	06
<hr/>		
02.	WHAT WE'VE DELIVERED THIS YEAR	08
	Priority 1: Provision	08
	Priority 2: Quality	10
	Priority 3: Policy	12
	Priority 4: Prevention	14
	Priority 5: Partnership	16
	Our thanks	19
<hr/>		
03.	ADMINISTRATION	20
	Legal, administrative and governance matters	
<hr/>		
04.	AUDITORS' REPORT	26
	Independent auditor's report	26
<hr/>		
05.	FINANCE	30
	Financial statements	30

Looking back

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

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

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



Looking ahead

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

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

Why we're here

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

VISION

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

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

MISSION

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

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

“

Lisa's* story

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

Why we're here

2023/2024 at a glance

Every two minutes someone turns to Refuge for help

**1 in 4 women
will experience
domestic abuse
during their lifetime**

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

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

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

“

Grace's* story

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Why we're here



Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Message from our chair and interim chief executive



Abigail Ampofo, interim chief executive

Just when the challenges feel overwhelming, our people keep going

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What we've delivered

Priority 1

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

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

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

Our National Domestic Abuse Helpline

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

Our safe accommodation

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

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

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

Supporting children and young people

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

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

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

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

Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

Our community-based services

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

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

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

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Laura's* story

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

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

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



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

What we've delivered

Priority 2

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

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

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

Providing safe accommodation that includes more survivors

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

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

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

Providing support that includes more survivors

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

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

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

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

Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

Evolving and sharing our sector-leading tech abuse expertise

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

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

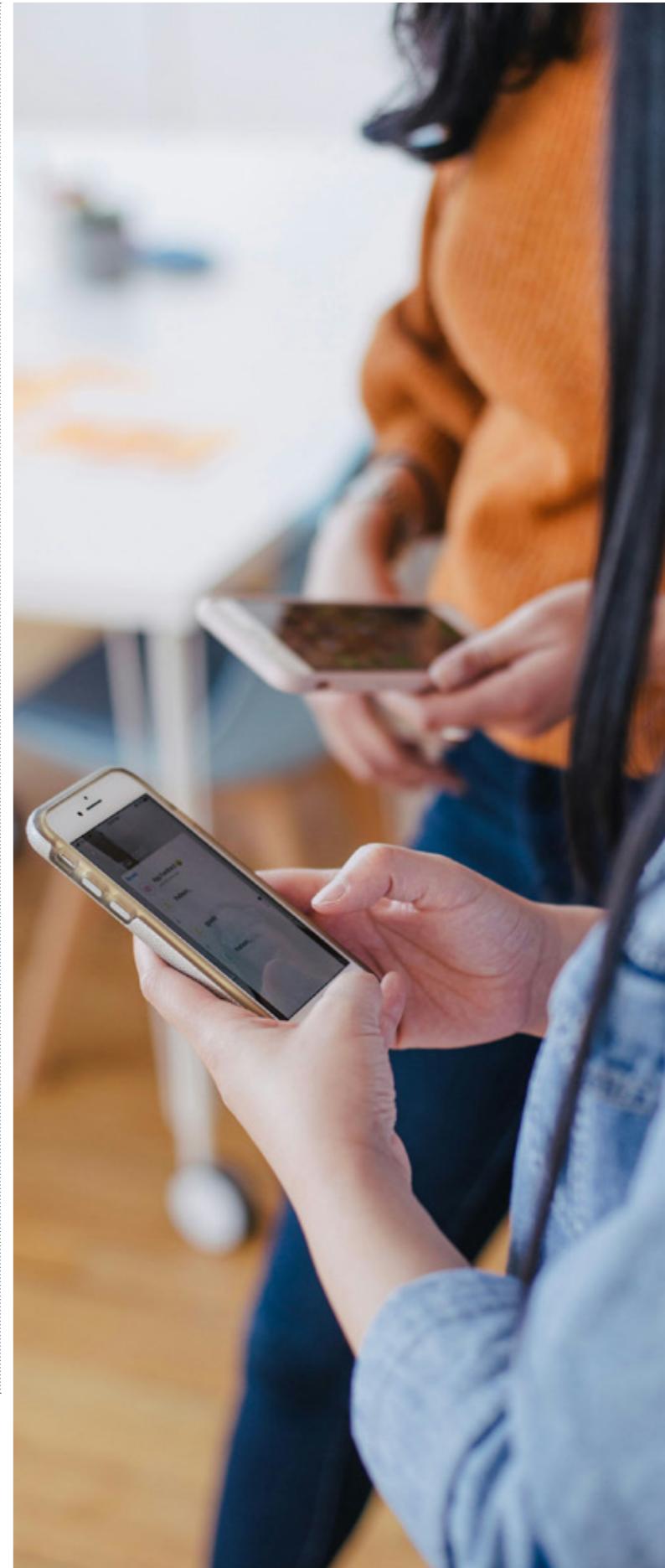
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This project is innovative, it's interesting, it's scalable, there was good reach, and it was value for money.

A judge for The Charity Awards organised by Civil Society Media

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

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



What we've delivered

Priority 3

Drive policy change to ensure sustainability of domestic abuse services

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

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

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

Influencing the Victims and Prisoners Act

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

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

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Louise's* story

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

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

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

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

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

Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

Removing the rot

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

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

Improving women's safety online

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

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

Amplifying survivors' voices

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

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

Penelope*, a survivor of domestic abuse



What we've delivered

Priority 4

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

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

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

Keeping domestic abuse in the news

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

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

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



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



Refuge Annual Report 2023-2024

Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

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

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

Campaigning for change

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

Daily Mail
.com

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

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

Grace*, a survivor who experienced coercive control

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



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

What we've delivered

Priority 5

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

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

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

Raising standards and widening our reach

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

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

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

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

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

Our strategic priorities 2022-2026

Sharing insights and expertise

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

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

Building long-term awareness and support

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

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



Independent Women: The Influence List. The Portrait Project

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



What we've delivered

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

Time, enthusiasm, influence and funding

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

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



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

Alex Scott, Refuge ambassador

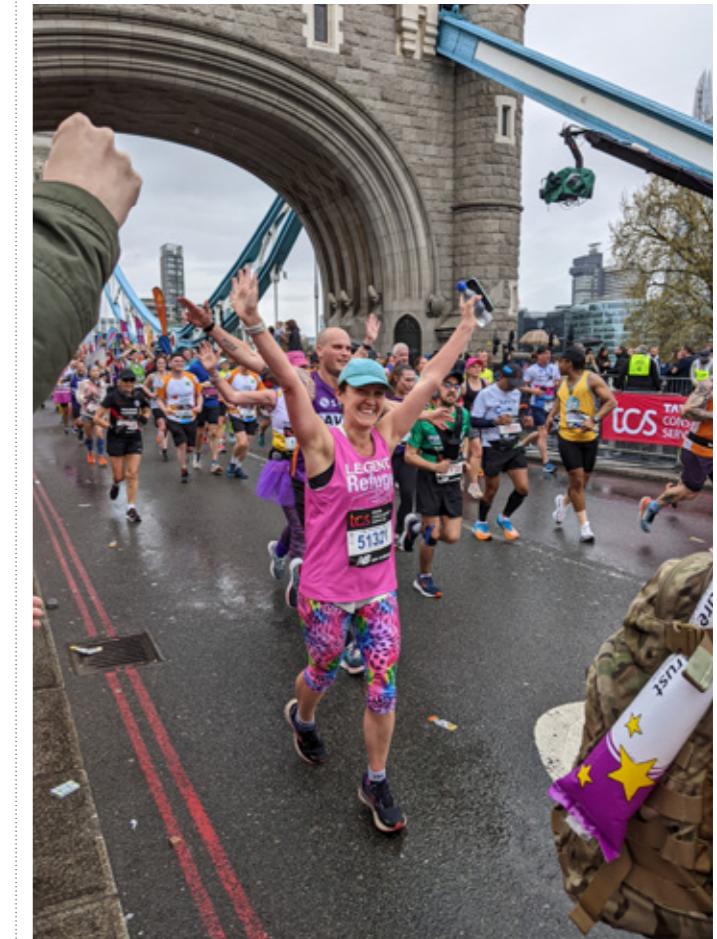
Our thanks

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

Thank you!

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

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



Legal, administrative and governance

Administrative details

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Board of Trustees:

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

Ambassadors:

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

Chief Executive

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

Senior Leadership Team

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

Governing document

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

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

Recruitment and appointment of The Board of Trustees

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

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

The Board of Trustees induction and training

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

Organisation

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

Partnerships

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

Housing associations:

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

Statutory partners:

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

Objectives

The objects of the company are:

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

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

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

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

Public benefit statement

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

Respect, inclusion and belonging

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

Fundraising

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

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

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

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

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

Financial review

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

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

Income

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

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

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

Expenditure

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

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

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

Looking ahead

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

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

Reserves and other funds

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Principal risks

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

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

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

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

Investment powers

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

Statement of the Board of Trustees responsibilities

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

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

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

As far as the Board of Trustees is aware:

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

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

On behalf of the Board of Trustees

Hetti Barkworth-Nanton, chair

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

Independent auditors report to the members of Refuge

Opinion

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

In our opinion the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 25, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

We also:

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

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

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

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

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

Our approach was as follows:

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

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

Use of our report

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

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

9 Appold Street
London
EC2A 2AP



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

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

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

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

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2024

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

Approved by the Board on 26 September 2024

Hetti Barkworth-Nanton

Jon Rowney

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

Company number: 1412276

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

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

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

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

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

Going concern

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

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

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

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

Basis of Consolidation

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

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

Tangible Fixed Assets - Depreciation

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

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

Intangible Fixed Assets - Amortisation

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

Software	4 years straight line
Website	4 years straight line

Income

All income is accounted for when the company has entitlement to the funds, receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Donations and legacies include donations, gifts, legacies and some grants receivable. Gifts in kind and intangible income are treated either as donations in the period the gift or intangible income is received, or as an asset, in both cases at a reasonable estimate of the gross value to the charity.

Contractual income and legacies are recognised as income where there is entitlement, probability of receipt and measurability.

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

Investment income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

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

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

1 Accounting Policies (Continued)

Costs of raising funds

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

Governance costs

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

Provisions

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

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

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

Bad debts

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

Investments

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

Stocks

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



Cash and cash equivalents

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

Financial instruments

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

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

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

Basic financial assets

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

Other financial assets

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

Impairment of financial assets

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

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

Derecognition of financial assets

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

Pension funds

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

Operating lease agreement

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

Research and development

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

Fund account

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

Status

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

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

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the company's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources.

The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.



Critical judgements

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

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

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

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

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

Registered Company Number: 1412276

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

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

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

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

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

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

	2024	2023
	£	£
Social housing income		
Rent receivable net of identifiable service charges	2,266,891	1,487,050
Service charges receivable eligible for Housing Benefit	3,313,456	3,196,387
Service charges receivable ineligible for Housing Benefit	312,901	282,582
Rent losses due to voids	(622,463)	(419,568)
Turnover from social housing lettings	5,270,785	4,546,451
Expenditure on social housing lettings		
Services	1,271,752	1,382,092
Management	2,735,105	2,567,791
Routine maintenance	132,735	245,298
Planned maintenance	97,459	250,126
Bad debts	216,834	171,314
Lease charges	1,186,742	1,248,315
Property depreciation	11,276	1,367
Operating costs on social housing lettings	5,651,903	5,866,303
Operating (deficit)/surplus on social lettings	(381,118)	(1,319,852)
Social housing units		
The number of supported housing units under management at the end of the period:		
Owned and managed	8	8
Not owned but managed	321	291
Total:	329	299

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

4. Donations and legacies

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

The comparative figures have been restated to reflect the correct analysis between categories.

Private donors includes: Fundraising from Events of £734k (2023: £1.2m), Local Fundraising of £518k (2023: £0.4m) and Individual Giving of £2.3m (2023: £3.2m)

5. Contracts for support services

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

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

6 Grants

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

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

Section 37 Statement

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

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

7 Investment income

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

8 Other trading activities

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

9 Costs of raising funds

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

10 Governance costs

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

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



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

11 Total Expenditure (continued)

2024

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

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

2023

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

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

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

12. Staff costs

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

12. Staff costs (cont)

Emoluments to key management personnel

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

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

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

Remuneration Policy

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

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

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



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

13. Tangible Fixed Assets

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

14. Intangible Fixed Assets

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

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

15. Investments

a) Financial investments - Group and Charity

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

All investments are listed on a recognised stock exchange.

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

b) Charity Investment in Trading Subsidiary

	2024	2023
	£	£
Issued share capital	1	1

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

16. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

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

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

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

18. Deferred Income

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

19. Provisions for liabilities and charges

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

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



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

20. Unrestricted Funds

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

General funds

These funds are available for Refuge's general purposes.

Designated funds

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

21. Restricted Funds

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

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

Refuge provision

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

Outreach and Floating Support

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

Integrated services

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

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Used to fund the National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Advocacy

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

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

22. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

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

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

23. Commitments

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

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

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

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

24. Related Party Transactions

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

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

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

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

26. Subsidiary Undertakings

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

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

(a) Investment in Subsidiary

	2024	2023
	£	£
Investment in Subsidiary Undertaking	1	1
Refuge's investment in Refuge Trading Ltd is £1, being the whole of the issued share capital of that company.		
(b) Refuge Trading Ltd	2024	2023
Total Income	125,602	17,327
Cost of Sales	(56,055)	(6,883)
Admin Costs	69,547	10,444
Net Profit gifted to Refuge	(62,738)	(4,504)
Retained Profit for the year	-	-

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

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

020 7395 7700

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

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

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

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

www.refuge.org.uk
www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
www.refugetechsafety.org