



Annual Report 2021/22

Herts Area Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre





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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.1194253) and recently completed the process of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), with effect from **27th April 2021**.

HARCSAC is run and delivered by a group of fifteen women volunteers who have undergone specialist training in rape and sexual abuse counselling, with one paid part-time Office Manager and one 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 who contact us.
- 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 sexual violence.
- To give ongoing training to our women counsellors.
- To set up and maintain a co-ordinated group of contacts to work in partnership with other organisations.
- 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 helpline are answered by a volunteer counsellor on Thursday evenings between 7.30pm - 9.30pm. At all other times callers can leave a message and a volunteer counsellor will return the call as soon as possible. This service operates 365 days per year.
- Free and confidential face to face counselling is available by appointment at our Centre in Hatfield.
- Free and confidential face to face counselling can also be 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 local groups and organisations wishing to increase their awareness of the needs of rape/sexual abuse survivors.
- Although we cannot provide counselling via email or text, we use these to share information about our service and sometimes signpost to other services.

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.

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.

Statistics about sexual violence and abuse

With so many myths surrounding rape, sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence and abuse, it can sometimes be hard to know what to believe. Here are some key statistics from trusted sources showing the scale of the problem in England and Wales.

- 1 in 4 women have been raped or sexually assaulted as an adult. 1 in 20 men have been raped or sexually assaulted as an adult. Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)
- The highest ever number of rapes was recorded by police in the year ending March 2022: 70,330. Source: Office for National Statistics (2022)
- In that same time period, charges were brought in just 2,223 rape cases. Source: Crown Prosecution Service (2022)
- Only 1 in 100 rapes recorded by police in 2021 resulted in a charge that same year. Source: Home Office (2022)
- 1 in 2 rapes against women are carried out by their partner or ex-partner. 5 in 6 rapes against women are carried out by someone they know. Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)
- 98% of adults prosecuted for sexual offences are men. Source: Office for National Statistics (2018)
- It is estimated that 5 in 6 women who are raped don't report – and the same is true for 4 in 5 men. Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)
- 5 million women in England and Wales have been raped or sexually assaulted since the age of 16. Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)
- 1 in 2 adult survivors of rape have experienced it more than once. Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)
- 1 in 3 adult survivors of rape experience it in their own home. Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)
- An estimated 7.5% of adults aged 18 to 74 years experienced sexual abuse before the age of 16 years (3.1 million people); this includes both adult and child perpetrators. Source: Office for National Statistics (2020)

You can find more statistics about rape and other forms of sexual violence and abuse at:

- **End Violence Against Women:** endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- **Crown Prosecution Service:** cps.gov.uk
- **Office for National Statistics:** ons.gov.uk

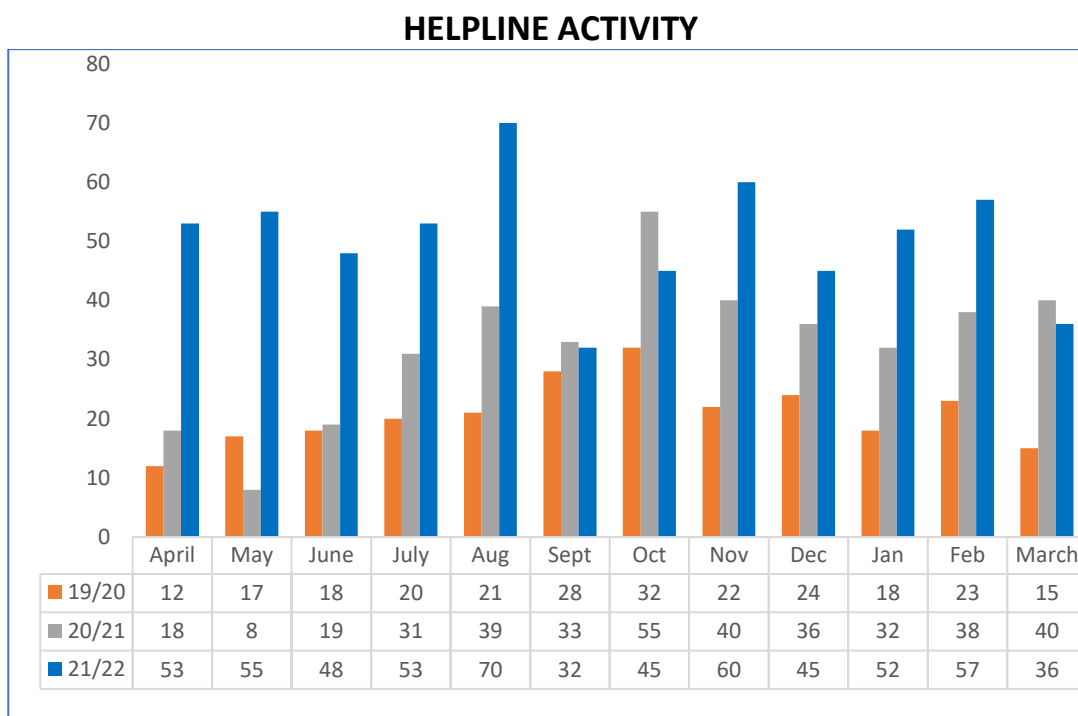
THE PAST 12 MONTHS

- Thanks to extended funding from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) our Centre can employ 1 part-time Office Manager/Fundraiser working 12 hours per week and 1 part-time Service Support Co-ordinator working 20 hours per week.
- Our helpline dealt with **606** contacts either by telephone or email.
- A total of **448** hours of face-to-face counselling were carried out at the centre and/or via video.
- We increased our delivery of services by **28%** resulting in a reduction in the waiting time to access the service.
- We redeveloped our face-to-face training course to enable it to be delivered online and successfully recruited and trained **8** new volunteer counsellors.
- In addition to working with clients our volunteers donated **295** working days, throughout the reporting period, to ensure the smooth running of the organisation - covering general admin, training, special projects, compliance and providing education.
- 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 county-wide Sexual Harm Partnership Group.
- 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 and managers/director's liaison meetings. Several volunteers attended online seminars and workshops at the RCEW Annual conference.
- Our new Data Performance Management System (DPMS) allows us to access and report on our activities to better meet our funders' information requirements and our own management information needs.
- In late November 2021 we commissioned a study, led by Ivana La Valle, Research Consultant and Visiting Scholar at the University of East London to evaluate the effectiveness of our client feedback process. This will help us understand the clients' experience of the service, what difference it makes to their life and how we might develop the service, demonstrate the value of HARCSAC's work and continue to secure funding.

HELPLINE ACTIVITY

During the period of this report, HARCSAC received **606** calls and emails to the helpline.

Calls and emails to the helpline have increased by almost **64%** from **389** calls 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.



95% of messages left on the helpline are returned on the same day.

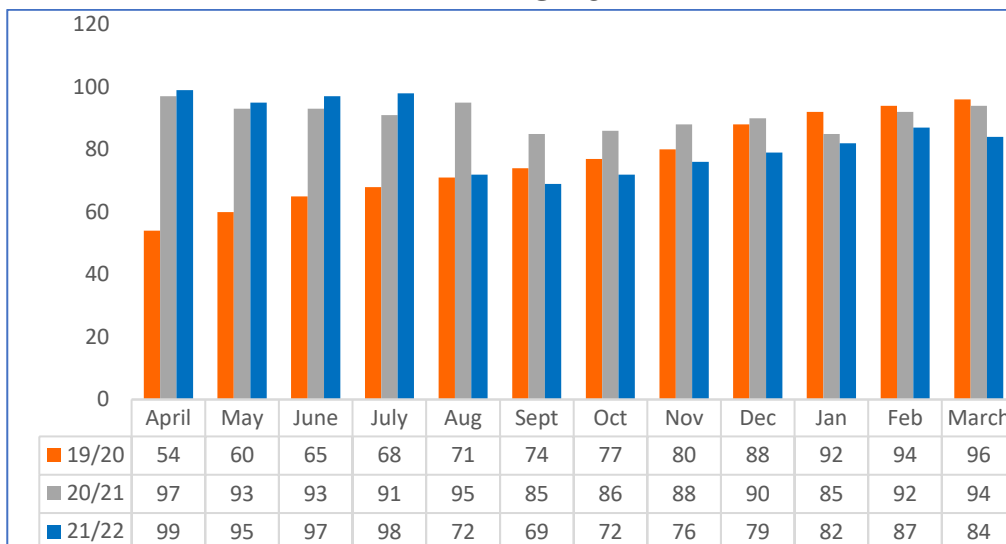
We support partners, friends and family of survivors who are seeking information.

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

WAITING LIST

From holding an average of **91** women at any one time on our waiting list in 2020/21 this fell to **84** in 21/22 largely due to a **28%** increase in the number of counselling hours we were able to deliver.

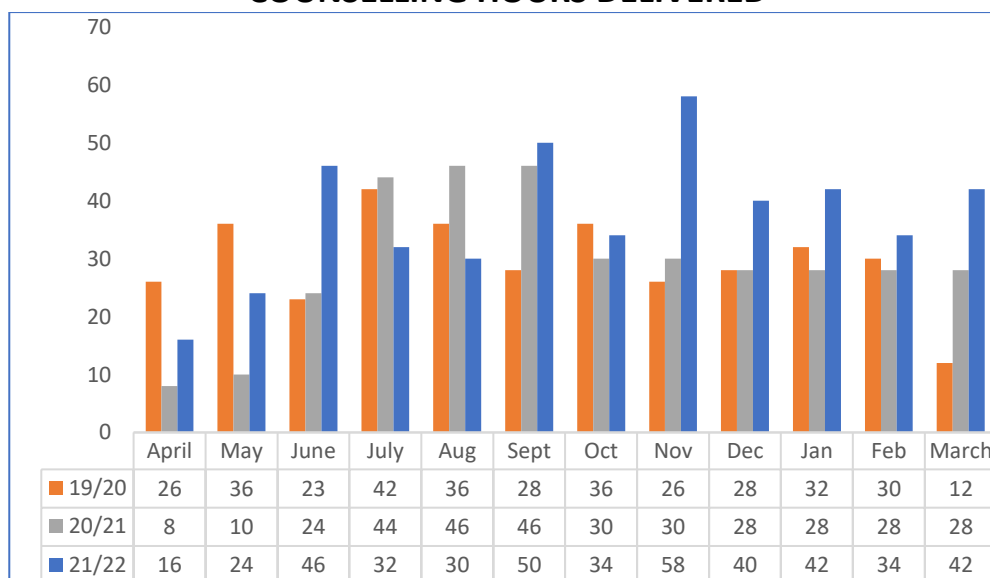
WAITING LIST



COUNSELLING

Prior to accepting a woman onto our waiting list, we carry out an initial risk assessment so that we can jointly determine whether the service we offer is likely to be appropriate for her. We offer client-led counselling with regular reviews, to ensure that the service remains relevant and appropriate to the client's needs. Many of the women who contact us are speaking of their experiences for the first time.

COUNSELLING HOURS DELIVERED



ABOUT THE COUNSELLING SESSIONS

Clients meet with 2 specialist trained female volunteer counsellors on a fortnightly basis at a regular time. In our experience this is the optimum timescale to allow the client to process the session. Each session lasts up to one hour.

HOW LONG WE PROVIDE THE SERVICE FOR

We will aim to work with the client initially for 20 sessions. During this time, we will regularly review how they are getting on to ensure that our service remains both relevant and appropriate. We will always try to be flexible in extending the service if the woman's needs are more complex.

CLIENT FEEDBACK

Q. How well did we respond to your initial enquiry?

A. The person I spoke to was compassionate and happy to talk to me for up to 40 mins.

Q. What is your overall feeling about the counselling/support you received from HARCSAC?

A. I am grateful for the opportunity to work on my previous experiences and now feel positive about my future - **Anon**

Q. What did you find most helpful in the counselling sessions?

A. My counsellors were brilliant. They were so calm and understanding and made me feel empowered to get through my trauma - **Anon**

Other comments

Both my counsellors were warm, welcoming, encouraging, and positive. I felt heard and very safe in their presence. After every session I left nourished and very positive. Thank you so much – **Anon**

Having the telephone helpline to access when needed is a great help – always knowing someone is there to talk to you is very comforting – **Anon**

SUGGESTIONS AND FEEDBACK

We are always looking for ways to improve and develop our service. When a client finishes hour counselling, we ask her to complete a feedback form which is used to inform our service for the future. This can be done anonymously if preferred. Suggestions and feedback are also welcomed and encouraged during the counselling relationship.

ACCESS TO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

It is our policy to provide open, honest and transparent services. Full access to our Policies, Procedures are available upon request and our Annual Reports including audited accounts are available on our website at www.hertsrapecrisis.org.uk.

COMPLAINTS

We hope that our clients will not have reason to do so but should they wish to make a complaint about any aspect of our service, they may initially address this with the person concerned. If, however, this is not a suitable course of action for them, they should make a complaint in writing to: **The Chair of Trustees, PO Box 256, Hatfield, Herts AL10 ONE** or by e-mail to admin@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk.

A copy of our complaints procedure and form are also available upon request.

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.
- **Caroline Vaux**, IT Development & Support Officer, Rape Crisis England & Wales for all her support with DPMS installation, set up and training.
- **Ivana La Valle**, Research Consultant for her help and recommendations. Our new evaluation approach is being rolled out in September 2022.
- Volunteer Counsellors, Trustees and Members of HARCSAC for their continued support.

FUTURE PLANS

In addition to offering our usual services to women in Hertfordshire who have experienced any form of sexual violence we are also planning to do the following during the forthcoming year:

- Continue our professional development in a structured manner and actively seek out relevant external courses.
- Develop the reach of our ongoing in-house new volunteer training so that we can increase our number of 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).
- Roll out and test our new evaluation approach.
- DPMS Database - Continue training on and development of the database and our reporting capabilities.
- Website – complete the review and update of our website. This will continue into the next financial year.
- To complete and action our revised 5-Year Strategic Plan.
- To continue our ongoing review and updating of our policies and procedures.
- Intranet – this is regularly updated with revised and new policies and procedures plus internal working documents.
- Comply with all requests for reporting, for example every 6 months for MoJ; Annually for Charity Commission; new requests from anyone who donates money and wants to see how it is used.

FUNDING

The finances for 2021/22 are slightly complicated by the change to HARCSAC's charitable status. This required us to close our accounts for the old charity, moving from an Unincorporated Organisation to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This effectively took place on 1 May 2021. For accounting purposes, we have two sets of accounts for the current year, and this is made clear in the audited accounts attached. However, we have combined them together for the whole of 2021/22 for comparative purposes.

All the assets and finances for the Unincorporated Organisation have been transferred to The Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and this has been approved by the Charity Commission.

Our primary source of funding comes from the Ministry of Justice, who for this year, gave us **£50,558.00**. Other significant income came from POhWER and Herts Community Foundation. We also had donations from a number of sources. D Wilkins continues to support us on a monthly basis, Cameron Henderson Begg contributed **£5,000**, Patsy Daeche ran a charity raffle for HARCSAC, and Louise Murphy contributed from her fashion show. In total we had nearly **£8,000.00** from these and other donations.

HARCSAC is indebted to all organisations and individuals that provide us with funds as without these resources we could not continue supporting women.

Details of our income for 2021/2022 are in the following table.

INCOME 2021/22

Grants	Ministry of Justice	£50,558.00
	POhWER	£1,875.00
	Herts Community Foundation (HCF)	£2,000.00
	Broxbourne Lottery	£214.00
	Sub total	£54,647.00
Donations	D Wilkins	£430.00
	Wheathampstead Warriors	£180.00
	Patsy Daeche - Raffle for HARCSAC	£500.00
	Louise Murphy - Fashion Show	£510.00
	Cameron Henderson-Begg	£5,000.00
	Other donations	£1,093.00
	Sub total	£7,713.00
Bank interest		£6.20
	GRAND TOTAL	£62,366.20

EXPENDITURE AND BUDGET

EXPENDITURE TYPE	BUDGET 2021/22	EXPENDITURE 2021/22	BUDGET 2022/23
Advertising	£2,800.00	£3,744.84	£3,500.00
Professional services	£0.00	£3,800.00	£1,000.00
Insurance	£1,200.00	£1,310.09	£1,500.00
General Expenses	£150.00	£104.34	£150.00
Stationery/Postage/Printing	£1,360.00	£1,909.04	£1,400.00
Rent	£7,900.00	£7,500.01	£6,000.00
Fund Raising Events	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
Staff Salaries	£25,200.00	£24,472.88	£30,000.00
Telephone	£2,260.00	£1,163.15	£1,500.00
Counsellors' Expenses	£3,737.00	£1,251.04	£3,900.00
Training and supervision	£6,300.00	£2,017.10	£5,200.00
Furniture & Equipment	£300.00	£173.71	£200.00
Computer Equipment and activity	£9,500.00	£6,804.47	£7,000.00
Transfer to reserves	£0.00	£0.00	£25,000.00
TOTAL	£60,707.00	£54,250.67	£86,850.00

The expenditure in 2021/22 was **£6,500** less than was budgeted for. This was due in part to our new group of volunteers not working with clients as quickly as we hoped.

At the end of 2021/22 our cash in hand balance was **£33,245.37**. The Trustees have agreed to increase our reserve fund so that we can maintain our service for 18 months rather than the one year which is current policy. This will enable us to offer continuity of service to women in the event that our current funding sources dry up and as a protection to the expected rise in running costs. The effect of this is to take around **£25,000** out of our current cash in hand balance.

BUDGET FOR 2022/23

We have increased the budget for **2022/23** to allow for the reserve fund to be increased. This is to allow for the impact of new trained volunteers starting to work with clients.

We will also incur the costs of running another recruitment campaign to increase the number of trained volunteers.

We expect to recruit a new supervisor which will impact on our costs.

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 online, via bank transfer, by phone or by cheque.

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: 1194253

www.hertsrapecrisis.org.uk

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

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