



Annual Report 2020/21

Herts Area Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre



CONTENTS

THE GROUP	3
COVID-19	3
AIMS.....	3
OBJECTIVES	3
OUR PHILOSOPHY	4
OUR SERVICES	4
THE PAST 12 MONTHS.....	6
HELPLINE CALLS	7
HELPLINE EMAILS	8
WAITING LIST	8
COUNSELLING.....	9
CLIENT FEEDBACK.....	9
CONFIDENTIALITY.....	10
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	10
FUTURE PLANS	11
FUNDING	12
INCOME 2020/21.....	12
EXPENDITURE AND BUDGET.....	13
BUDGET FOR 2021/22	14
ATTACHMENTS AUDITED ACCOUNTS – PAGE 1.....	14
ATTACHMENTS AUDITED ACCOUNTS – PAGE 2.....	15



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.

COVID-19

On 23 March 2020, the government announced more stringent measures on travel and social distancing. As a result, we faced an unexpected re-purposing of our centre which necessitated a sudden evacuation of all our essential operating records, and we were forced to suspend our face-to-face service.

HARCSAC is proud to have responded very quickly to the need to support survivors on-line. This was done via a secure service developed by Rape Crisis England and Wales (RCEW) and was offered on the same basis as face-to-face counselling.

Through the use of new technology, we were also able to ensure that our helpline remained open.

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 or support through the appropriate medium.
- 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 PHILOSOPHY

HARCSAC is committed to a client led approach to service delivery and understands that the women who use our services are best placed to identify their own recovery needs. We offer non-judgemental, non-directive information, counselling, and support in order to assist each woman's individual recovery process. All women are supported in their choices with regard to their human rights including sexual health, reproductive rights and the right to safe abortion.

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, often 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.

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. This service continues to operate 365 days per year.
- Free and confidential face to face counselling is available by appointment at our Centre in Hatfield (prior to COVID-19)
- Free and confidential face to face counselling delivered via a secure online platform
- We can offer information on rape and sexual abuse 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.

Here at HARCSAC we are very proud that:

- We are rated very highly by the women that access our services
- Our services are free at the point of delivery
- We offer a client focused approach empowering women to address their own individual needs

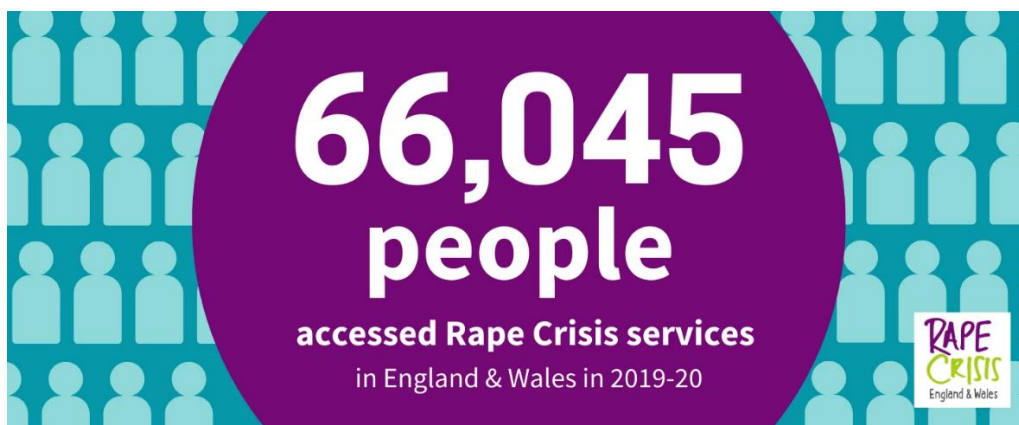
It is only possible to deliver our services in the flexible way that we do because of the commitment and dedication of our volunteer counsellors and staff.

Particularly over the period of the Covid lockdown everyone has worked tirelessly and given freely of their time and energies to ensure our service users were supported in the best possible way for them.

ENGLAND AND WALES – RAPE CRISIS STATISTICS

We continued to work in line with the Rape Crisis National Service Standards, which represent recognised standards of best practice and quality across the Rape Crisis network and have been mapped against other quality assurance frameworks.

Last year, Rape Crisis specialist services in England and Wales were accessed by 66,045 people.



In 2019-20, Rape Crisis Centres provided 775,447 sessions of specialist support. This included advocacy, emotional support, and counselling. This was an increase of 6% from 2018-19.



Rape Crisis Centres across the Rape Crisis England & Wales network handled 194,881 online and telephone helpline contacts. This was a 5% increase compared to 2018-19.



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.
- Our helpline dealt with **389** telephone/emails.
- A total of **350** hours of face-to-face counselling hours were carried out via video during the year.
- **138** emails were received requesting information on our referral process, requesting crisis support from counsellors and some business-related enquiries.
- At very short notice we were forced to vacate our premises due to its temporary re-purposing as a homeless shelter during lock-down. We evacuated, taking with us all that we needed for GDPR and operational reasons and established the policies and procedures necessary for successful homeworking via a video platform.
- As a result of the C-19 lock-down we quickly developed an online counselling service.

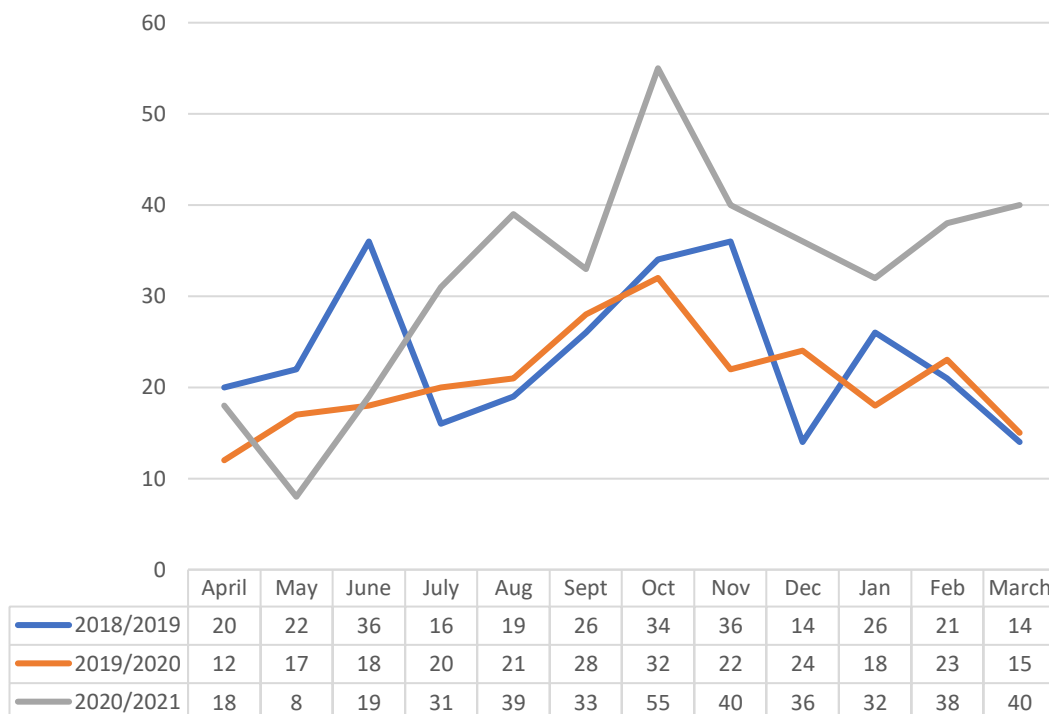
Some existing clients and many new clients opted to access the online support. Some women were reluctant to continue their work via the online platform, some were unable to due to technical or personal safety reasons. These women are held as priority cases for when the pandemic restrictions are lifted.

- We redeveloped our face-to-face training course to enable it to be delivered online and successfully recruited and trained **6** new volunteer counsellors.
- Our regular external clinical supervision was transferred online to enable us to continue to facilitate individual and group development and ensure best practice.
- We continue to work in partnership with Herts SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) and the Sexual Harm Group (SHPG run by the Herts Constabulary).
- We continue to play an active role within the Rape Crisis community by maintaining full membership of Rape Crisis England and Wales (RCEW) and attending bi-monthly online regional meetings. Several volunteers attended online seminars and workshops at the RCEW Annual conference.
- We implemented a new Data Performance Management System (DPMS). This allows us to access and report on our activities to better meet our funders' information requirements and our own management information needs.

HELPLINE CALLS

All incoming telephone calls to the helpline are logged. During this period, HARCSAC received **389** on the helpline.

Helpline Calls



Over the 12-month period, calls to the helpline increased by **55%** from **250** calls during 2019/20 to **389** during 2020/21. It is felt that this dramatic increase is in large part due to additional stresses placed on survivors during the lock-down period.

We support partners, friends and family of survivors who are seeking information.

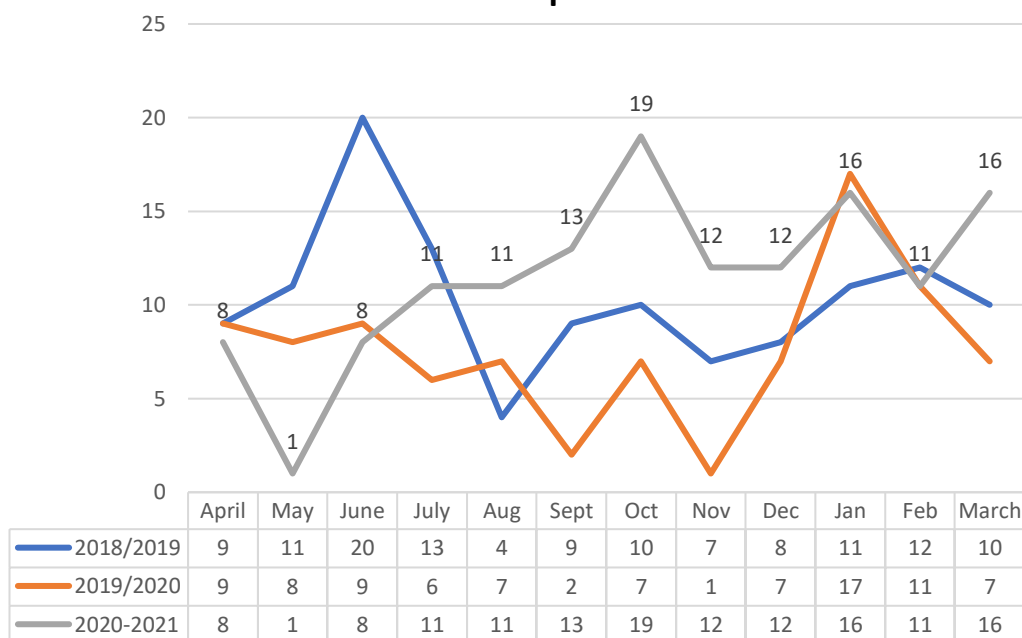
We do not work with male survivors but treat callers sympathetically and can signpost them to male support organisations.

HELPLINE EMAILS

A total of **138** emails seeking information on our services were received within the reporting period. This represents an increase of **55%** over the previous period.

April 2020 we created a dedicated helpline email: helpline@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk. Our marketing materials and social media sites have been updated to reflect this new email address.

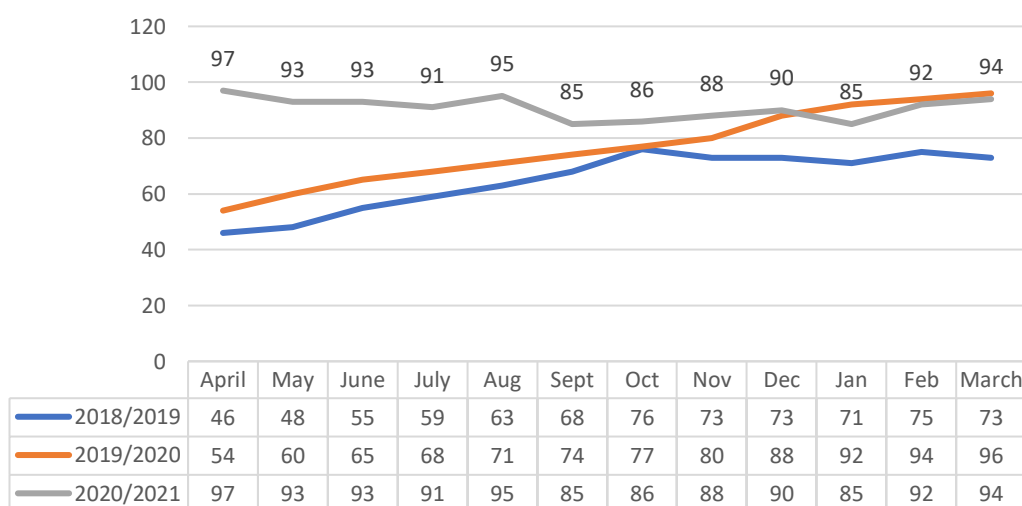
Helpline Emails



WAITING LIST

Our waiting list has remained steady over the last 12 months, from **97** at 1st April 2020 to **94** at 31st March 2021. **36** women were offered counselling support during this period.

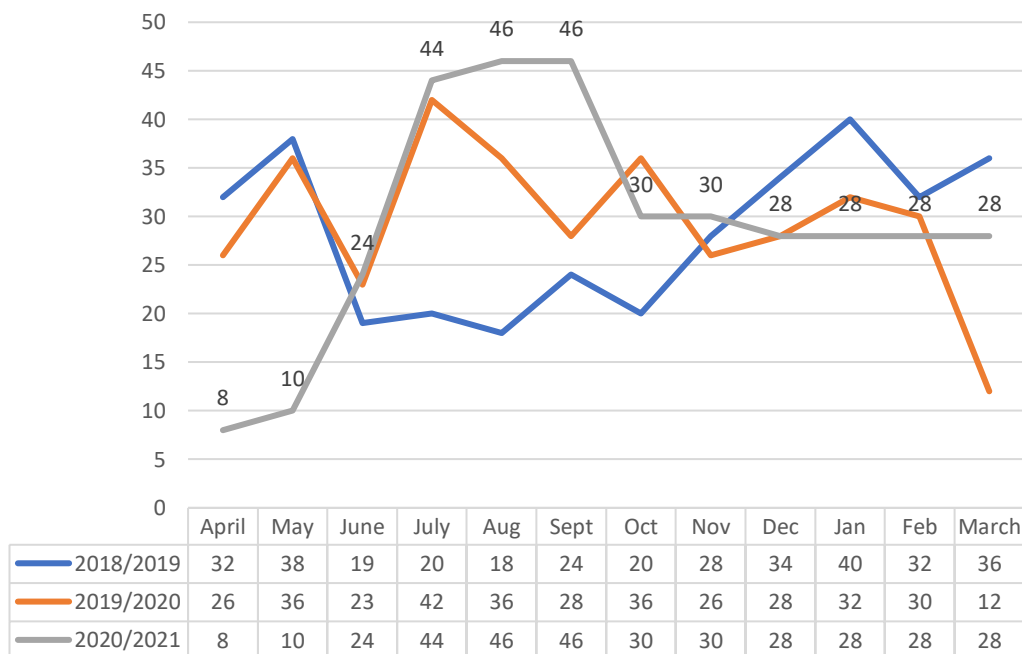
Waiting List



COUNSELLING

Face to face counselling was suspended in March 2020 due to COVID-19 and within a short time we were able to replace it with our online service. This method of delivery now forms an additional service that sits alongside face-to-face counselling and telephone support.

Counselling Hours



CLIENT FEEDBACK

- Q. *What is your overall feeling about the counselling/support you received from HARCSAC?*
- A. *I thought it was amazing, so patient, supportive and encouraging me positively on my journey that I have never had before! It's great that you can take your time on sessions and there is no rush. I felt this allowed me to open up when I felt ready and then progress with accepting my trauma and moving forward with my life. I'm ever so thankful to both counsellors. Anon.*

Other Comments received

I think the hour sessions 2 weekly are just right as it's not too long between sessions and not too close together which allows time for reflection. But it's good if you feel you need to be seen sooner or later having that flexibility really helps. Having access to the helpline when needed is great too. Always knowing there is someone from the team to talk to is comforting. Anon.

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 session 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 our premises at unsociable hours.
- Deborah Turton for all her support with the implementation of DPMS.

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 2021.
- 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, SHPG and POhWER (an advocacy service for the residents of Hertfordshire).
- Continue development 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. They show our total income for 2020/201 was significantly higher (64%) than 2019/20. This was primarily due to The Ministry of Justice significantly increasing their support for Rape Crisis Centres to help them continue to work during the COVID Pandemic. The Ministry's Funding amounted to 62% of our funding for this year. We were also grateful to three Charitable Trusts for offering additional support. They were Truemark Charitable Trust, The Brook Trust, and Mrs Smith and Mount Trust. We also received money from Herts Community Foundation (HCF) from the emergency COVID fund grant.

We also had a number of other donations, regular monthly donations from D Wilkins and the Soroptimists and Cameron Henderson-Begg contributing £1,000 each. We were also one of a local Waitrose's charity for a week. Patsy Daeche ran a charity raffle for HARCSAC with Louise Murphy contributing funds from her fashion show. These, together with several others, donated over £4,000 and we are very grateful for their generosity.

HARCSAC is indebted to any organisation that provides us with funds as without these resources we could not continue supporting the women. This year the money was particularly important as we had to rapidly adjust the service, we provided so that women could still be supported.

Details of our income for 2020/201 are in the following table.

INCOME 2020/21

Grants	Ministry of Justice	£46,235.00
	Truemark Charitable Trust	£3,000.00
	The Brook Trust Grant	£10,000.00
	Mrs Smith and Mount Trust	£3,000.00
	POhWer	£3,125.00
	Herts Community Foundation (HCF)	£4,034.00
	Broxbourne Lottery	£242.50
	Sub total	£69,636.50
Local Authorities	Herts County Council LBS	£300.00
	Sub total	£300.00
Donations	Waitrose Charity, Welwyn Garden City	£333.00
	D Wilkins	£330.00
	Soroptimists	£1,000.00
	Patsy Daeche Raffle for HARCSAC	£530.00
	Louise Murphy Fashion Show	£320.00
	Cameron Henderson-Begg	£1,000.00
	Other donations	£905.25
	Sub total	£4,418.25
Bank interest		£1.81
	GRAND TOTAL	£74,356.56

EXPENDITURE AND BUDGET

EXPENDITURE TYPE	BUDGET 2020/21	EXPENDITURE 2020/21	BUDGET 2021/22
Advertising	£5,850.00	£1,325.68	£2,800.00
Covid expenses	£0.00	£316.25	£0.00
Professional services	£0.00	£1,750.00	£0.00
Insurance	£1,300.00	£1,136.52	£1,200.00
General Expenses	£0.00	£147.90	£150.00
Stationery/Postage/Printing	£600.00	£1,060.28	£1,360.00
Rent	£6,500.00	£2,598.57	£7,900.00
Fund Raising Events	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Staff Salaries	£22,424.00	£24,644.99	£25,200.00
Telephone	£1,400.00	£2,249.03	£2,260.00
Counsellors' Expenses	£5,800.00	£1,121.45	£3,737.00
Training and supervision	£4,250.00	£20,040.14	£6,300.00
Furniture & Equipment	£1,720.00	£294.51	£300.00
Computer Equipment and activity	£4,100.00	£7,617.00	£9,500.00
Transfer to reserves	£0.00	£12,500.00	£0.00
TOTAL	£54,544.00	£76,801.30	£60,707.00

The expenditure in 2020/21 was over £22,000 more than the planned budget. This was unsurprising given the COVID Pandemic as the way we provided our services had to rapidly change. Fortunately, we had sufficient income during the year to meet this higher level of expenditure.

The main areas of increase were because we had earlier decided to change our charitable status from an unincorporated organisation to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This required some professional support. It was always part of our plans that we would increase our capacity and run a recruitment programme. However, we needed to change the programme which required a lot of support to be able to run the course online. In addition, we had to ensure that all Volunteers and Trustees were able to operate satisfactorily online, hence the higher level of computer expenditure. But on the plus side there was a much smaller amount of spend on volunteer's expenses as they were unable to travel.

At the end of 2020/21 our cash in hand balance was £24,354.94. We had started the year at 1st April 2019 with cash in hand balance of £26,800.00 so this balance has reduced.

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. This has now increased to match our annual spend. It will always be the first port of call, should our income begin to diminish, so we can maintain the service for the women who need it.

Ways you can help...

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

Telephone Admin: 01707 276539 / **Email:** admin@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk

Telephone Helpline: 01707 276512 / **Email:** helpline@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk

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