

# Herts Area Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre

Annual Report 2019-20



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## **THE GROUP**

Herts Area Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre (HARCSAC) has been operating since 1986 and is located in Hatfield. We are a registered charity (No. 800325), currently undergoing the process of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

HARCSAC is run as a collective by a group of thirteen women volunteers who have undergone specialist training in rape and sexual abuse counselling, with one paid part-time Office Manager and one paid part-time Administrator.

## **AIMS**

To offer free support to any woman aged over 18 living in Hertfordshire who has experienced rape, sexual assault, or any form of sexual abuse at any time in her life.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- To listen to, and believe, the women in distress who call the helpline.
- To support and assist them in reviewing their options by providing free confidential counselling both face to face and over the phone.
- To provide them and their family and friends with information.
- To promote education and research into rape-related issues.
- To give ongoing training to our women counsellors.
- To set up and maintain a co-ordinated group of contacts.
- To receive training on related issues for our ongoing professional development.
- To provide training for any local group wishing to increase their awareness of the needs of rape/sexual abuse survivors.
- To obtain funding for all of the above and to enable us to continue to employ staff.

## OUR SERVICES

- Calls to our telephone helpline are answered by a volunteer counsellor on Thursday evenings between 7.30pm - 9.30pm. At all other times callers leave a message and a volunteer counsellor returns their call as soon as possible.
- Free and confidential face to face counselling is available by appointment at our Centre in Hatfield. If a woman would like counselling but is unable to get to the Centre, we will see her at her home or other suitable venue, if possible.
- We can offer information on rape-related issues to survivors and to their families and friends, including details of other agencies offering complementary services.
- Presentations to any local groups and organisations wishing to increase their awareness of the needs of rape/sexual abuse survivors.

## THE PAST 12 MONTHS

- Due to extended funding from the Ministry of Justice the Centre now has 1 part-time Office Manager/Fundraiser working 10 hours per week and 1 part-time Service Support Co-ordinator working 17 hours per week.
- **250** telephone calls were received on the helpline in the last year.
- A total of **346** hours of face-to-face counselling hours were carried out during the year, plus more than **38** hours of emotional support by telephone.
- **91** emails were received in total - **11** business related emails, **16** from existing clients and **31** were enquiries from new clients. There were a further **33** emails requesting further information on our referral procedure.
- The group continues to receive regular external clinical supervision to facilitate group development and ensure best practice.
- We provide ongoing representation at two domestic violence forums in Hertfordshire. We continue to work in partnership with Herts SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) and the Sexual Abuse Partnership Group (SAPG run by the Herts Constabulary).
- We continue to maintain full membership of Rape Crisis England and Wales (RCEW) and attend bi-monthly meetings.
- We continue to maintain a client-anonymised database collating a variety of statistics.

## HELPLINE CALLS

All incoming telephone calls to the helpline are logged. During this period, HARCSAC received **250** on the helpline.

**Helpline Calls  
2018/2019 & 2019/2020**



Over the 12-month period, calls to the helpline decreased by **11%** from **284** calls during 2018/19 to **250** during 2019/20.

We are always happy to speak to partners or friends of women who are seeking advice on how they can provide support. We will not contact a woman at the request of a third party as we feel strongly that she needs to come to the decision to make the initial contact herself. For any woman to undergo counselling and to talk about her experiences (possibly for the first time) is a very big step and one that takes a great deal of courage. In our experience, it is not helpful to a woman if she is pressurised or pushed into counselling by anyone, however well-meaning they may be.

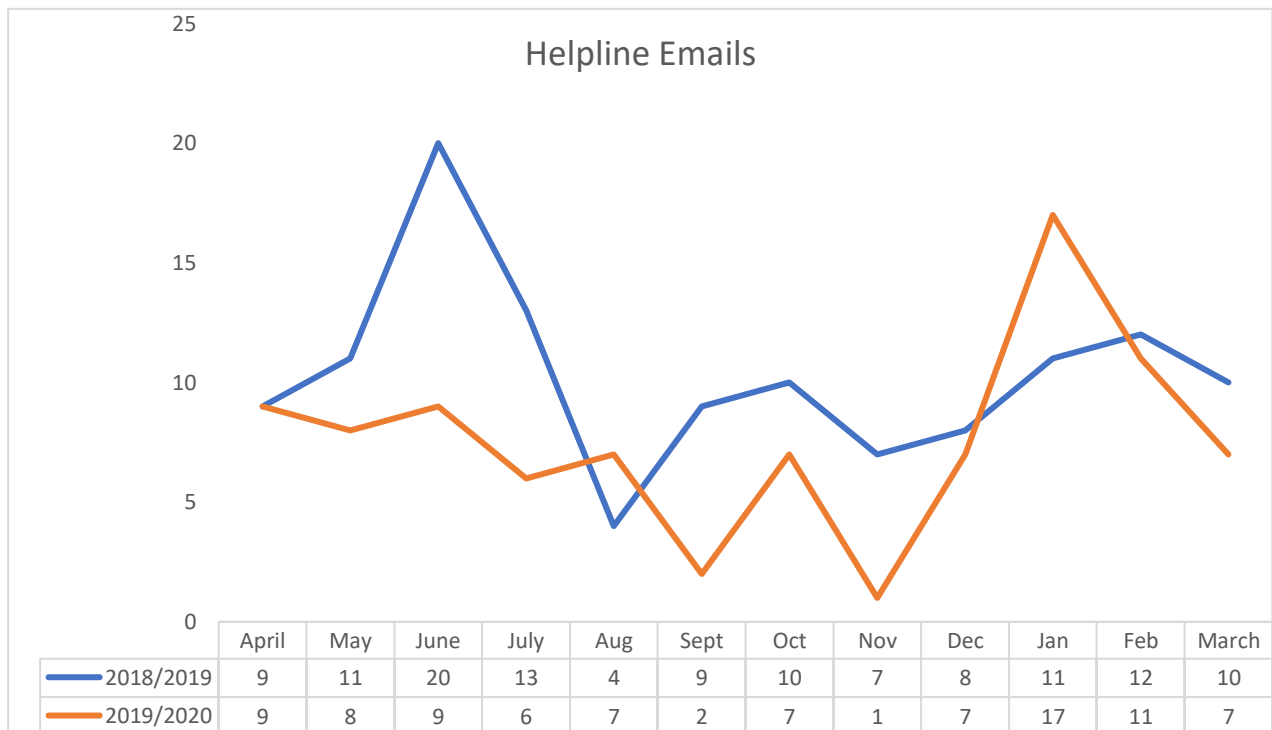
***We do not work with male survivors but we do treat callers sympathetically and will provide them with the telephone numbers of male support organisations.***

## HELPLINE EMAILS

We have seen a steady flow of emails throughout the year with a total of **91** emails seeking information on our services.

From April 2020 we will have a dedicated helpline email for all clients: [helpline@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk](mailto:helpline@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk). Our marketing materials and social media sites will be updated to reflect this new email address.

**Helpline Emails  
2018/2019 & 2019/2020**

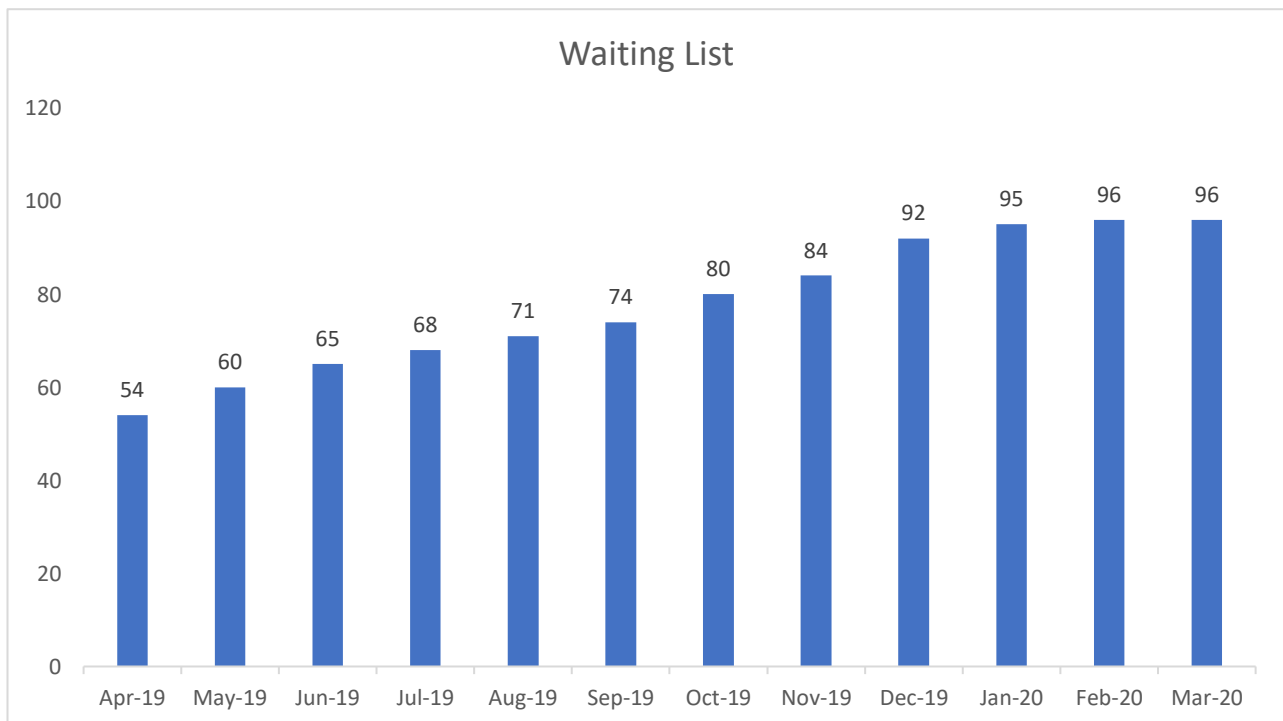


## WAITING LIST

Our current waiting list has grown considerably over the last 12 months, from **54** at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to **96** at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The reasons for the increased demand for our services are:

- Increased awareness of sexual violence towards children and adults. Public consciousness has increased over the last few years as a result of high profile “celebrity” paedophile and rape cases, together with television dramas and documentaries and the highly successful police “cup of tea” and “ask for Megan” campaigns.
- Our active promotion of our services at a local level. We have increased our presence at multiagency meetings and raised our profile throughout the community.

**Waiting List Chart**  
**1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

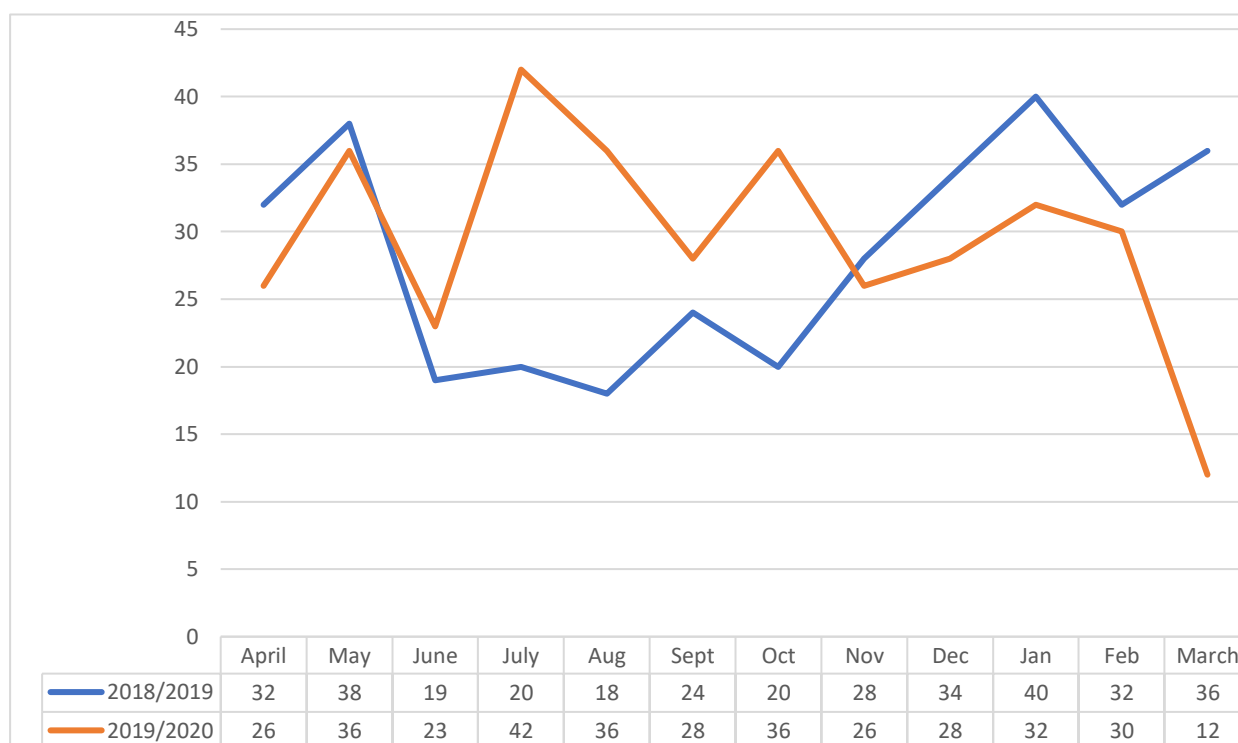


## COUNSELLING

Prior to the first counselling session with a client, we carry out a telephone assessment to ensure that the woman understands how we work and both parties can determine whether the service we offer is appropriate for her. We offer free, client-led, open-ended counselling with regular reviews, helping the client to evaluate her progress. A large majority of the women we see speak of their experiences for the first time. In the event that our service is not the most appropriate we will work with the woman to identify something more suitable for her needs.

During the last 12 months we saw an increase in face-to-face counselling, up from **341** hrs in the previous year to **355** hrs. Telephone counselling remained the same at **38** hours.

**Counselling Hours  
2018/2019 & 2019/2020**



Counselling in March 2020 was interrupted due to COVID-19 and following government guidelines we suspended all our face-to-face counselling, effective from 19th March 2020.



## CLIENT FEEDBACK

- *Response to my initial enquiry was super quick. After a short assessment I was placed on the waiting list.*
- *Before I spent many hours trying to process and find answers for what happened to me and trying to understand how I got there. The sessions gave me the tools to start to navigate out of this and I finally feel like I am understanding that it was not my fault.*
- *This is a great service that came at a pivotal time for me and has certainly helped my healing process immensely.*

## CONFIDENTIALITY

We keep a certain amount of identifiable personal client information which is kept in a secure place and is only kept for the purpose for which it was collected. We will not share personal data with anyone. Full information about the data we store, how we use it, a data subjects rights to see, amend or have it deleted can be found in our GDPR policies.

Apart from the initial assessment process we do not keep notes of what a client tells us either in a face-to-face meeting, video call or on the telephone.

Clients can be provided with copies of our GDPR, Note Keeping and Destruction Policy for further information if required.

The figures presented throughout this report only reflect details that women have chosen to disclose to us. We feel it is important to collect this information as it makes a useful contribution to the understanding of sexual violence within our society.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following people who have helped HARCSAC in the past year:

Peter Holman who kindly does the final parts of the bookkeeping every year. We recognise the time and effort that this takes.

Brenda Alcock who very kindly audits our accounts. We are very grateful for Brenda's continued help and support.

James Tiplady, Centre Manager and his team for opening up our premises at unsociable hours.

Deborah Turton for all her support with the new Data Performance Management System (DPMS). We decided to implement DPMS to standardise our client-anonymous information and to be consistent with our funders' information requirements when completing funding applications and monitoring reports. It is due to go live in July 2020.

## FUTURE PLANS

In addition to offering our usual services to women in Hertfordshire who have experienced rape, sexual assault or sexual abuse, we are also planning to do the following during the forthcoming year:

- Conduct a volunteer counsellor recruitment and training programme in spring/summer 2020.
- Continue our professional development in a structured manner and actively seek out relevant external courses as well as our ongoing in-house training. We will need to increase the extent of our training to accommodate the new volunteers.
- Continue our commitment to inter-agency liaison and partnership working e.g., partnerships with Herts SARC, SAPG and POHWER (an advocacy service for the residents of Hertfordshire).
- Implementation of DPMS database.
- Website – we have started the process of updating and revising our website. This will continue into the next financial year.
- Intranet – internal storage of policies and procedures.

## FUNDING

A copy of our audited accounts is included in this report which show that our total income for 2019/20 was 40% lower than in 2018/19. There were two main reasons for this. Firstly, the Ministry of Justice reduced its funding for 2019/20 as they had provided extra resources for 2018/19 to cover the closure of the Stevenage Women's Centre. Secondly, we had completed an agreed digital project which used up the RCEW grant for this purpose. Ministry of Justice provided 60% of our funding.

In 2019/20 although we had no direct contributions from local authorities, we did receive £1,240 from individual councillors' Locality Budget Grants. Others who provided grants were POHWER, Tesco Bags of Help, Burton Charity Trust and Stevenage Community Trust. Together they accounted for 12% of the funding we received. We had an increase in donations this year and together with HARCSAC's fundraising this accounted for 24% of our funding.

As an organisation we would like to thank those individuals who generously provided us with donations which amounted to £3,358.

Details of our income for 2019/20 are in the following table.

## INCOME 2019-2020

<b>Grants</b>	Ministry of Justice	£27,438.00
	Burton Charitable Trust	£2,500.00
	Tesco Bags of Help	£725.00
	Stevenage Community Trust	£400.00
	POhWER	£1,875.00
<b>Locality Budget Scheme</b>	Cllr Hale	£250.00
	Cllr Wyatt-Lowe	£720.00
	Cllr Bennett Lovell	£270.00
	Broxbourne Lottery	£206.00
	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>£34,384.00</b>
<b>Donations</b>	Funding from the Co-op	£35.00
	D Wilkins	£335.00
	Just Giving	£755.00
	Andy Peck	£312.00
	Asda Charity	£500.00
	St Andrews Church	£90.00
	Ladies Spa Day	£526.00
	Other donations	£805.00
	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>£3,358.00</b>
<b>Fundraising by HARCSAC</b>	Gala Dinner	£7,303.00
	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>£7,303.00</b>
<b>Bank interest</b>		£29.00
	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>£29.00</b>
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>£45,074.00</b>

## EXPENDITURE AND BUDGET

EXPENDITURE TYPE	BUDGET 2019/20	EXPENDITURE 2019/20	BUDGET 2020/21
Advertising	£2,500.00	£2,125.00	£5,850.00
Insurance	£1,250.00	£1,075.00	£1,300.00
General Expenses	£300.00	£111.00	£0.00
Stationery/Postage/Printing	£1,150.00	£458.00	£600.00
Rent	£6,000.00	£5,000.00	£6,500.00
Fund Raising Events	£280.00	£4,480.00	£0.00
Salaries	£21,977.00	£18,806.00	£22,424.00
Telephone	£1,300.00	£1,693.00	£1,400.00
Counsellors' Expenses	£6,170.00	£3,807.00	£5,800.00
Training and supervision	£6,300.00	£2,252.00	£4,250.00
Furniture & Equipment	£1,050.00	£581.00	£1,720.00
Computer Equipment and activity	£12,800.00	£11,482.00	£4,100.00
Transfer to reserves	£0.00	£400.00	£0.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£61,077.00</b>	<b>£52,537.00</b>	<b>£54,544.00</b>

The expenditure in 2019/20 was £8,540 less than the planned budget. This was mainly a result of two of our counsellors stepping down and the resignation of our support worker. As a result, we ended up seeing fewer clients and we were without our second member of staff for two months until we were successfully able to recruit another support worker.

At the end of 2019/20 our cash in hand balance was £26,799. We had started the year at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 with cash in hand balance of £34,263 so this balance has reduced and we still have not spent all of the £16,000 from RCEW for the digital transformation project which is due to complete in 2019/20.

As well as a cash in hand balance we do have a reserve account which provides us with the ability to continue to support women should our funding sources totally dry up.

### Budget for 2020/21

We have marginally increased the budget for 2020/21 as we are running a recruitment and training course which will require extra resources. And then there was the start of the COVID-19 pandemic which will completely change the way we operate. The budget we set for 2020/21 will have to be thoroughly reviewed as the COVID circumstances will require us to modify the way we operate and undoubtedly learn new skills. We envisage that the 2020/21 report will present the original budget and the new one developed under COVID.



## ATTACHMENTS Audited Accounts – Page 2

### HERTS AREA RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE

#### RESERVE ACCOUNT

#### 12 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH 2020

Deposit	1999	7,000.00	Balance as at 31st March 2020	42,658.47
Deposit	2003	2,000.00		
Deposit	2011	9,000.00		
Deposit	2018	15,000.00		
Deposit	2019	7,000.00		
Deposit	2019/20	400.00		
Interest	1999/2020	2,258.47		
		<u>42,658.47</u>		
		<u>42,658.47</u>		<u>42,658.47</u>

I have examined the financial statement in accordance with approved accounting standards and in my opinion this financial statement gives a true and fair view of the charity's affairs at 31st March 2020 and of its surplus for the year then ended.

*B. Alcock FCA*  
B. Alcock F.C.A.

7th May 2020

# Ways you can help...

There are many ways in which individuals and companies can support us. Here are some ways to get involved.

## Fundraise

- Choose Herts Area Rape Crisis as your Company's Charity of the Year
- Arrange a fundraising event or activity
- Take on a challenge

## Volunteer

- Help at one of our events

## Donate

- Make a contribution on-line, by text or phone
- Provide prizes for us to auction or raffle

## Legacy Giving

- Leave a gift in your will

### Contact details

P.O. Box 256, Hatfield. Hertfordshire. AL10 0NE  
Registered Charity: 800325  
[www.hertsrapecrisis.org.uk](http://www.hertsrapecrisis.org.uk)

**Telephone Admin:** 01707 276539 / **Email:** [admin@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk](mailto:admin@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk)

**Telephone Helpline:** 01707 276512 / **Email:** [helpline@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk](mailto:helpline@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk)

Find us on **Facebook:** crisis87 / **Twitter:** @hertsrapecrisi5