

Solace Women's Aid

Contents

For the year ended 31 March 2023



solace

Company number: 3376716

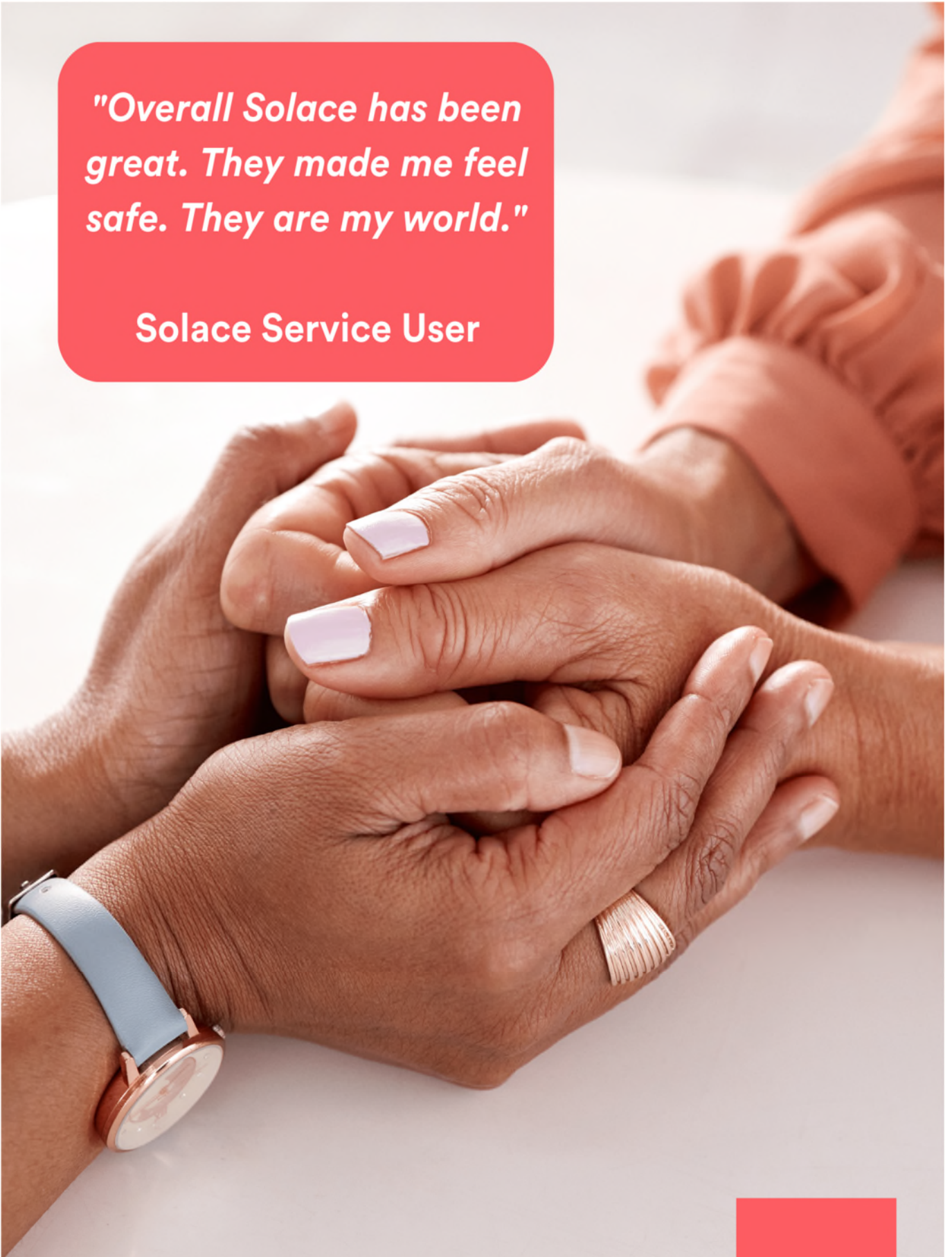
Charity number: 1082450

Annual Report and Financial Statements

31 March 2023

"Overall Solace has been great. They made me feel safe. They are my world."

Solace Service User



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SOLACE AT A GLANCE

For the year ended 31 March 2023, Solace Women's Aid's (Solace) services touched the lives of 21,254 survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

During the year, we continued delivering our charitable activities covering refuge accommodation, community support advocacy and advice, and therapeutic counselling services. We also delivered specialist services for children and younger people, and women experiencing multiple disadvantages. We continued to deliver our first national project through our Labyrinth Project. Over 18 months the partnership of organisations across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland supported 33,889 women and trained 992 professionals – all this helped women and women's organisations recover from the impact of the covid-19 pandemic.

We have been implementing and building on our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan with new anti-racism training and four inclusion networks led by and for staff to provide safe spaces for staff as well as helping inform future progress in policies, consultation and communications responses. We progressed work on our organisational development including commissioning an independent culture review and completing an independent review of our grievance processes.

Housing remained one of the largest issues for the survivors we support, and the increasing housing crisis in London is exacerbating this challenge. To help meet this increasing need, we established a new move on accommodation project, joined a pan-London partnership to deliver floating housing support and have employed specialist refuge workers to support women with more complex needs. Additionally, we launched a new report looking at the impact of the Domestic Abuse Act on the experience of survivors accessing housing and made recommendations on necessary further improvements.

The external environment remains challenging for the sector, with high staff turnover, difficult recruitment, and a lack of sustainable funding. Solace raised income of £15.2 million from statutory funders and the public for the year ended March 2023 (2022: £16.4 million). Our dedicated 281 strong staff team and the 5,336 hours contributed by volunteers allowed us to carry on providing our life-saving services. We increased the awareness of our services with the public and reached out to more women and supporters, including reaching 34,000 followers on our social media and delivering several award winning campaigns and films. Throughout 2022/23, we have continued to support women and children and raised awareness to help us in our mission to end the harm done through gender-based violence.

Equity Diversity, and Inclusion

Solace is committed to putting the values of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at the very centre of our organisation to best support our service users and staff, and doing so in visible, measurable and accountable ways.

Over the last year, we have created, initiated, and established a range of new ways to ensure that EDI is at the heart of all we do. We are now working hard to embed these initiatives, with the aim of implementing our EDI Strategy in every area of our organisation. This includes:

- Offering therapeutic support to staff with our daily debriefs and clinical supervision including specific sessions for Black and minoritised women with supervisors of colour.
- Piloted EDI drop-in sessions with our Head of EDI and embedded a new Employee Assistance Programme.

- Launched a new confidential reporting system called 'Tell Jane' where staff can safely and confidentially raise any concerns.
- Undertaken a full external culture review and sought advice from external consultants on our complaints, grievances, and HR policies.
- Established four inclusion networks (people of colour, diverse abilities, LGBTQ+ and allies) to bring together staff who share protected characteristics, building and expanding on the strengths of existing communities at Solace. The networks are run by our staff for our staff, with plenty of opportunity to get involved as hosts, co-hosts and active participants.
- Our Inclusion Networks have spearheaded our new Inclusion Awards and our Future Leaders Programme aimed primarily at supporting women from the global majorities to work towards achieving greater parity in the workplace. We are looking at other specialist inclusion groups to be introduced in the coming year.
- Championing and supporting 'by and for' organisations including a commitment to not bid for funding for specific services for Black and minoritised women or for other groups such as Deaf and disabled women and LGBT+ survivors.
- Secured funding from the Vision Foundation for a new project to support women living with sight loss to volunteer with the advice team. The project will include a comprehensive training programme, mentoring and support into employment.

Solace is a signatory of the VAWG Sector Anti-Racism Charter and we are seeking to incorporate its recommendations into our work.

We continue to support and represent trans women and non-binary people. We are reviewing how we best support this group, and developing guidance and training to staff on supporting trans survivors in their services, in addition to the LGBT+ and Domestic Abuse training that Galop currently provide us.

STRATEGIC REPORT

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. The reference and administrative information set out on page 24 forms part of this report.

The trustees review the aims, objectives, and activities of Solace each year. This report looks at what Solace has achieved and the outcomes and benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people Solace is established to assist during the reporting period. The review also helps ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

Key objectives

The purpose of Solace is 'the promotion of the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being and safety of victims of domestic, sexual, and associated abuse, in particular women, young people and children'.

Vision and mission

Solace's vision and mission were reviewed in the development of our 2022-2027 strategy and are:

A world where everyone is able to live safe and independent lives which are free from gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation.

Solace exists to end the harm done through gender-based violence. Our aim is to work to prevent violence and abuse as well as providing services to meet the individual needs of survivors particularly women and children. Our work is holistic and empowering, working alongside survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse.

Solace has an inclusive definition of women including trans women. Our services seek to support and represent trans women and non-binary people. We understand that trans women and non-binary people are affected by misogyny and the patriarchal frameworks that cause harm to cis women and girls.

Values

Solace core values reflect our history and were developed in consultation with staff and service users. We are working to be:

- Feminist and intersectional in our understanding of male violence against women and girls (MVAWG)
- Survivor led, trauma informed and empowering
- Diverse, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory to create a fully inclusive environment for staff and service users.

We are committed to:

- Social justice and human rights
- Service users having a central voice within the organisation
- Working in collaboration with other agencies
- Continuous improvement.

Public benefit

The trustees have referred to the guidance provided by the Charity Commission regarding public benefit, including its guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity (PB2)', when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In setting the annual plan each year, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives of the charity.

Strategy

Following the launch of Solace's 2022-27 strategy last year, we have started to work towards our six strategic objectives to drive forward our ambitions of supporting more survivors on their journeys to recovery and beyond. Our six strategic objectives are:

S – Strategic Influencing, Partnerships & Leadership

O – Organisational Development & Growth

L – Long-term Recovery and & Lasting Change

A – Accessibility, Education & Employment

C – Children & Young People

E – Empowerment, Engagement & Aspirations

The overarching aim of the strategy is to be bold as we feel this is what is necessary to really tackle MVAWG now and in the future. We will continue to build on our partnerships and our service user-led projects and ensure survivors are at the heart of all our work. To support survivors to achieve long-term recovery and lasting change, we are also ensuring our staff team feel supported and empowered.

To deliver this strategy, in 2022-23 we have:

- Launched our Service User Advisory Board to help shape our strategic influencing, approach to fundraising and service delivery.
- Started to review our development opportunities for staff and launched our people of colour leadership programme including a mentoring scheme.
- We began embedding a trauma informed approach to relevant policies and procedures.
- Developed a suite of wellbeing resources for staff.
- Improved our corporate partnership approach and seen a growth in this income source.
- Grown our move on accommodation offer with the expansion of the Casa Project and launch of the Nest Project.
- Expanded our therapeutic offer to ensure that both women and children in our refuge can receive counselling support.
- Started the development of new children and young people service models including a programme for young boys showing signs of unhealthy behaviours.
- Supported our Young Change Makers to develop two powerful awareness raising campaigns 'Dear Dads' and '#ReframetheBlame'
- Secured funding for a new project to support visually impaired women into volunteer positions within our advice team, and into future employment in the VAWG sector.
- Launched Recite Me, an inclusive digital technology that allows individuals to access the information on our website in a way that suits their individual needs including over 100 languages and features to support people with learning disabilities.
- Led by Trustees, we undertook an independent culture review with all staff.

Beneficiaries of our services

Solace's main beneficiaries are women, young people and children as outlined in our aims, vision, and mission. A small number of beneficiaries are men who access our community support services.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Our work has a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the women and children we work with, which is frequently expressed by them as 'life saving' or 'life changing'.

We support survivors to achieve long-term recovery and change. Each year, we measure our success annually via our service user survey, exit questionnaires and analysis of the impact of our services through outcomes achieved with our service users. Successful outcomes are demonstrated through increased autonomy, independence and capability, better mental health and self-care, and better parenting and relationships with children.

93% rated there was a continued need for Solace services **(2021/22: 93%)**

91% of respondents found it easy or very easy to make initial contact with their services **(2021/22: 91%)**

88% rated the service as good, very good or excellent **(2021/22: 88%)**

Our work is also evaluated in accordance to agreed quality frameworks which are monitored through regular reviews with staff, the senior management team, trustees, and funders. We renewed the ISO 9001 accreditation, the CHAS Health and Safety Quality Standard and maintained our SafeLives Leading Lights accreditation and Advice Quality Mark.

Charitable activities and outcomes

For the year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, our core provision services including refuge, advocacy, casework, therapeutic counselling and groups, and holistic support at Solace supported 13,361 women and children. Some of the women and children we help use just one of Solace's services, while many seek holistic assistance by accessing multiple support services. Our outcomes for provision services compared to the prior year reflects occupancy patterns at refuges and the end of delivery on some projects.

Over the last year, our prevention services continued to deliver preventive group work for children and young people, and we trained professionals and other groups. We had a slower delivery of training with IRIS professionals and fewer awareness programmes at schools partly due to the completion of the 'Hear to Change' project funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. This explains the reduction in the number of beneficiaries we supported with group and awareness programmes. We will be looking at our preventive strategy and assessing how this could be improved in the future.

| SERVICE DELIVERY | 2022/23 | 2021/22 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| PROVISION | | |
| Refuge and specialist accommodation | 949 | 1,049 |
| Community based advice, advocacy and support | 10,023 | 10,689 |
| Therapeutic | 2,198 | 2,426 |
| Children and young people | 191 | 301 |
| Total provision | 13,361 | 14,465 |
| PREVENTION | | |
| Children and Young People Preventive Group Work and Projects | 4,954 | 9,610 |
| Professional and External Training | 2,898 | 5,083 |
| Perpetrator Programmes | 41 | 47 |
| Total prevention | 7,893 | 14,740 |
| TOTAL | 21,254 | 29,205 |

Refuge and specialist accommodation-based services

Solace runs 22 refuges offering 178 rooms across seven London boroughs for women and children fleeing abuse who need a safe place to stay in order to recover from their trauma and rebuild independent lives.

Our skilled refuge workers create a supportive environment, providing practical and emotional support on a range of areas including finances and debt, housing, family and criminal justice processes, immigration and health. Following recent funding from MOPAC, we have introduced multiple disadvantage refuge workers who can support women with their mental health needs, and wider complex needs.

Supporting women into move on accommodation and helping them to resettle is a key part of our support. This year we were delighted to launch our second move on accommodation project in partnership with L&Q. We have 10 new affordable properties for women leaving refuges across London which are provided with two years of support to help with ongoing needs and move towards independent living.

Solace delivers a 'whole family' approach in our accommodation services and specialist family support workers together with sessional play workers provide vital support to mothers and children during their time in refuge. Family support workers work with mothers and children to ensure that they are supported with their physical and mental health, emotional well-being and development and accessing education opportunities and resources. We have also developed a Specialist Family Support Project in Haringey, Islington, and Enfield to provide holistic support to mothers and children through a psycho-educational group work programme.

Specialist safe accommodation

We continue to run one of London's few specialist accommodation services for women experiencing multiple disadvantage. Our refuge in Camden offers 24-hour support to women with mental health needs and problematic substance use. We also run two second stage dispersed accommodation and specialist support services: The **Amari Project** provides second stage accommodation for women who have been sexually exploited through prostitution or trafficking and the **Rhea Project** provides immediate temporary, crisis emergency accommodation for women and children in Southwark.

Refuge accommodation outcomes

- 58% (2021/22: 58%) felt safer since accessing refuge.
- 63% (2021/22: 58%) felt more confident since entering refuge.
- 73% (2021/22: 72%) of service users felt an overall improvement to their wellbeing after accessing refuge.

Community based advice, advocacy, and support

Advocacy and Support

Our Advocacy and Support teams offer support to those affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence in their community across eight London boroughs. Our Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) and specialist caseworkers work to increase the safety of survivors of domestic abuse and meet a range of needs – these can include ongoing safety concerns, emotional or housing support, legal options, reporting to the police, help around child contact, benefits and financial advice. IDVAs usually hold cases for 3 months but can work with clients for up to 6 months.

Solace runs Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) services across five London boroughs. Our IRIS advocates work in partnership with GP surgeries and offer tailored training on the public health issue of

domestic abuse. This service enables support to be offered to domestic abuse victims at an early stage before the abuse becomes a serious risk to mental, emotional and physical health.

Advice line

Solace's advice line supports those who are women, trans and non-binary aged 14+ who have experienced any form of male violence against women and girls across 16 London boroughs. The line is a first point of contact and empowers service users by exploring their rights and options to make independent decisions about their future. Our advice service provides support to service users who have been assessed as being at medium risk but have not been able to receive support from other domestic abuse services, and risk falling through the gaps. The advice line and casework are part of two pan-London partnerships, Ascent Advice and Counselling (led by Women and Girls Network) and Ascent Advice Plus (led by Solace).

Specialist advice and support projects

- **Irish Traveller Project** - This project provides long-term, holistic support to Irish & Irish Traveller (including those of Irish descent) survivors of abuse across all London boroughs, and who have experienced domestic/sexual abuse at any point in their lives.
- **Immigration Service** – Our immigration project supports women, trans and non-binary service users who have no recourse to public funds. We provide casework, accommodation and subsistence support for up to 16 weeks, and 1:1 immigration advice to help the service user to regularise their status in the UK.
- **Silver Project** - The Silver Project works across London to provide longer term advocacy support for women over 55 who have experienced domestic abuse. This year the project has also supported over 400 practitioners through training to raise awareness of domestic abuse in older women and the barriers to reporting and support for this group.

Advice, Advocacy, and specialist services outcomes

- 64% (2021/22: 69%) felt more confident since accessing advice and advocacy support
- 73% (2021/22: 63%) felt safer since accessing advice and advocacy support
- 67% (2021/22: 47%) of service users felt an overall improvement to their wellbeing after accessing support



“You reassured me, you have guided me throughout this process. You make sure me and my family are safe. You gave continuous support, check in regularly, keep updating us, referred me to the right people, like solicitors. I felt really reassured by Solace. I'm so grateful for your help from the bottom of heart. I would like to volunteer and give back if I can.”

Multiple Disadvantage Services

Solace is one of the few violence against women and girls organisations to have specialist services that support women experiencing multiple disadvantage. We run services for women who have experienced violence against women and girls as well wider issues in their life including significant mental health issues and/or problematic substance use, potential involvement in the criminal justice system leading to additional barriers in finding and maintaining housing, and/or No Recourse to Public Funds.

Solace runs specialist **Housing First Projects in Islington and Westminster** for women experiencing multiple disadvantage in partnership with Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse. Across our two Housing First services we supported 46 women in 2022-23.

As the Women's Safe Engagement and Recovery (**WiSER**) project enters its fifth year, it continues to support women who find it very hard to access/engage with support and who are facing severe and multiple disadvantage. The project is delivered across eight London boroughs in partnership with Against Violence and Abuse (AVA), SHP, Hopscotch, IMECE Women's Centre, NIA and IKWRO and Ashiana. WiSER uses assertive outreach in a trauma and psychologically informed way and provides holistic wrap around support methods.

Integral to the support are a team of peer mentors who are women with lived experience that now support other women accessing the WiSER service. This year 9 new peer mentors were recruited and have provided emotional and practical support to 12 women.

We have also ran the **Southwark Women's Assessment Hub** which is our intensive accommodation project, primarily focused on supporting women affected by rough sleeping, the criminal justice system, or in many cases, both. We offer flexible, assertive, trauma-informed support to help residents to achieve their goals and aspirations, and provide up to one year of resettlement support in the community.

Multiple Disadvantage outcomes

- 54% (2021/22: 51%) had accessed various health services and were better able to manage their health and wellbeing.

Therapeutic Services

Solace provides a range of therapeutic services to help survivors of domestic abuse and wider forms of male violence against women and girls to recover from their experiences and make choices for themselves. We provide a person-centred approach which allows survivors to focus on their strengths, whilst helping them to recover from the long-term impact of physical and emotional abuse. In 2022/23 we provided 3,344 hours of counselling support to 404 women and children through the pan-London Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership and specific services for Southwark, Waltham Forest, and Islington.

- 82% of survivors supported by Ascent Counselling felt an increase in their emotional or mental wellbeing
- 82% of survivors supported by Ascent Counselling had an increased understanding of their rights and choices

Therapeutic support in our refuges

We are proud to have extended our therapeutic support for both women and children within our refuge through new funding from MOPAC. We now provide a bespoke counselling programme for women in refuge and during their resettlement which provides a safe space to work through their feelings and understand their trauma they have experienced. We also have a new creative play therapy service for children within our refuge.



[My therapist] is amazing and has helped me so much with counselling. She might not know but she made me feel more able to express my feelings as understand them also. I'm grateful for all the support and her patience

Rape Crisis

Solace runs one of the four rape crisis centres in London supporting survivors of sexual violence. We support women and girls in North London aged over 13 who have experienced any form of sexual violence. We work

alongside the three other London rape crisis centres, Galop, SurvivorsUK and the Havens to form the London Survivors Gateway (led by Women and Girls Network). In 2022/23, our service took 894 calls, supported 540 service users and provided 272 women with therapeutic support.

Our North London Rape Crisis team run:

- A **helpline** for women and girls to provide emotional support regarding the sexual violence they have experienced, regardless of when the violence occurred.
- An **advocacy service** through a team of ISVAs who work with survivors of sexual violence in a trauma-informed way using a person-centred empowerment model to support them to make informed choices from reporting to the police to court.
- A new pilot **casework service** sits alongside our ISVA service to provide support for women and girls who are not engaged in the criminal justice system, which focuses on providing practical support.
- A specialist **counselling service** to help women understand the impact of abuse and to recover from trauma. We also run a safeguarding hub for women who are at risk of self-harm or are experiencing deteriorating mental health through a series of stabilisation sessions.
- **Training for professionals** as well as staff and volunteers at local community groups to increase understanding of sexual violence.

North London Rape Crisis outcomes

- 68% (2021/22: 56%) felt safer after support from North London Rape Crisis.
- 54% (2021/22: 53%) felt more confident after support from North London Rape Crisis.
- 82% (2021/22: 78%) felt an increase in emotional and mental wellbeing.
- 82% of survivors had an increased understanding of their rights and choices.



Thank you for all your efforts and incredible support throughout this. I couldn't have gone through that day in court if it wasn't for you! Keep doing what you do because you are amazing.

Children and Young People

Solace delivers a 'whole school approach' through our Protect Our Women Project which provides healthy relationships and sex education to 10-25 year olds in primary and secondary schools in Haringey. Our AQA accredited programme teaches pupils about the root causes and strands of VAWG, through age-appropriate interactive workshops. Through our children and young people IDVA we are also able to provide holistic trauma informed support to young people who experienced VAWG.

Our team of IDVAs works in close partnership with Redthread to provide crisis intervention support to young people of all genders who present in London's Major Trauma Centres due to domestic abuse and sexual violence issues. We provide training provision to hospital practitioners to improve the identification of violence and abuse across the four London major trauma centres.

Through the **CouRAGEous Project**, Solace provides a specialised service for Black and Minoritised young women aged between 14-24 who are worried about or have experienced violence, abuse or exploitation.

Young Change Makers

Our Young Change Makers continue to raise awareness of VAWG through the co-production of empowering and educational campaigns. This year they developed two powerful campaigns:

- Dear Dads campaign – The campaign calls for fathers to have a better understanding of what it is to be a young girl in today's world, challenges they are overcoming on a daily basis while asking them for support and guidance to show their feelings more and be role models to young boys.
- #Reframetheblame campaign - Commissioned by Haringey Council, our Young Change Makers developed and produced a series of campaign videos in response to the high prevalence of sexual abuse disclosures in schools/colleges/universities. Working closely with the Rank&File company, three campaigns were developed targeting young girls, young boys and professionals.

Children and Young People outcomes

- Helped and supported 191 (2021/22: 301) children and young people in our community services, helping to build their resilience and dealing with the impact of domestic violence.
- Preventive strategies included workshops, talks and seminars with groups of young people in schools impacting 4,954 (2021/22: 9,610) lives.

Other services – Training and Consultancy

Across Solace, our training team deliver in person and remote training to professionals across the statutory sector and corporate partners. Solace has 32 unique training packages available and has worked with organisations to develop bespoke training packages. The training team has implemented new measures to ensure that training sessions are more trauma-informed, both for learners and for our associate trainers. Alongside these we have delivered training to smaller grassroots organisations through our Labyrinth Project and specialist training on women's homelessness through our Women's Development Unit.

Training outcomes

- We have trained 2,898 (2021/22: 5,083) learners during the year.
- 93% of learners strongly felt that the training was engaging, inclusive and helpful.
- 95% said that they will be able to apply what they've learned in their work.

Partnership work

Some of Solace's best work has been achieved by working collaboratively and in partnership with other organisations both big and small. In 2022/23, we worked with 55 partners including 20 'by and for' partners who provide much needed tailored support for marginalised groups.

This year, Solace has continued to build upon our existing successful partnerships, as well as developing new ones, such as:

- The Nest Project, working with L&Q and funded by the Greater London Authority to provide 10 new move on properties for women leaving refuge. Women are provided with affordable tenancies for up to two years with ongoing support.
- Ascent Pan London Floating Support Service, a London VAWG Consortium project which provides high-quality domestic abuse support, 'by-and-for' services and counselling for those in safe accommodation.

Ascent Advice Plus

Ascent Advice Plus has secured further funding from MOPAC for continuation into 2024. This funding expands support provided by two advice hubs and Rights of Women's Family Law Line, provides longer term advice

casework and incorporates the expertise of four additional Equity & Diversity (E&D) partners to provide training and casework support. In 2022/23, the partnership supported:

- 1,810 women supported through the East and West London Advice hubs
- 612 women were supported by the London Family Law Line
- 555 women were provided with specialist casework support

Labyrinth Project

2022/23 saw the continuation and completion of our first national project, the Labyrinth Project. It was a partnership of 14 women's organisations contributing to a strengthened women's sector in 8 areas across England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland by building capacity and forging stronger networks of support and shared learning locally and nationally. Labyrinth's three main strands of work were:

- Local capacity building through 'Navigators' hosted by local women's organisations in London, Hampshire, Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Manchester, Glasgow, and Northern Ireland, supported by training and consultancy from specialist training partners.
- The Empowering Women Fund, a grants scheme providing both small 'seed funding' and larger women's sector grants to 40 organisations led by and for women in order to build their capacity and develop sustainable ways of empowering women in their local area.
- Developing a 'Centre for Excellence' to pilot a range of approaches to networking and sharing learning across the women's sector - including a website of information and resources.

Despite being operational for only 18 months and working within the context of Covid-19, the Labyrinth Project successes included engaged over 33,889 women through the project, trained 992 women and delivered 463 group work sessions.



The Labyrinth sessions were brilliant and the women really bonded... We are a small, local project and being able to tap into knowledge and networks really expanded things for us and also directly for the women in that group."

Casa Project

Solace continues to lead the Casa Project, a partnership within the London Violence against Women and Girls Consortium. The Casa Project enables women to move on from refuge to high quality, self-contained accommodation with affordable rents, for up to 2 years with specialist resettlement support attached. Support is provided throughout the tenancy by our partners Ashiana Network, EACH Counselling and Support, IKWRO Women's Rights Organisation, Latin American Women's Aid and The Nia Project. In 2022/23 the project supported 60 women including 19 women entering training and education and 13 women securing paid employment.

Women's Development Unit

Solace delivered a second year of the Women's Development Unit in partnership with The Connection at St Martin's, working across the capital to improve access to support for women experiencing homelessness and multiple disadvantage.

The Unit worked with partners to design and deliver the first London Women's Rough Sleeping Census in October 2022. The Census aimed to bring visibility to the experiences of women who are rough sleeping by collecting anonymised data through a census survey. The census was delivered across London and resulted in a published report, Making Women Count, and launched at an event with the Deputy Mayor for Housing Tom Copley.

The Unit published best practice guidance on Women's Spaces within Homelessness Settings, designed to encourage homelessness services (which are often primarily used by men) to create protected and trauma-informed spaces for women.

Over its two years, the project has had:

- 300 people attend training
- 109 people participate in women's homelessness focused workshops
- 165 people take part in interviews and surveys to support our evidence gathering
- 61 people with lived experience help shape the project.

Putting survivors at the heart of our organisation

Service User Involvement

At Solace we place our service users at the heart of what we do, and we fundamentally believe in amplifying the voices of women and supporting them to take ownership of their own journeys. Our Service User Involvement strategy was developed last year and has been created in collaboration with service users to provide a framework to involve them meaningfully in the planning, delivery, evaluation and direction of all our work.

Solace's overall aim is to embed a co-production approach to service user involvement in all areas of its work. This means going beyond service user consultation and seeking meaningful collaboration from the outset and throughout projects. Co-production is the long-term aim of this strategy and is focused on sharing power and influence with service users.

During 2022/23, we continued to embed our service user involvement strategy through the launch of our Service User Advisory Board, a group of former and current service users who meet quarterly to discuss a range of topics to shape Solace's policies and strategies. We have also developed service user involvement training for all staff to allow them to improve participation in their local services, trained service users to lead audits of our services and supported service users to be involved in recruitment.

Solace Ambassadors

Our Ambassadors are all survivors who can draw on their experiences to help us raise awareness and campaign for change. We offer all media training and ongoing support. Our current charity ambassadors are trustee Emily Florence Hutchings, former Miss England Rehema, actor Karen Bryson and film director and founder, Kirsty Malcolm. They are supported to speak up for women on issues as experts by experience including sharing our awareness campaigns, speaking at our events, and supporting our fundraising campaigns.

We are also planning the launch of a new programme of survivor ambassadors in 2023/24 which will be women who have accessed Solace's services and now want to share their stories to raise awareness of sexual violence and domestic abuse and empower other women and girls.

Volunteers

The trustees would like to thank all our volunteers, supporters, and staff for their invaluable work throughout the year, as their support is essential to help Solace achieve its aims.

Volunteers play an integral role in the life saving services we can provide to women and children and are a source of inspiration and support to our staff.

We received 5,336 volunteer and professional hours (2021/22: 4,588) from individuals and students who help us with our service delivery, alongside pro bono corporate supporters who contribute to various projects and awareness campaigns. Our dedicated volunteers work across 28 different projects.

We provide women volunteers with specialist training to enhance their skills to allow them to help with our services, especially our advice line, North London Rape Crisis Service, refuges and our therapeutic services. We have also been expanding our peer mentoring schemes where people who have previous, lived experience of VAWG and/ or multiple disadvantage provide support or a listening ear to current service users. We hope to continue to expand this service and have already seen peer mentors move into paid roles within the organisation.

In accordance with charity reporting regulations, we have not accounted for the time provided by these volunteers in the financial statements, however, based on London's Living Wage rate of pay, this is estimated at £63,765 (2021/22: £50,697).

The value of professional pro bono services provided to Solace was valued at £87,282 (2020/21: £90,391) with a large proportion attributable to free advertising provided by Financial Times and apprentice levy funding received from corporate supporters National Grid and Chelsea Football Club. We also received many gifts for our service users from our numerous corporate supporters.

Being the voice of survivors - public affairs

We have continued to develop our public affairs function which seeks to ensure that key decisions in Westminster and London are shaped by the powerful voices and experiences of the survivors that we support. In 2022-23 there was an increased focus on the urgent reform needed in the police response to VAWG and to police perpetrated abuse, following the case of David Carrick and the publication of the Casey Review.

We shared our views and made recommendations on key developments in the response to VAWG particularly on housing, criminal justice and sustainable funding for MVAWG services. This included contributions and commentary on the Draft Victims Bill, Angiolini Inquiry into the police response to MVAWG, women and housing in London, policing priorities and housing reform related to domestic abuse.

Through this work we:

- Met with 23 key stakeholders across the UK and London Government
- Were mentioned in 39 UK Parliament and London Assembly reports.

Domestic abuse and housing

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 sought to improve access to housing for survivors of domestic abuse however it continues to be one of the biggest challenges for the survivors we support. In November 2022, Solace launched a [new report](#) looking at the impact of the Act on the experience of survivors accessing housing and

made recommendations on necessary further improvements. We launched the report with a roundtable of London councillors and continue to engage with stakeholders on our key recommendations.

Covid-19 inquiry

As the provider of the largest crisis accommodation for domestic abuse survivors during the pandemic, we successfully called for domestic abuse victims to be included in the final terms of reference for the covid-19 inquiry. To ensure that survivors voices were properly represented in the inquiry, we applied and succeeded in becoming a core participant to the inquiry alongside our partner Southall Black Sisters. We are being supported by Public Interest Law Centre and Garden Court Chambers and have submitted written evidence ahead of the public hearings in October 2023.

Fundraising

We continue to be so grateful to all our supporters during 2022/23, including those that would prefer to remain anonymous.

In 2022/23, we have been successful in raising a combined value of £498,178 (2021/22: £735,597) in voluntary income. Our work is made possible by the generous support and donations of individual donors, community groups and companies over the past year. The income raised during the year reflects the continuing difficult funding landscape and we continue to work closely with our existing supporters and look at ways to increase income generation to benefit the impact of our work with beneficiaries.

With a cost of living crisis affecting survivors and those that donate to us, it continues to be a challenging fundraising climate and that is why we are so grateful to all those that have donated or fundraised for us. From marathon runners and cake bakers to jewellery sellers and gig organisers, every £1 raised has made a huge difference to the lives of survivors recovering from abuse. We are proud that we have had:

- Over 1,000 miles ran for Team Solace
- £18,000 worth of Christmas gifts donated
- 100 volunteers helped transform our refuges.

Volunteer group, eCubed, once again held some fantastic events for Solace including Rock Against Violence and Jazz Against Violence.

We are proud to have been selected as retail giant New Look's 2022 and 2023 charity partner as part of their 'Kind to the Core' mission. In our first year of working together they raised an incredible £15,000 through till point donations and fundraising activities. They have also generously donated clothing, easter eggs, sanitary products and ran an incredible employability and wellbeing day for our service users.



'A massive thank you to New Look for their very generous donation. I work at Solace in a service who supports some of the most vulnerable women who experience abuse, homelessness, addiction and mental health issues. They are living in poverty and usually have very low self-esteem and do not have much. It is incredible to be able to give them brand new clothes from New Look for practical reasons and to show them that they deserve nice things and that they are worthy!' A WiSER Project Advocate

Our approach to fundraising and compliance

Solace is a member of the fundraising regulator. Our income is generated predominately thanks to the support of individual fundraisers raising income at our events or their own events. We do not employ the services of any fundraising agencies or third parties, nor have we run a telephone or door to door fundraising campaign. Our relationship with our supporters is especially important to us and the charity does not wish for our supporters to feel under any pressure to donate to the charity. We have a close relationship with our fundraisers and support them in delivering their events and complying with relevant codes of practice. Where we work with commercial participators, contracts are exchanged so that we can ensure compliance with the code of fundraising practice, applicable laws, and adherence to best practice.

We received no complaints about our fundraising practices in 2022/23.

Quality Management

Solace prides itself on providing high quality support to our service users. Our staff team are committed to providing a high standard of support to our service users and we continually look at how we can improve our services. We continue to invest in accredited training for our staff and have a comprehensive internal training programme to ensure we deliver quality services. The organisation is supported by our business development, business support, HR and finance teams who have been introducing new systems and procedures to better support our frontline services and the wider organisation. This helps us to continue to deliver excellent services and ensure value for money for our funders.

In 2022/23, we achieved and retained several accreditations and quality marks, demonstrating the high standard of Solace's work, including:

- SafeLives Leading Lights;
- Rape Crisis National Service Standards;
- Disability Confident Employer;
- Advice Quality Standard;
- ISO 9001; and
- CHAS (The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme).

Raising awareness – media, campaigns and communications

It has been another busy year for our award-winning media and communications, campaigns and community teams. As always, we continue to look for creative and innovative ways to reach women and girls and to support and promote our services both externally and internally.

We want to support more women and children in London to live free from violence and that means raising awareness of what abuse and violence is, what help is out there and how people can support those around

them. It is also crucial that we challenge misogynistic, racist, ableist and homophobic attitudes in our society and institutions, and our communications are a key tool to doing this.

We continue to work to improve internal communications across the organisation, so that our staff team feel informed, empowered and engaged. We have continued to develop our intranet, Solace Space, and are setting up new ways to share information across the organisation.

- 213,000 unique visits to our website
- 35,000 followers across our social media platform
- 180 media requests.

Recite Me

In September, we launched Recite Me, an inclusive digital technology that allows individuals to access the information on our website in a way that suits their individual needs. It has over 100 languages available and a wide range of features to support people with learning disabilities. This will help us to reach more women and girls that need our support. 560 people used our Recite Me tool to access our website in the first 8 months.

Seven Years of Christmas

In November 2022, we launched our #7YearsofChristmas appeal which included a short animation following the life of 'Maya' over seven years of Christmas, based on the Twelve Years of Christmas theme. The campaign awareness that it takes on average 7 years to leave an abusive relationship raised over £60,000. We were so honoured to be supported by Self Esteem who provided the vocals to our film and special thanks to MBASack and Roll Nine for bringing our appeal to life.

The campaign won Crisis Response Content of the Year at the UK Content Awards and was nominated for Best Fundraising Campaign in Purpose Awards and Best Marketing Campaign in Drum Awards.

Not Here for Your Entertainment and the Solace Test

For International Women's Day, we focused on the sexism and stereotypes that heavily features within our entertainment, particularly through TV and film. Our campaign highlighted the way in which stories of violence against women and girls in the media are often victim-blaming and a part of why so many women feel shame about experiencing abuse and feel fear talking about it or asking for help.

We launched our Solace Test to guide those writing about VAWG in the arts as part of our "Not Here for Your Entertainment" event hosted at Rich Mix Cinema with a panel discussion featuring writers, directors and actors.

Plans for the future

We are delighted that since 2022-23, Solace has appointed a permanent CEO, Nahar Choudhury in June and permanent Chair of Trustees, Priyanka Devani in July. Solace looks forward to starting a new chapter under their leadership and thanks Judith Banjoko, Bernadette Keane and Kirsty Telford for their work over the last year.

Our focus continues to be on constantly improving the support we give to survivors, providing new services that meet the complexity of survivors' lives when they reach us and ensuring that we have a motivated and healthy workforce. Our 2022-27 strategy set out that our ambition is for the organisation to grow to achieve the dual aim of supporting more survivors but also to support the frontline staff working for the organisation.

Our staff are committed to supporting survivors of male violence against women and girls. Their wellbeing is crucial to the organisation and ensuring that we provide the support needed to undertake this challenging work continues to be a key focus for trustees and the leadership team. As well as maintaining a physically and psychologically safe workforce, we want to empower staff to be involved in the future direction of the organisation so we ensure we provide the best possible services for survivors of male violence.

Noting the challenges across around recruitment and retention with the in VAWG sector, we are also looking at our staff benefits and development pathways. We will focus on how we can bring teams together for meaningful collaboration, including through our move to a new Head Office and our approach to flexible and agile working.

With an independent organisational culture review having taken place in 2022-23, trustees and the executive will be reviewing the learnings from this review and will focus on making crucial internal changes to improve the culture and experience of working at Solace. Fostering a positive and healthy culture will help us live our values, build a strong and supported workforce, and provide strong outcomes for the women and children we support.

As part of this work, we are working on how to embed a trauma informed approach into all aspects of our organisation and the work we do. Our initial focus will be on ensuring a trauma informed approach is embedded into services and we are in the process of acquiring our trauma informed quality mark, to ensure that we run services that are healthy, mindful and reflective.

We are looking to refresh and rescope our work on equity, diversity and inclusion to follow on from our 2021-23 plan. As part of this work, we will develop further plans on embedding an anti-racism approach throughout the organisation including in our training and working practices through a specific anti-racism plan. We recognise that needs to be a continual commitment to anti-racism within the organisation, which needs to reflect our actions both internally and externally.

To ensure that we are continuously developing our services, it is crucial that the voices and experiences of survivors shapes our work. We will continue to implement our new service user involvement strategy which aims to take us on the important journey from engagement to true co-production.

We are also looking to review our approach to support provision from our mainly non-clinical staff team. We are reassessing our use of psychological frameworks to look for a better response to women and children with complex needs.

To give further strength to our governance, we will be assessing our performance against the Charity Governance Code on an annual basis and commit to an external review every three years.

Our business development focus will be on supporting income generation and strengthening our reserves, with the goal to achieve our desired target reserve levels of £1,125,000 to enable us to meet the varied needs of our service users, staff, and volunteers at Solace.

We will support the organisation's growth by strengthening core services and seek to grow our services around housing for VAWG survivors, including looking at the feasibility of becoming a registered social landlord. We will continue to develop new models for children and young people and secure funding to test and refine these.

Our business development strategy will also look at how we can improve the sustainability of our services including through campaigning for better funded services that can meet the needs of service users and ensure we can fairly remunerate our staff for the tireless work they do. We will also focus on developing further partnerships across the VAWG sector and beyond with a particular focus on housing and children and young

people. We will look to support and work alongside 'by and for' organisations supporting marginalised groups, and will review our partnership working to ensure that we are operating in an equitable way.

To work towards our mission of a world free of gender based abuse, we will continue to speak out about violence against women and girls in the public arena. We will do this through our awareness raising and fundraising campaigns, creating opportunities for allies to support our work and pushing for change in policy, legislation and funding.

Financial review

The financial results for the year ended 31 March 2023 are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities, balance sheet, cash flow statement and notes to the accounts on pages 33 onwards.

Income

For the financial year 2022/23, total incoming resources was £15,156,000 (2021/22 £16,361,000) with funding from statutory partners, trusts and foundations, corporates and the public which have helped Solace maintain essential services during the year. The total reduction in income of £1,205,000 compared to prior year is primarily due to the planned closure of three large partnership projects. The majority of our statutory contracts reported within our charitable activities have been renewed and this provides longer term financial security for Solace to withstand the continuing challenging financial climate.

Our refuge services grew by £705,000 through new funding streams and inflationary increases in core rental income. The Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) Tier 1 Accommodation funding enhanced our work in refuges with multiple disadvantage refuge workers, the Greater London Authority and L&Q Foundation provided funding for our new 'NEST' move on accommodation project. Community based advice and advocacy services remained stable with a smaller growth of £73,000 during the year with changes in funders outlined in notes 3a of the accounts.

Therapeutic services, which deliver counselling in a trauma informed manner to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, increased during the year by a total amount of £209,000 attributable to higher funding received from MOPAC towards our North London Rape Crisis services.

Our work with Children and Young People saw a reduction in income of £100,000 due to the completion of the Hear to Change project which was funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

The largest reduction was recorded in our partnership work with a decline in income of £1,851,000, which is matched by a similar reduction in our partnership expenditure as outlined in note 4 of the accounts. Solace completed its tenure on leading the Ascent partnership work previously funded by London Councils; this accounted for a reduction in partnership income of £1,034,000. The remaining reduction is due to the planned end of our partnership work through the Labyrinth project and Emergency COVID 19 project.

Our advice and advocacy work in the community, which includes specialist services and work with women with multiple needs represented the largest source of incoming resources at 38.6% of our funding base, followed by refuge provision 32.3%, therapeutic at 12.7% and partnership work at 8.9%. Children and young people services focussed on prevention activities was at 3.2% and remains a core strategic goal for Solace.

Voluntary income from donations contributed 3.3% of our funding base through the support of the public, corporates and trusts and foundations.

Further details on our incoming resources are in notes 2 and 3 of the financial statements.

Expenditure

Our charitable spending on activities has correspondingly decreased by 9.8% from £16,927,000 to £15,257,000. Due to the reasons mentioned in the above paragraphs on partnership work, there was a reduction in payments to partners amounting to £1,226,000 which explains the year on year change in total expenditure.

The number of staff to deliver our charitable services have reduced by an average of 18 over the year, however salary increases and initiatives for stronger employee engagement and staff wellbeing recorded an overall increase in staff expenditure of £53,000. The closure of COVID 19 projects resulted in less expenditure and grants towards our beneficiaries amounting to £312,000.

Solace remains focused on tight cost management and supplier contracts are reviewed periodically for better value for money propositions, some of these savings are reflected across expenditure for IT, facilities and professional and other fees totalling £243,000. Maintenance and services have increased by £59,000 predominantly through uncontrollable inflationary rises.

The blended average annual cost per service user at £718 (2021/22: £580) is higher reflecting inflationary and other cost increases against the previous year.

Further details on our expenditure are in note 4 of the financial statements.

Financial position

After the net expenditure on restricted funds, the overall result for the year was a deficit of £102,000 (2021/22: deficit of £566,000). The current year deficit is explained predominantly by lower than planned voluntary income generation. A key reason for this is the cost of living crisis resulting in reduced donations received from individual donors as noted in note 2 of the financial statements.

Achieving a surplus remains a key performance target to enable the charity to set aside funds towards reserves for contingency requirements, further explained in our reserves policy note. We have planned to achieve a balanced budget for the coming year which we believe is achievable due to recent renewals and extensions of contracts and a more targeted approach towards fundraising combined with tight management of costs.

Total fund balances as of 31 March 2023 were £2,001,000 (2021/22: £2,103,000) of which £909,000 (2021/22: £913,000) were designated funds and the remaining £1,092,000 (2021/22: £1,189,000) represented general funds. Designated funds as at the balance sheet date represent the net book value of tangible and intangible fixed assets.

Reserves policy and going concern

The reserves fund represents unrestricted general funds which are not committed or tied to any tangible fixed assets held by Solace.

It is Solace's policy to retain sufficient reserves to safeguard its financial commitments and to continue to provide essential services to women and children who are experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence, in the event of unforeseen financial problems for a length of time to enable those problems to be resolved.

The trustees have reviewed its reserves policy in March 2023 and agreed to build Solace's reserves based on an analysis of the risks facing the charity. In determining the level of reserves required by Solace, the following factors are taken into account by the Board of Trustees:

- key strategic risks as described in Solace's risk register;
- our strategic goals;
- financial strategy and sustainability;
- liquidity management;
- commitments to staff and other contractual obligations; and
- needs of services and beneficiaries.

This level of reserves is to protect the charity from having to make quick structural changes arising from the sudden loss of income, for example when contracts are not renewed or other unforeseen circumstances, to enable the charity to function during unexpected periods of financial difficulties. The Finance and Resources sub-committee reviews the level of reserves required by Solace annually and recommends the appropriate level to the trustees.

Based on the analysis of risks, the trustees have set a reserve range from of £1,069,000 to £1,125,000. As at the end of March 2023, the current unrestricted free reserves of £1,092,000 (unrestricted reserves less those related to tangible fixed assets, intangible fixed assets and designations) are within the desired reserve range agreed by trustees.

To achieve the higher target of £1,125,000, there is a shortfall of £33,000 in current unrestricted free reserves. The trustees intend to achieve the target level of £1,125,000 by generating adequate surpluses through the annual financial planning cycles over the next two years.

Further notes on our reserves are outlined in note 15 of the financial statements.

The trustees have considered the material uncertainties which may cast doubts on the appropriateness of the going concern assumption with regards to the 2022/23 financial statements. As noted above, these uncertainties are continually monitored by the board and the senior management team, and remedial actions are implemented in a timely manner. Having considered the risks of these uncertainties, the trustees have concluded that the going concern assumption remains appropriate for the coming year.

Risk management and principal risks

Trustees have overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the system of risk management at Solace. The charity maintains a charity risk register which tracks key risks to Solace and is reviewed by trustees at quarterly sub-committee meetings and full board meeting. Unexpected and sudden changes in risks would be scrutinised by trustees over and above planned meetings.

The principal risks facing the charity which operates in a challenging and demanding sector are financial, operational, reputational, people and culture and regulatory and these are detailed below.

Financial

Solace operates in a challenging and demanding sector with uncertainties over longer term funding, due to the commissioning of services by local and central government and the cuts to public spending. Payments by local authorities, government bodies, trusts and foundations are based on the achievement of outcomes or payment by results add further pressures on cash flow and overall financial management.

External risks to funding have been reduced by reaching and maintaining the standards required by commissioners and funding bodies and implementing a strategy to diversify our funding base through income generation from fundraising.

Financial risks arising from any contract renewals in 2023/24 are mitigated through TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment) arrangements and the maintenance of adequate reserves to absorb central costs covered by these contracts. This has been significantly reduced as Solace has retained and renewed several key contracts for a new term of three to five years.

The recent cost-of-living crisis has added greater financial pressures and creates additional risks through the need to increase salaries at a higher rate and the need to pay more for goods and services.

Overall financial risks are monitored through regular reporting to the Finance and Resources sub-committee and trustees with scrutiny of annual budgets, reforecasts, management accounts and cash flow projections. Scenario planning with prudent income generation activities has been prepared and reviewed with trustees to ensure that Solace continues to have sufficient resources to deliver its services and remain solvent in the foreseeable future.

Operational

The nature of our service delivery which provides support to vulnerable women and children suffering from domestic and sexual violence increases our operational risks which could result from services providing inadequate support for our service users caused by unclear priorities, lack of quality oversight and inadequate staff resources.

Operational risks are managed through implementation of suitable policies and procedures including good practices for case management, appropriate case loads, rigorous staff training, staff supervision and support and regular reporting to senior management. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, risks assessments and data protection regulations in respect of service users, staff, trustees, volunteers, and visitors. Appropriate insurance cover is in place for unexpected losses.

Risks on IT systems and cyber crime are managed through the use of accredited managed IT providers using secure cloud based technology. Monthly review of performance and IT risks are undertaken with senior management and reported to trustees. Staff receive regular training on IT and cyber security and induction training is provided to all new employees.

Reputational

In line with our operational risks, reputational risks are heightened as we engage with vulnerable people in difficult circumstances. Service audits are conducted annually to review compliance with funder agreements and reported to trustees. The senior management team works closely with boroughs and other funder leads and attend meetings and events which enable issues to be dealt with promptly and manage reputational risks.

People and culture

As other charities operating in the sector, Solace has been challenged with equity, diversity and inclusiveness and has been in the spotlight with negative publications on racism. Solace is committed to being an actively inclusive charity and has reviewed its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan with trustees, staff and volunteers as outlined in the earlier sections of this report. Specialist inclusive training and awareness programmes are being delivered to all staff.

Risks and challenges on staff recruitment and retention are managed through continuous staff learning and development. Staff wellbeing initiatives have been strengthened and we are committed to becoming a fully trauma informed charity to support with overall staff safety and retention.

Regulatory and compliance

Safeguarding is at the heart of our operational services and a key governance priority, keeping women and their children safe is our primary responsibility and we take all appropriate steps to protect everyone from harm.

We deliver robust safeguarding training to all our staff and volunteers, as part of their induction training. This includes the legal framework, how to spot signs and symptoms, how to respond and what makes a good referral to social care. We also explain our whistle blowing policies to all staff and volunteers during the training. Annual refresher training on safeguarding is mandatory for all staff.

We have a suite of policies and procedures designed to manage this risk including those covering acceptance of donations, unauthorised fundraising, procurement, IT security, anti-fraud, data protection and social media. We undertake regular training on compliance and continue to review and strengthen our training to staff and volunteers.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the memorandum, and articles of association, the Companies Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Company number | 3376716 |
| Country of incorporation | United Kingdom |
| Charity number | 1082450 |
| Country of registration | England & Wales |
| Registered office | 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP |
| Website | www.solacewomensaid.org |

Board of Trustees

Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Ms. Priyanka Devani | Chair (co-opted 19 July 2023) |
| Ms. Kirsty Telford | Interim Chair (retired 22 June 2023) |
| Ms. Madeline Church | Interim Vice Chair (since 8 Dec 2022) |
| Ms. Kerri Hartwell (nee Podobnik) | Interim Treasurer (since 29 June 2022) |
| Ms. Jasbir Sandhu | Treasurer (up to 29 June 2022) |
| Ms. Yasmin Becker | (resigned 15 September 2022) |
| Ms. Maureen Hopcroft | (resigned 15 September 2022) |
| Ms. Emily Florence Hutchings | |
| Ms. Vivien Ma | |
| Ms. Natalie Lopez | (appointed 5 August 2022) |
| Ms. Madeline Church | (appointed 5 August 2022) |
| Ms. Meghan Roach | (appointed 5 August 2022) |
| Dr. Amy Pritchard | (appointed 5 August 2022) |
| Ms. Hannah Cane | (appointed 30 March 2023) |

Principal staff

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Ms. Nahar Choudhury | Chief Executive Officer (appointed June 2023) |
| Ms. Bernadette Keane | Interim Chief Executive Officer (Jan to Jun 2023) |
| Ms. Judith Banjoko | Interim Chief Executive Officer (resigned Dec 2022) |
| Ms. Retna Thevarajah | Chief Operating Officer |
| Ms. Jane Jutsum | Director of Business Development (left April 2023) |
| Dr. Jennifer Cirone | Director of Services |

Bankers

HSBC plc
1 Aldermans Hill
London, N13 4YE

Solicitors

Bates Wells & Braithwaite London LLP
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1BE

Auditor

Moore Kingston Smith
9 Appold Street,
London EC2A 2AP

Structure, governance & management

Solace is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 28 May 1997, and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 16 September 2000. The charity is formed under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

Recruitment and appointment of members of the Board of Trustees

Solace welcomes women to the Board of Trustees who have the skills, dedication, and enthusiasm to take overall responsibility for the organisation. The charity advertises for members in a number of ways including recruitment websites and other relevant publications.

Trustees serve for a maximum period of six years in aggregate and the total number of trustees are twelve members. Solace has a diverse Board, ensuring that our trustees represent the women we support.

Induction and training for the Board of Trustees

All prospective members receive information regarding Solace including the most recent annual report and audited accounts, as well as copies of relevant policies and procedures. They meet with the CEO who carries out an induction that includes training on key policies (including equality, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, confidentiality, complaints, whistle blowing, financial regulation, risk assessments, data protection and DBS checks), a tour of our services and meetings with both staff and service users.

A skills audit is conducted annually, and any gaps identified are met through training, guidance from the CEO and other members of the trustees and staff, as well as targeted recruitment.

Trustees are encouraged to attend relevant training in areas such as governance, human resource management and financial management. The cost of this training is met by the organisation.

Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 5 to the accounts.

Organisational structure

The trustees meet every quarter and are responsible for the organisation's overall management and strategic direction. The trustees also meet twice a year for Board Away Days. These women are drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to our work including those who have been impacted by domestic or sexual abuse. We are also committed to diversity and have a trustee board representative of our service users and staff.

The officers of the charity are:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Chair | Ms Priyanka Devani (since 19 July 2023) |
| Interim Chair | Ms. Kirsty Telford (retired 22 June 2023) |
| Interim Vice Chair | Ms. Madeline Church (since 8 December 2022) |
| Interim Treasurer | Ms. Kerri Hartwell (appointed 29 June 2022) (nee Podobnik) |
| Treasurer | Ms. Jasbir Sandhu (up to 29 June 2022) |
| Chair of HR & Governance | Ms. Natalie Lopez (since 8 December 2022) |

The trustees delegate appropriate functions to the sub-committees listed below, of which at least two members must be from the Board.

Business Development sub-committee: Oversees the overall strategy and business development plans for the charity, as well as Training and Consultancy, Fundraising, and Communications. Chair – Ms. Kirsty Telford (up to June 2023).

Finance and Resources sub-committee: Oversees financial management to ensure optimum use of resources. It scrutinises income and expenditure and regularly reports to, makes recommendations, and clarifies options available to the trustees. Interim Chair – Ms. Kerri Hartwell.

Human Resources and Governance sub-committee: Oversees staffing issues including recruitment, retention, pay, equality and diversity, health and safety and environmental issues. It acts as the appeal body for any disciplinary and capability matters and is responsible for overall board governance. Chair – Ms. Natalie Lopez.
Services sub-committee: Scrutinises operational top-level reports and internal audits; discusses policy, devises, and reviews the service operations strategy. Chair – Ms. Madeline Church.

In the summer of 2021, the Board of Trustees set up an Oversight sub-committee that was led by the Chair and had Chairs of all sub-committees and the CEO working together to monitor and manage the increased risks faced by the charity since allegations around racism were published in the media. The committee met twice in 2022 and has worked closely with the interim CEOs to drive forward changes in the culture and management of the charity. The committee has now completed its scrutiny on all matters relating to staffing, in particular staff from the global majority, ED&I action plan and oversight of the culture review. Since 2023, the ongoing monitoring of organisational culture changes are considered in depth at sub-committee and Board meetings.

Expert Advisors are selected to provide specialist advice to the sub-committees. They attend and scrutinise reports together with trustees at sub-committee meeting. We currently have four Expert Advisors: Ms. Judy Kawaguchi (Finance and Resources); Ms Debbie Peel (Services); Ms Rachel Galvin (HR and Governance) and Ms Sian Elliot (HR and Governance).

Overall management is delegated to the CEO and Directors who are responsible for ensuring that Solace delivers high quality services, meets contractual obligations and conditions of grant aid. Principal staff are the CEO, COO, Director of Services and Director of Business Development who convene regularly to oversee the organisational management of Solace. The Directors report to the CEO.

The wider Senior Management Team includes eight Heads of Services and one Deputy Head of Services who meet with the Directors and CEO on a monthly basis.

Team and Service Managers run the day-to-day activities with their staff teams delivering services in refuge, community-based services and from our Head Office. They report to Heads of Services and meet with the CEO and Directors each quarter.

Related party transactions

Donations from one trustee totalled £518 (2021/22: £658).

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

Solace awards a fair remuneration package to all staff including key management personnel. Both the Human Resources and Finance and Resources sub-committees undertake an annual review of salaries, and the trustees are responsible for setting the CEO salary, and with the CEO set the salaries of Directors. The salary of the highest and lowest salaries in the organisation does not exceed 1:5.

Statement of responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Solace for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic 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 trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate 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 trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2023 was 13 (2021/22 - 12). The trustees are members of the charity, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors

Moore Kingston Smith LLP were appointed as auditors in 2018 and are deemed to be reappointed to under Section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The report of the Board of Trustees has been approved by the trustees on 14 September 2023 and signed on their behalf by



Ms Madeline Church
Interim Vice Chair

Date Signed: 24th October 2023

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SOLACE WOMEN'S AID

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Solace Women's Aid ('the charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the Summary Income and Expenditure Account), the Balance Sheet, the 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 FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; 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 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 within 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 trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the 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:

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

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 28, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

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

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 company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Date: 13 November 2023

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

9 Appold Street
London
EC2A 2AP

Solace Women's Aid

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2023

| | Note | Unrestricted £ | Restricted £ | 2023 Total £ | Unrestricted £ | Restricted £ | 2022 Total £ |
|--|------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Income from: | | | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 2 | 498,178 | - | 498,178 | 735,597 | - | 735,597 |
| Charitable activities | | | | | | | |
| Provision and Prevention | | | | | | | |
| Refuge accommodation | 3 | 3,791,608 | 1,103,632 | 4,895,240 | 3,702,854 | 487,743 | 4,190,597 |
| Community based advice, advocacy and Therapeutic | 3 | 4,267,107 | 1,594,258 | 5,861,365 | 5,022,474 | 766,094 | 5,788,568 |
| Children and Young People | 3 | - | 1,919,511 | 1,919,511 | - | 1,710,618 | 1,710,618 |
| Other services | 3 | 63,551 | 425,022 | 488,573 | 57,349 | 531,142 | 588,491 |
| Partnership work | | | | | | | |
| Ascent Plus and other partnership work | 3 | 171,930 | 1,168,924 | 1,340,854 | 121,467 | 3,070,654 | 3,192,121 |
| Investment income | | 1,411 | - | 1,411 | 168 | - | 168 |
| Total income | | 8,901,838 | 6,253,844 | 15,155,682 | 9,746,918 | 6,614,504 | 16,361,422 |
| Expenditure on: | | | | | | | |
| Raising funds | 4 | 393,143 | - | 393,143 | 291,306 | - | 291,306 |
| Charitable activities | | | | | | | |
| Provision and Prevention | | | | | | | |
| Refuge accommodation | 4 | 3,604,802 | 1,166,185 | 4,770,987 | 3,655,295 | 542,599 | 4,197,894 |
| Community based advice, advocacy and Therapeutic | 4 | 4,576,286 | 1,609,814 | 6,186,100 | 5,441,389 | 756,677 | 6,198,066 |
| Children and Young People | 4 | 4,357 | 1,930,044 | 1,934,401 | 17,031 | 1,800,380 | 1,817,411 |
| Other services | 4 | 58,664 | 436,014 | 494,678 | 63,378 | 580,395 | 643,773 |
| Partnership work | | | | | | | |
| Ascent Plus and other partnership work | 4 | 87,618 | 41,948 | 129,566 | 478,896 | 48,253 | 527,149 |
| Total expenditure | | 8,897,392 | 6,359,930 | 15,257,322 | 10,109,851 | 6,817,561 | 16,927,412 |
| Net (expenditure) for the year | 5 | 4,446 | (106,086) | (101,640) | (362,933) | (203,057) | (565,990) |
| Transfers between funds | | (106,086) | 106,086 | - | (203,057) | 203,057 | - |
| Net movement in funds | | (101,640) | - | (101,640) | (565,990) | - | (565,990) |
| Reconciliation of funds: | | | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | | 2,102,741 | - | 2,102,741 | 2,668,731 | - | 2,668,731 |
| Total funds carried forward | | 2,001,101 | - | 2,001,101 | 2,102,741 | - | 2,102,741 |

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities unless noted otherwise.

There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15 to the financial statements.

Notes on pages 36 to 47 form part of these financial statements.

Solace Women's Aid

Balance sheet

Company no. 3376716

As at 31 March 2023

| | Note | £ | 2023 £ | £ | 2022 £ |
|--|------|-----------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Fixed assets: | | | | | |
| Tangible fixed assets | 10a | | 825,339 | | 913,262 |
| Intangible assets | 10b | | 83,409 | | - |
| | | | <u>908,748</u> | | <u>913,262</u> |
| Current assets: | | | | | |
| Debtors | 11 | 2,605,070 | | 2,045,428 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 1,325,211 | | 2,922,697 | |
| | | | <u>3,930,281</u> | <u>4,968,125</u> | |
| Liabilities: | | | | | |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | 12 | | <u>2,772,274</u> | <u>3,460,664</u> | |
| Net current assets | | | 1,158,007 | | 1,507,461 |
| Total assets less current liabilities | | | <u>2,066,755</u> | | <u>2,420,723</u> |
| Creditors: amounts falling due after one year | 13 | | 65,654 | | 317,982 |
| Total net assets | 14 | | <u>2,001,101</u> | | <u>2,102,741</u> |
| The funds of the charity: | | | | | |
| Unrestricted income funds: | | | | | |
| Designated funds | 15 | | 908,748 | | 913,262 |
| General funds | 15 | | 1,092,353 | | 1,189,479 |
| | | | <u>2,001,101</u> | | <u>2,102,741</u> |
| Total unrestricted funds | | | 2,001,101 | | 2,102,741 |
| Total charity funds | | | <u>2,001,101</u> | | <u>2,102,741</u> |

Notes on pages 36 to 47 form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the trustees on 14 September 2023 and signed on their behalf by



Ms Madeline Church
Interim Chair



Ms Kerri Hartwell
Interim Treasurer

Date Signed: 24th October 2023

Solace Women's Aid

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

| | Note | 2023 £ | £ | 2022 £ | £ |
|--|------|------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Cash flows from operating activities: | | | | | |
| Net cash (used in) operating activities | 16 | | (1,299,284) | | (190,833) |
| Cash flows from investing activities: | | | | | |
| Dividends, interest and rents from investments | | 1,411 | | 168 | |
| Purchase of property, plant and equipment | | (99,155) | | (62,780) | |
| Net cash (used in) investing activities | | | (97,744) | | (62,612) |
| Cash flows from financing activities: | | | | | |
| Interest paid | | (20,139) | | - | |
| Receipt of CBILS loan | | - | | 500,000 | |
| Repayments of borrowing | | (180,319) | | - | |
| Net cash (used in) / provided by financing activities | | | (200,458) | | 500,000 |
| Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year | | | (1,597,486) | | 246,555 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year | | | 2,922,697 | | 2,676,142 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year | | | 1,325,211 | | 2,922,697 |

Analysis of cash and changes in net debt

| | 1 April 2022 | Cash flows | Other movements | 31 March 2023 |
|---|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS | | | | |
| Cash in hand | 77,799 | (46,239) | - | 31,560 |
| Cash in bank | 1,417,474 | (881,711) | - | 535,763 |
| Immediate notice deposits | 1,427,424 | (669,536) | - | 757,888 |
| Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year | 2,922,697 | (1,597,486) | - | 1,325,211 |
| BORROWINGS | | | | |
| CBILS loan falling due within one year | (182,018) | 180,319 | (252,328) | (254,027) |
| CBILS loan falling due after one year | (317,982) | | 252,328 | (65,654) |
| Total | 2,422,697 | (1,417,167) | - | 1,005,530 |

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Solace Women's Aid is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address is 6th floor, 9 Appold Street, London EC2A 2AP.

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The presentation currency of the Charity is British Pounds Sterling. The amounts in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound.

c) Key judgements and Assumptions

In the application of the company's accounting policies, 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. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis and actual results may differ from these estimates.

d) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

e) Going concern

The trustees have considered the principal risks of the charity and the potential financial impact of these risks materialising in a range of adverse and worse case scenarios. The detailed cash flow forecast and the adequacy of cash resources under these scenarios have been reviewed by trustees. Based on these detailed scrutiny, the trustees have concluded that there is reasonable expectation that the charity is able to meet its obligations as they fall due for at least 12 months following approval of the financial statements. There are no material uncertainties which may impact on the going concern assumption. Accordingly the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

f) Income

Income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis once the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Personal charges from service users are recognised on a receipts basis as this is the most reliable form of measurement.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for performance related or other conditions of income recognition have been met.

g) Intangible assets

Computer software are capitalised when direct expenditure enhances or extends the performance of the software beyond its specifications and can be reliably measured as a capital improvement. These costs are amortised using a straight line method over the estimated useful lives of three to five years.

h) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised. The trustees' annual report describes their contributions in more detail.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

i) Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument to meet the requirements of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102. Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, where 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.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

j) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

k) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are accounted for in accordance with the express or implied wishes of donors in so far as these are intended to be binding on the charity. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes which are not subject to any special restrictions and are classed as unrestricted within the General fund.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

l) Irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make
 - Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services and other charitable activities undertaken
- Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

m) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure based on costs incurred with the publicity event.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

n) Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases charges are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

o) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000 or groups of similar assets purchased in bulk exceeds £7,500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Freehold land and buildings are carried at cost.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be depreciated at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| ● Freehold land | Not depreciated |
| ● Freehold buildings | 2% on cost |
| ● Leasehold property | Over the life of the lease |
| ● Office equipment, fixtures and fittings and play area | 25% on cost |

p) Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. In general, cost is determined on a first in first out basis

q) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are

r) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three

s) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present or constructive obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Creditors are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due. Provisions are made for obligations when there is a legal or other obligation as a result of past events. It is more likely than not that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and a reliable estimate of the amount can be made for the provision based on the expected settlement amount.

t) Pensions

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Solace Women's Aid operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions. It provides a contribution at 3% of annual basic pay for those staff who have joined the scheme. The pension charge recorded in these accounts is the amount of contributions payable in the accounting year.

2 Donations and legacies

| | Unrestricted | Restricted | 2023 Total £ | 2022 Total £ |
|--|----------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Individuals | 206,981 | - | 206,981 | 373,019 |
| Community fundraising and events | 25,207 | - | 25,207 | 53,503 |
| Corporates | 91,256 | - | 91,256 | 73,058 |
| Trust and Foundations | 79,327 | - | 79,327 | 75,680 |
| Government CJRS grant | - | - | - | 4,946 |
| Donation in kind – Government CBILS Loan | - | - | - | 65,000 |
| Donated services | 95,407 | - | 95,407 | 90,391 |
| | 498,178 | - | 498,178 | 735,597 |

3a Income from charitable activities

| | Unrestricted £ | Restricted £ | 2023 Total £ | 2022 Total £ |
|---|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Provision and Prevention | | | | |
| Local Boroughs | 1,521,199 | 12,725 | 1,533,924 | 1,559,323 |
| Core Rents | 2,170,452 | - | 2,170,452 | 2,040,609 |
| Personal Charges | 99,957 | - | 99,957 | 102,520 |
| MOPAC | - | 494,477 | 494,477 | - |
| London Councils via Ashiana (note 3b) | - | 249,816 | 249,816 | 249,816 |
| Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government | - | 161,007 | 161,007 | 136,858 |
| REFUGE | - | 85,808 | 85,808 | - |
| Greater London Authority | - | 30,538 | 30,538 | - |
| Walcot Foundation | - | 24,968 | 24,968 | - |
| L&Q Foundation | - | 24,055 | 24,055 | - |
| Hollick Foundation | - | 7,638 | 7,638 | 3,256 |
| Southall Black Sisters | - | 10,410 | 10,410 | 6,542 |
| The Masonic Foundation | - | - | - | 49,500 |
| Other | - | 2,190 | 2,190 | 42,173 |
| Sub-total for Refuge Accommodation | 3,791,608 | 1,103,632 | 4,895,240 | 4,190,597 |

Prior year income from charitable Refuge Accommodation activities included £3,702,854 attributable to unrestricted activities and £487,743 to restricted activities.

| | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Local Boroughs | 4,267,107 | 18,847 | 4,285,954 | 5,022,474 |
| Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) | - | 869,312 | 869,312 | 43,850 |
| Southall Black Sisters | - | 173,112 | 173,112 | 154,664 |
| Women and Girls Network | - | 176,625 | 176,625 | - |
| The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Fields | - | 82,023 | 82,023 | 57,311 |
| Bruno Schroder Trust | - | 80,258 | 80,258 | 42,978 |
| London Councils via Ashiana (note 3b) | - | 36,506 | 36,506 | 226,863 |
| Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Emigrant | - | 35,000 | 35,000 | 35,000 |
| Trust For London | - | 13,500 | 13,500 | 52,296 |
| Olwyn Foundation | - | 35,000 | 35,000 | 24,595 |
| 3i Foundation | - | 42,567 | 42,567 | 23,333 |
| Irish Youth Foundation | - | 11,000 | 11,000 | 14,500 |
| City of London | - | 17,856 | 17,856 | 8,928 |
| Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government | - | - | - | 7,359 |
| National Lottery Fund (Reaching Communities) | - | - | - | 32,271 |
| Cripplegate Foundation | - | - | - | 15,030 |
| Marion Malcapine | - | - | - | 10,000 |
| Other | - | 2,652 | 2,652 | 17,116 |
| Sub-total for Community based advice, advocacy and support | 4,267,107 | 1,594,258 | 5,861,365 | 5,788,568 |

Prior year income from charitable Community based advice, advocacy and support activities included £5,022,474 attributable to unrestricted activities and £766,094 to restricted activities.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

3a Income from charitable activities (continued)

| | | | 2023 Total £ | 2022 Total £ |
|---|--------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | Unrestricted | Restricted | | |
| Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) | - | 1,118,954 | 1,118,954 | 770,748 |
| Local Boroughs | - | 279,147 | 279,147 | 335,609 |
| Women and Girls Network | - | 234,785 | 234,785 | 151,718 |
| NHSE | - | 90,154 | 90,154 | 107,736 |
| Tri-borough Angelou | - | 44,300 | 44,300 | 56,602 |
| BBC Children in Need | - | 23,199 | 23,199 | 46,010 |
| 3i Foundation | - | 74,100 | 74,100 | 20,000 |
| Ruth and David Foundation | - | 12,857 | 12,857 | 17,143 |
| Cloudesley | - | 14,375 | 14,375 | 15,000 |
| Big Give | - | 27,640 | 27,640 | - |
| London Councils (note 3b) | - | - | - | 190,052 |
| Sub-total for Therapeutic | - | 1,919,511 | 1,919,511 | 1,710,618 |

Prior year income from charitable Therapeutic activities included restricted activities only totalling £1,710,618.

| | | | | |
|--|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) | - | 298,091 | 298,091 | 185,001 |
| National Lottery Community Fund | - | - | - | 100,449 |
| NSPCC | - | - | - | 121,069 |
| Local Boroughs | 63,551 | - | 63,551 | 57,349 |
| Women and Girls Network | - | 88,823 | 88,823 | 92,124 |
| Big Give | - | 19,212 | 19,212 | - |
| Firebird Foundation | - | 15,000 | 15,000 | - |
| Garfield Weston Foundation | - | - | - | 28,200 |
| Other | - | 3,896 | 3,896 | 4,299 |
| Sub-total for Children and Young People | 63,551 | 425,022 | 488,573 | 588,491 |

Prior year income from charitable Children and Young People activities included £57,349 attributable to unrestricted activities and £531,142 to restricted activities.

| | | | | |
|---|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| External training | 87,053 | - | 87,053 | 86,465 |
| Local Boroughs | 20,000 | - | 20,000 | - |
| The Youth Endowment Fund | - | 11,723 | 11,723 | - |
| Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government | - | 30,225 | 30,225 | - |
| Other | 1,000 | 549 | 1,549 | 68,797 |
| Sub-total for Other services | 108,053 | 42,497 | 150,550 | 155,262 |

Prior year income from charitable Other services included £107,009 attributable to unrestricted activities and £48,253 to restricted activities.

Partnership work

| | | | | |
|--|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) | - | 695,721 | 695,721 | 1,098,110 |
| Department of Culture, Media and Digital | - | 473,203 | 473,203 | 906,474 |
| MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local | - | - | - | - |
| Greater London Authority | 171,930 | - | 171,930 | 121,467 |
| London Councils (Ascent, note 3b) | - | - | - | 1,033,846 |
| Wansworth Councils | - | - | - | 21,623 |
| St Mungos | - | - | - | 10,601 |
| Sub-total for Partnerships | 171,930 | 1,168,924 | 1,340,854 | 3,192,121 |

Prior year income from charitable Partnership activities included £nil to unrestricted activities and £3,192,121 to restricted activities.

| | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total income from charitable activities | 8,402,249 | 6,253,844 | 14,656,093 | 15,625,657 |
|--|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

Total income from charitable activities in 2022 included £9,011,153 attributable to unrestricted activities and £6,614,504 to restricted activities.

Solace Women's Aid

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

3b. Section 37 Statement

* Grand funding of £Nil was received in 2023 (2022 £1,425,238) from London Councils for the Ascent partnership delivering advice, counselling and other work funded under Priority 2 Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence. The table below shows how the funding was allocated across the partnership and that it has been used for the purposes outlined in the funding agreement.

| | 2023 | 2023 | 2022 | 2022 |
|--|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Grant awarded | Grant spent | Grant awarded | Grant spent |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Ascent Advice and Counselling | | | | |
| Solace lead partner | - | - | 463,150 | 463,150 |
| Rights of Women | - | - | 67,555 | 67,555 |
| Women and Girls Network | - | - | 296,272 | 296,272 |
| Ashiana Network | - | - | 81,777 | 81,777 |
| Nia | - | - | 36,849 | 25,831 |
| IMECE | - | - | 69,583 | 69,583 |
| IKWRO | - | - | 76,267 | 76,267 |
| LAWRS | - | - | 72,861 | 72,861 |
| Jewish Women's Aid | - | - | 23,674 | 23,674 |
| EACH counselling | - | - | 90,489 | 90,489 |
| Southall Black Sisters | - | - | 53,619 | 53,619 |
| RASASC | - | - | 19,184 | 19,184 |
| Asian Women's Resource Centre | - | - | 36,979 | 36,979 |
| CIAC | - | - | 36,979 | 36,979 |
| | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>1,425,238</u> | <u>1,414,220</u> |
| Breakdown by expenditure: | | | | |
| Staff costs | - | - | 1,205,254 | 1,199,803 |
| Beneficiary costs | - | - | 56,221 | 50,654 |
| Other costs | - | - | 163,763 | 163,763 |
| | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>1,425,238</u> | <u>1,414,220</u> |
| | | | | |
| Ascent Refuges | <u>286,322</u> | <u>286,322</u> | <u>286,339</u> | <u>286,339</u> |
| | <u>286,322</u> | <u>286,322</u> | <u>286,339</u> | <u>286,339</u> |
| | | | | |
| TOTAL LONDON COUNCIL FUNDING | <u>286,322</u> | <u>286,322</u> | <u>1,711,577</u> | <u>1,700,559</u> |
| | | | | |
| As per note 3a) for all London Council funding: | | 2023 | 2022 | |
| | | £ | £ | |
| Refuge services | | 249,816 | 249,798 | |
| Community advice advocacy and support | | 36,506 | 226,863 | |
| Therapeutic | | - | 190,052 | |
| Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership | | - | 1,033,846 | |
| | | <u>286,322</u> | <u>1,700,559</u> | |

4 Analysis of expenditure

Charitable activities

| | Provision and Prevention | | | | | | Partnership | | Governance costs £ | 2023 Total £ | 2022 Total £ |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---|------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|---|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | Cost of raising funds £ | Refuge accommodation £ | Community advice, advocacy and support £ | Therapeutic £ | Children and Young People £ | Other services (*) £ | Ascent Plus and other Partnerships £ | Support costs £ | | | |
| Staff (Note 6) | 186,496 | 2,253,809 | 4,444,782 | 1,250,540 | 395,272 | 50,809 | 202,642 | 1,504,487 | 127,874 | 10,416,711 | 10,363,938 |
| Partnerships | - | 91,323 | 291,507 | 21,061 | - | - | 901,711 | - | - | 1,305,602 | 2,531,493 |
| Children and service users | 606 | 73,198 | 181,713 | 42,455 | 3,767 | 30,742 | 118,164 | 1,011 | - | 451,656 | 763,849 |
| IT and Facilities | 31,234 | 154,995 | 238,823 | 89,252 | 22,872 | 3,691 | 12,637 | 127,747 | 25,575 | 706,826 | 779,022 |
| Occupancy, Maintenance and Services | 10,055 | 1,355,559 | 173,531 | 113,113 | 1,858 | 3,175 | 6,115 | 22,063 | 40,920 | 1,726,389 | 1,667,674 |
| Professional Fees and Other | 74,486 | 12,666 | 46,251 | 3,868 | 85 | 26,479 | 26,016 | 425,811 | 34,476 | 650,138 | 821,436 |
| | 302,877 | 3,941,550 | 5,376,607 | 1,520,289 | 423,854 | 114,896 | 1,267,285 | 2,081,119 | 228,845 | 15,257,322 | 16,927,412 |
| Support costs | 89,128 | 771,991 | 724,676 | 389,242 | 62,014 | 7,405 | 36,663 | (2,081,119) | - | - | - |
| Governance costs | 1,138 | 57,446 | 84,817 | 24,870 | 8,810 | 7,265 | 44,499 | - | (228,845) | - | - |
| Total expenditure 2023 | 393,143 | 4,770,987 | 6,186,100 | 1,934,401 | 494,678 | 129,566 | 1,348,447 | - | - | 15,257,322 | 16,927,412 |
| Total expenditure 2022 | 291,306 | 4,197,894 | 6,198,066 | 1,817,411 | 643,773 | 527,149 | 3,251,813 | - | - | 16,927,412 | |

Of the total expenditure, £8,897,392 was unrestricted (2022: £10,109,851) and £6,359,930 was restricted (2022: £6,817,561).

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

4 Analysis of expenditure (prior year comparative information)

| | Charitable activities | | | | | | | Support costs | Governance costs | 2022 Total | 2021 Total |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | Provision and Prevention | | | | | Partnership | | | | | |
| | Cost of raising funds | Refuge accommodation | Community advice, advocacy and support | Therapeutic | Children and Young People | Other services (*) | Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships | | | | |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Staff (Note 6) | 62,255 | 1,896,844 | 4,422,506 | 1,390,751 | 491,186 | 283,386 | 430,537 | 1,300,627 | 85,846 | 10,363,938 | 8,907,668 |
| Partnerships | - | 91,323 | 279,722 | - | - | - | 2,160,448 | - | - | 2,531,493 | 2,398,804 |
| Children and service users | 517 | 107,000 | 216,956 | 25,277 | 10,577 | 52,207 | 351,315 | - | - | 763,849 | 1,178,702 |
| IT and Facilities | 25,929 | 204,988 | 249,501 | 72,552 | 29,019 | 50,342 | 24,033 | 105,504 | 17,154 | 779,022 | 958,033 |
| Occupancy, Maintenance and Services | 29,149 | 1,228,656 | 174,975 | 82,902 | 16,699 | 7,031 | 9,931 | 90,885 | 27,446 | 1,667,674 | 1,630,598 |
| Professional Fees and Other | 84,024 | 6,150 | 46,938 | 2,424 | 14,031 | 28,058 | 91,825 | 525,986 | 22,000 | 821,436 | 518,360 |
| | 201,874 | 3,534,961 | 5,390,598 | 1,573,906 | 561,512 | 421,024 | 3,068,089 | 2,023,002 | 152,446 | 16,927,412 | 15,592,165 |
| Support costs | 86,274 | 624,329 | 750,471 | 226,792 | 76,341 | 104,975 | 153,820 | (2,023,002) | - | - | - |
| Governance costs | 3,158 | 38,604 | 56,997 | 16,713 | 5,920 | 1,150 | 29,904 | - | (152,446) | - | - |
| Total expenditure 2022 | 291,306 | 4,197,894 | 6,198,066 | 1,817,411 | 643,773 | 527,149 | 3,251,813 | - | - | 16,927,412 | 15,592,165 |
| Total expenditure 2021 | 627,761 | 3,770,426 | 5,139,602 | 1,492,002 | 645,578 | 227,040 | 3,689,756 | - | - | 15,592,165 | |

Of the total expenditure, £10,109,851 was unrestricted (2021: £8,273,102) and £6,817,561 was restricted (2021: £7,319,063).

(*) Other services includes prior year designated COVID-19 appeal funds amounting to £350,000 which was expended on staff and other costs relating to the pandemic in 2021/22.

5 Net (expenditure)/income for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Depreciation | 103,669 | 100,190 |
| Interest payable | 20,139 | - |
| Operating lease rentals: | | |
| Property | 776,247 | 1,031,292 |
| Other | 60,610 | 22,828 |
| Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT): | | |
| Audit (statutory audit) | 23,200 | 13,115 |
| Prior year underaccrual (statutory audit) | 7,797 | - |
| Other services | - | 1,390 |
| | 1,061,462 | 1,170,415 |

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Salaries and wages | 8,064,069 | 7,899,261 |
| Social security costs | 794,994 | 735,849 |
| Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes | 224,838 | 223,406 |
| Redundancy and termination payments | - | 73,376 |
| Staff training, supervision, travel and volunteer costs | 275,052 | 250,005 |
| Sessional counsellors and self employed | 367,128 | 559,980 |
| Agency & locum staff | 636,415 | 594,098 |
| Other forms of employee benefits | 54,215 | 27,963 |
| | 10,416,711 | 10,363,938 |

Staff costs above have been allocated to expenditure as follows:

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Cost of raising funds | 186,496 | 62,255 |
| Refuge accommodation | 2,253,809 | 1,896,844 |
| Community advice, advocacy and support | 4,444,782 | 4,422,506 |
| Therapeutic | 1,250,540 | 1,390,751 |
| Children and Young People | 395,272 | 491,186 |
| Other services | 50,809 | 283,386 |
| Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships | 202,642 | 430,537 |
| Support and governance | 1,632,361 | 1,386,473 |
| | 10,416,711 | 10,363,938 |

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) during the year between:

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|-------------------|------|------|
| | No. | No. |
| £60,000 – £69,999 | 3 | 1 |
| £70,000 – £79,999 | 1 | 2 |

All higher paid staff are members of the key management personnel.

The total employee benefits paid to the key management personnel (Chief Executive Officer, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Services and Director of Business Development) were £343,071 (2021: £381,471). Employee benefits included employer pension contributions, on call payments and employer NI.

Pensions paid in respect of the key management personnel above amounted to £8,896 (2022: £15,528).

One charity trustee received a payment of £150 for other services supplied to the charity (2022: £nil). Reimbursement of travel and other expenses to trustees in 2023 was £253 (2022: £75).

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

| | 2023 No. | 2022 No. |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Cost of raising funds | 5.0 | 2.0 |
| Refuge accommodation | 56.7 | 60.7 |
| Community advice, advocacy and support | 125.9 | 136.2 |
| Therapeutic | 30.7 | 35.5 |
| Children and Young People | 13.3 | 16.1 |
| Other services | 1.3 | 2.0 |
| Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships | 5.7 | 8.6 |
| Support and governance | 41.9 | 36.5 |
| | 280.5 | 297.6 |
| | 280.5 | 297.6 |

8 Related party transactions

Total donations from 1 trustee was £518 (2022: £658).

9 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10a Tangible fixed assets

| | Play area £ | Freehold property £ | Fixtures and fittings £ | Total £ |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| Cost or valuation | | | | |
| At the start of the year | 51,908 | 961,662 | 256,943 | 1,270,513 |
| Additions in year | - | - | 21,572 | 21,572 |
| | 51,908 | 961,662 | 278,515 | 1,292,085 |
| Depreciation | | | | |
| At the start of the year | 51,908 | 171,068 | 207,004 | 429,980 |
| Charge for the year | - | 11,383 | 25,383 | 36,766 |
| | 51,908 | 182,451 | 232,387 | 466,746 |
| Net book value | | | | |
| At the end of the year | - | 779,211 | 46,128 | 825,339 |
| | - | 790,594 | 49,939 | 840,533 |

Land with a value of £480,831 (2021: £480,831) is included within freehold property and not depreciated.
All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

10b Intangible fixed assets

| | Software £ | Total £ |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Cost or valuation | | |
| At the start of the year | 315,060 | 315,060 |
| Additions in year | 77,583 | - |
| | 392,643 | 392,643 |
| Depreciation | | |
| At the start of the year | 242,331 | 242,331 |
| Charge for the year | 66,903 | 66,903 |
| | 309,234 | 309,234 |
| Net book value | | |
| At the end of the year | 83,409 | 83,409 |
| | 72,729 | 72,729 |

11 Debtors

| | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Amounts due from Local Authorities and government agencies | 1,794,867 | 1,276,622 |
| Other debtors | 147,106 | 78,709 |
| Prepayments | 106,407 | 95,896 |
| Accrued income | 556,690 | 594,201 |
| | 2,605,070 | 2,045,428 |
| | 2,605,070 | 2,045,428 |

Solace Women's Aid

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

| | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Trade creditors | 570,301 | 834,570 |
| Taxation and social security | 252,712 | 275,249 |
| Other creditors | 29,757 | 94,199 |
| Provision- see 12a below | 250,000 | 105,000 |
| Funds held on behalf of clients | 22,286 | 21,174 |
| CBILS Loan payable (see note 13 below) | 254,027 | 182,018 |
| Accruals | 672,356 | 638,896 |
| Deferred income - see 12b below | 720,835 | 1,309,558 |
| | <u>2,772,274</u> | <u>3,460,664</u> |

12a Provision

The provision at the balance sheet date was the estimated settlement cost relating to the planned exit at one of our services. The timing of the settlement has not yet been agreed with the funder.

| | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Balance at the beginning of the year | 105,000 | - |
| Amount released to expenditure in the year | (105,000) | 105,000 |
| Amount charged to expenditure in the year | <u>250,000</u> | |
| Balance at the end of the year | <u>250,000</u> | <u>105,000</u> |

12b Deferred income

Deferred income comprises income received in advance on contracts and projects which are delivered in the following year.

| | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Balance at the beginning of the year | 1,309,558 | 1,078,618 |
| Amount released to income in the year | (1,309,558) | (1,078,618) |
| Amount deferred in the year | <u>720,835</u> | <u>1,309,558</u> |
| Balance at the end of the year | <u>720,835</u> | <u>1,309,558</u> |

13 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

| | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
|--------------------|---------------|----------------|
| CBILS Loan payable | <u>65,654</u> | <u>317,982</u> |

13a Loans payable

Loans payable includes £319,681 (2022: £500,000) relating to the government backed Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, which carries interest at 6.5% and a final Scheme payable to Social Investment Business FM Limited (SIB).

Interest is charged at 6.5% and monthly capital and interest payments commenced in July 2022 and is planned to end by March 2024.

The government paid interest of £45,000 and an arrangement fee of £20,000 to SIB on behalf of Solace, this has been recognised as a donation in kind in note 2 of the financial statements in prior year 2022.

| | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Capital repayments are due as follows: | | |
| - up to one year (see note 12) | 254,027 | 182,018 |
| - two to five years (see note 13) | 65,654 | 317,982 |
| Balance at the end of the year | <u>319,681</u> | <u>500,000</u> |

The loan is secured with a debenture charge over the charity's assets in favour of SIB.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

| | General unrestricted | Designated | Restricted | Total funds |
|--|-------------------------|----------------|------------|------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Tangible fixed assets | - | 825,339 | - | 825,339 |
| Intangible fixed assets | - | 83,409 | - | 83,409 |
| Net current assets | 1,158,007 | - | - | 1,158,007 |
| Non current liabilities | (65,654) | - | - | (65,654) |
| Net assets at the end of the year | 1,092,353 | 908,748 | - | 2,001,101 |

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

| | General unrestricted | Designated | Restricted | Total funds |
|--|-------------------------|----------------|------------|------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Tangible fixed assets | - | 913,262 | - | 913,262 |
| Net current assets | 1,507,461 | - | - | 1,507,461 |
| Non current liabilities | (317,982) | - | - | (317,982) |
| Net assets at the end of the year | 1,189,479 | 913,262 | - | 2,102,741 |

15 Movements in funds (current year)

| | At the start of the year | Income & gains | Expenditure & losses | Transfers | At the end of the year |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Restricted funds: | | | | | |
| Provision and Prevention | | | | | |
| Refuge services | - | 1,103,632 | (1,166,185) | 62,553 | - |
| Community advice, advocacy & support | - | 1,594,258 | (1,609,814) | 15,556 | - |
| Therapeutic | - | 1,919,511 | (1,930,044) | 10,533 | - |
| Children and Young People | - | 425,022 | (436,014) | 10,992 | - |
| Other services | - | 42,497 | (41,948) | (549) | - |
| Partnership work | | | | | |
| Ascent Plus and other partnership | - | 1,168,924 | (1,175,925) | 7,001 | - |
| Total restricted funds | - | 6,253,844 | (6,359,930) | 106,086 | - |
| Unrestricted funds: | | | | | |
| Designated funds: | | | | | |
| Capital | 913,262 | - | (103,669) | 99,155 | 908,748 |
| Total designated funds | 913,262 | - | (103,669) | 99,155 | 908,748 |
| General funds | 1,189,479 | 8,901,838 | (8,793,723) | (205,241) | 1,092,353 |
| Total unrestricted funds | 2,102,741 | 8,901,838 | (8,897,392) | (106,086) | 2,001,101 |
| Total funds | 2,102,741 | 15,155,682 | (15,257,322) | - | 2,001,101 |

15a Movements in funds (prior year)

| | At the start of the year | Income & gains | Expenditure & losses | Transfers | At the end of the year |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Restricted funds: | | | | | |
| Provision and Prevention | | | | | |
| Refuge services | - | 487,743 | (542,599) | 54,856 | - |
| Community advice, advocacy & support | - | 766,094 | (756,677) | (9,417) | - |
| Therapeutic | - | 1,710,618 | (1,800,380) | 89,762 | - |
| Children and Young People | - | 531,142 | (580,395) | 49,253 | - |
| Other services | - | 48,253 | (48,253) | - | - |
| Partnership work | | | | | |
| Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership | - | 3,070,654 | (3,089,257) | 18,603 | - |
| Total restricted funds | - | 6,614,504 | (6,817,561) | 203,057 | - |
| Unrestricted funds: | | | | | |
| Designated funds: | | | | | |
| Capital | 950,672 | - | (100,190) | 62,780 | 913,262 |
| COVID-19 appeal | 350,000 | - | (350,000) | - | - |
| Total designated funds | 1,300,672 | - | (450,190) | 62,780 | 913,262 |
| General funds | 1,368,059 | 9,746,918 | (9,659,660) | (265,837) | 1,189,479 |
| Total unrestricted funds | 2,668,731 | 9,746,918 | (10,109,850) | (203,057) | 2,102,741 |
| Total funds | 2,668,731 | 16,361,422 | (16,927,411) | - | 2,102,741 |

Purposes of restricted funds

Refuge services: This fund is dedicated to help the women and children staying in our refuges. Restrictd funding was received from London Councils (via Ashiana lead partner) for the complex needs refuge in Camden; MHCLG funding for Family Support and Resettlement workers across our London boroughs. The MOPAC Tier 1 Accomodation funding supported several multiple disadvantage workers at our refuges. The GLA and L&Q Foundation funded the new move on accommodation NEST project across three London boroughs.

Community advice, advocacy and support: This fund is for the advice, advocacy and outreach work to survivors of domestic violence. Women and Girls Network have channeled London Councils funding for our Advice hub. Other funders include Southall Black Sisters for women with no recourse to public funds, Bruno Schroder Trust for a specialist programme, The Connections at St Martin-in -the Fields for a Women's Homelessness project, 3i Foundation for a multiple disadvantage worker, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Programme, together with the Irish Youth Foundation for the Irish and Irish Traveller communities and Trust for London towards the Immigration advice lawyer. The Olywn Foundation provides service user grants.

The Emigrant Support Programme included 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 which was deferred from 2021/22 and utilised in 2022/23. 9 months of the grant income received in 2022/23 was utilised in the period to 31 March 2023 and 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 has been deferred to the 2023/24 financial year and will be utilised by 30th June 2023.

Therapeutic: The counselling service is free to residents and service users of the organisation and is accessed through Ascent counselling and the North London Rape Crisis services. The funders are MOPAC, Women and Girls Network with London Councils funding, Tri-borough Angelou, Women and Girls Network, 3i Foundation for a wellbeing worker, BBC for child play therapy and more recently Richard Cloudesley and Big Give funding for these projects.

15 Movements in funds (continued)**Purposes of restricted funds (continued)**

Children and Young People (CYP): Our work in partnership with Redthread provide crisis intervention support to young people in hospital emergency departments is funded by MOPAC. WGN fund our work with Black and minoritised young women who have experienced domestic and sexual abuse.

Ascent Plus and other partnership: This fund was for the provision of Violence against Women and Girls services delivered through the partners om the Ascent Plus project funded by London Councils. DCMS funded our Labyrinth project.

A total of £205,241 unrestricted general funds was transferred, of which £99,155 was used towards designated funds as explained below and £106,086 was used towards supporting restricted charitable activities.

Purposes of designated funds

Capital: This fund represents the net book value of all tangible and intangible fixed assets. The expenditure reflect the movements in depreciation charges and transfers from unrestricted funds made to align the tangible and intangible fixed assets to net book value.

16 Reconciliation of net (expenditure) to net cash flows (used in) / provided by operating activities

| | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
|--|--------------------|-------------|
| Net (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities) | (101,640) | (565,990) |
| Interest received | (1,411) | (168) |
| Loan interest paid | 20,139 | - |
| Depreciation charges | 103,669 | 100,190 |
| (Increase) / decrease in debtors | (559,642) | 50,033 |
| (Decrease) / increase in creditors | (760,399) | 225,102 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Net cash (used in) operating activities | (1,299,284) | (190,833) |
| | <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> |

17 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

| | Property | | Equipment | |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| | 2023 £ | 2022 £ | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
| Up to one year | 827,151 | 775,122 | 12,749 | 15,214 |
| Two to five years | 65,932 | 1,125 | 22,440 | 45,396 |
| Over five years | 3,375 | - | - | - |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 896,458 | 776,247 | 35,189 | 60,610 |
| | <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> |

18 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.