



solace

Company number: 3376716

Charity number: 1082450

Annual Report and Financial Statements

31 March 2021

“I felt trapped during lockdown and thought I would not make it through. Solace helped me and my child survive and stay safe. They have given me a place to recover, nappies, medicines and clothes for my child, but most of all they have given me counselling and peace of mind for the first time in years.” Solace service user

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SOLACE AT A GLANCE

For the year ended 31 March 2021, Solace Women's Aid's (Solace) life-changing services touched the lives of 23,461 survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

The pandemic had a huge impact on our services and our Advice Helpline saw an increase of 26% calls from the previous year. During the year, we continued to maintain all our essential refuge accommodation, community support advocacy and advice including specialist and therapeutic counselling services and delivered new crisis emergency accommodation projects.

We continued to adapt our services and introduced new ways of working and have been able to deliver workshops with children and young people and therapeutic services since late last year. Some services and prevention work with children and young people were impacted as schools and venues were closed for long periods last year.

We responded to the Covid-19 crisis together with our network of partners and delivered an emergency accommodation project in partnership with Southall Black Sisters which was a life line throughout lockdown supporting 192 women, including 64 women with no recourse to public funds. The project has continued beyond the year end due to the ongoing nature of the crisis.

Our provision to women with specialist needs and multiple disadvantaged backgrounds continued to grow and we extended our reach with Housing First projects in Westminster and the WISER project in eight boroughs in London.

We extended our partnership networks to include other women sector organisations in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland and mobilised a new project to support women in November 2020, The Labyrinth project's aim is to join up women's centred outcomes across women's centres, children's centres and older women's spaces, providing holistic support to women to untangle the complexities within their lives and at time of crisis.

Solace received additional funding from statutory funders and the public in response to the pandemic. Our income grew by 40% and unrestricted voluntary income raised during the emergency appeal has enabled the charity to maintain its financial sustainability during this incredibly challenging period. Our staff team grew by 15% and our volunteers contributed 3,961 of hours; together they made all the difference to help us provide our life-saving services.

We increased the awareness of our services to the public and reached out to more women and supporters: with over half a million unique website page views, with our 12,666 followers on twitter alone reaching over 11 million people, with Facebook reaching 81,000, with 146,000 on LinkedIn and Instagram gaining over 5,000 followers.

STRATEGIC REPORT

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. The reference and administrative information set out on page 23 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 is of a world where women and children live their lives free from all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

Solace exists to bring to an end to the harm done through Violence Against Women and Girls. Our aim is to work to prevent violence and abuse as well as providing services to meet the needs of survivors particularly women and girls. Our work is holistic and empowering, working alongside survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse.

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.

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.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Solace is committed as an organisation to living our values on equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work and service provision. Solace understands its responsibilities for everyone to feel supported and live our values of intersectionality and inclusion at all levels.

During the last year, we reflected as an organisation on the Black Lives Matter movement for racial justice and have created an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan together with employees, volunteers and trustees. This plan is a living document and we have determined it shall be the driver of all that we do to meet the challenges of inequality still evident in society and in workplaces and stand up against all forms of oppression.

Solace recognises the need to make ongoing improvements to ensure we have a culture where all employees, volunteers and trustees feel they can be heard, treated fairly and have a sense of belonging to the charity.

We are committed to ensuring that our beneficiaries who access our services experience the same values that we uphold within the charity. All frontline services have monitoring mechanisms including an annual survey to seek feedback from our beneficiaries on our values which informs our overall actions plans.

Our newly appointed Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will play a pivotal role in continuing our journey and engagement with all stakeholders and further embed a culture which fully embraces equality, diversity and inclusion with Solace.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Overview

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'.

Solace's Strategic Plan for 2016-2021 focused on the three key aims of provision, prevention and partnership working to support survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

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.

Solace aims to achieve at least 85% satisfaction levels and our 2020/21 results demonstrates a good outcome.

93% rated there was a continued need for Solace services (2020: n/a)

88% rated the service met or exceeded their expectation (2020: n/a)

88% rated the service as good or excellent (2020: 91%)

73% reported that their service helped them feel more confident (2020: 80%)

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 received the ISO 9001 accreditation, renewed our SafeLives Leading Lights accreditation and achieved the Advice Quality Mark.

Charitable activities and outcomes

For the year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, Solace supported 15,798 woman and children through a range of services including refuge, advocacy, casework, therapeutic groups and holistic support. Some of the women and children we help use just one of Solace's services, while many seek holistic support by accessing multiple initiatives.

A total of 14,984 adult service users and 814 child service users accessed our provision services. Overall, this is a 6% decrease to the 16,087 supported in the last financial year due to the added complexities of operating during the pandemic and remote working.

The Advice Helpline provided support through a further 3,633 calls in 2020/21, an increase of 26% from the previous year, whilst the Rape Crisis Helpline and therapeutic services saw a decrease due to cancellations for face to face counselling which could not be substituted with virtual counselling. We have responded to these challenges and continue to adapt our working model to achieve higher outcomes.

This year, Solace has supported 550 people with no recourse to public funds in refuge, advocacy services, North London Rape Crisis and counselling services. Solace supported 134 male survivors in 2020/21, a 43% increase from the previous year. 60 survivors were supported in multiple disadvantage projects.

Our prevention work was also at the forefront this financial year with 7,663 individuals educated on various strands of VAWG and its impact, as well as best practices for responding to survivors. This is a decrease of

32% from last year and reflects the impact of Covid-19 and national lockdowns on the prevention services as schools were unable to equip for workshops and training as they would have prior to the pandemic.

SERVICE DELIVERY	2020/21	2019/20
PROVISION		
Refuge Accommodation	1,087	920
Community Based Advice, Advocacy and Support	12,364	11,220
Therapeutic	1,988	2,991
Children and Young People	359	956
Total provision	15,798	16,087
PREVENTION		
Children and Young People Preventive Group Work and Community Projects	4,284	7,461
Professional and External Training	3,338	3,723
Perpetrator Programmes	41	143
Total prevention	7,663	11,327
TOTAL	23,461	27,414

PROVISION

Refuge and specialist accommodation-based services

We manage twenty-two refuges offering 178 rooms across seven London boroughs for women and children fleeing abuse who need a safe place to stay in a crisis in order to recover from their trauma and rebuild independent lives. Our specialist multiple disadvantage refuge in Camden offers 24-hour support to women with mental health needs and problematic substance use. We operate a specialist accommodation hub in Southwark for women with multiple disadvantages and special needs leaving prison or at risk of street homelessness.

We provide second stage dispersed accommodation and specialist support services across two projects with a total number of 19 flats: 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.

Last year, we launched a Housing First Project in Islington in partnership with Fulfilling Lives in Islington and Camden (FLIC) to support women with multiple disadvantages. Solace Housing First is the first project of its kind to be run by a specialist VAWG provider whereby we provide the specialist support to this group of women and FLIC allocates and manages the flats. Since August 2019, we have also been running a Housing First Project in Westminster, funded by Westminster Council.

Refuge accommodation outcomes

- 54% were resettled through support.
- 71% of service users felt an overall improvement to their wellbeing after accessing refuge.
- 34% accessed treatment support for physical health, 24% for mental health.
- 59% felt more confident since entering refuge.
- 57% felt safer since accessing refuge.
- 63% had improved positive coping strategies and have seen a reduction in trauma and anxiety.
- 37% had increased access to benefit entitlements.
- 4.8 months is the average case length throughout refuge services.

Community based advice, advocacy and support

Advice

Solace's dedicated London Advice confidential line provides a first point of call for survivors and is available five days a week including one evening. The Advice team take calls from individuals and agencies across London who are concerned about domestic and/or sexual abuse and provide immediate advice and short-term support on safety planning, legal rights and options, housing advice, financial concerns, immigration issues, safeguarding and mental health issues. The team are able to refer to specialist services as necessary. The team also manage one of the two advice hubs in London within the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership of 14 organisations, which Solace leads.

Immigration Advice Service

Our Immigration service is an important part of our Advice Service and last year supported some of the most vulnerable women in London. All the women were supported with complex, insecure immigration status, and No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). We work with women who are eligible to make applications under the Domestic Violence rule, under their human rights and EU regulations. We work with migrant women and EEA Nationals with NRPFs who have experienced domestic abuse and sexual violence, including; women exiting prostitution, sexually exploited and trafficked women, women who are at risk of homelessness or are homeless and women needing refuge accommodation and other community advocacy services.

Women who do not have the right to reside and work in the UK are much more vulnerable to be subject to continued exploitation and violence and are often frightened to seek support due to the risk of deportation. There is a gap in the provision of immigration legal advice for migrant women who have experienced VAWG from a qualified solicitor; and extremely difficult for women to find immigration solicitors who offer Legal Aid. Our Immigration Solicitor provides representation for particularly complex cases at Tribunals and the High Court and so our free service is an absolute lifeline for women in highly dangerous and vulnerable circumstances.

Advocacy and Support

Our Advocacy and Support teams offer support to those affected by domestic and sexual violence in their community. Our teams supply information, advocacy and specialist services to increase service users' safety and meet a range of needs – these can include ongoing safety concerns, emotional or housing support, reporting to the police, legal options and support through court, help around child contact, benefits and financial advice. As well as providing direct assistance, we also work to build capacity and develop expertise amongst professionals and agencies.

We engage with professionals and community groups through a range of programmes, examples include:

- The Silver project supports women over 55 who have experienced domestic and/or sexual abuse offering intensive support and advocacy;

- The Irish Traveller project provides a specialist outreach and resettlement service to Irish women, Irish Traveller women and their children delivered in conjunction with our partner, the Irish Traveller Movement;
- The Women in Safe Engagement and Recovery (WiSER) project targets women who find it very hard to access/engage with support and who are facing severe and multiple disadvantage, delivered in partnership with Against Violence and Abuse (AVA), Fulfilling Lives Islington and Camden (FLIC), Hopscotch, IMECE Women's Centre, nia and Women at the Well using assertive outreach in a trauma and psychologically informed way;
- The Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) programme, a GP based domestic violence training, support and referral programme for primary care staff;
- Our Women's Resilience Awareness Project (WRAP) delivers a variety of courses and groups in Islington, Enfield and Southwark that aim to increase resilience and wellbeing for women with children who have experienced domestic and/or sexual abuse; and
- Southwark's Sanctuary Scheme is designed to prevent someone affected by domestic violence from becoming homeless through the provision of security works to a home, ranging from changing locks to the installation of an internal 'safe room'.

In addition, we worked with statutory partners on an innovation project to further develop our response to Domestic Violence perpetrators in Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark, working with high risk and repeat offenders to bring about a change in behaviour in order to keep women and children safer.

Community based advice, advocacy and support outcomes

Advice, Advocacy and specialist services

- 7% of service users had the perpetrator removed from the property.
- 12% had security improvements made to property.
- 92% of DDVC (destitution of domestic violence concession) applications made were successful.
- Of those who accessed treatment support for Sexual Health, 97% were better able to manage it.
- 3.7 months is the average case length throughout all community services, a decrease from 6 months last year.

Multiple Disadvantage services

- 59% had accessed various health services and were better able to manage.
- 10.6 months is the average case length.

Therapeutic Services

Our therapeutic services implement a person-centred approach, which is trauma informed and strength based practice and supports the service user to make choices for themselves. It ensures the full recognition of intersectionality and life experience and works within an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive framework. The service support women who have experienced domestic abuse and all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) with a view to provide support in the following areas:

- Address physical and emotional safety;
- Increase awareness of abusive dynamics in relationships – vicious circus of abuse;
- Increase confidence, resilience and a greater sense of wellbeing;
- Manage post-traumatic stress and support the client in their recovery journey; and

- Empower survivors to explore options and choices.

Counselling

The Solace Counselling team offers one-to-one counselling sessions to women, creating a safe space for them to explore the impact of violence on their lives. Experienced counsellors work with women to help them recover from the long term impact of emotional and physical abuse. Our counselling services are delivered as part of the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership as well as through separate contracts with Southwark, Waltham Forest and Islington.

Ascent Counselling Service: Offers one-to-one counselling to victims/survivors of domestic abuse and all forms of VAWG. The service covers one assessment and up to 15 counselling sessions. We also offer 6 sessions of pre-trial therapy. Solace offers this service in 11 London Boroughs (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Havering, Islington, Lambeth, Newham and Southwark).

Ascent Moving Forward: The Moving Forward Group is an 8-week educational programme for women aged 16+ who have experienced any form of domestic and/or sexual violence. These groups provide some first steps on the road to recovery from domestic and/or sexual abuse.

A safe space to talk, listen and be heard, while gaining emotional support. It gives women the opportunity to share experiences and information and explore and understand the impact of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse and the support to regain power and make positive choices. We provided 264 group sessions during the year.

Rape Crisis

The Gateway is a partnership between the four London Rape Crisis Centres (including North London Rape Crisis run by Solace), Galop, SurvivorsUK and the Havens, and is led by the Women and Girls' Network. Solace provide specialist complex needs: with our Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) supporting women with multiple and complex needs.

Our North London Rape Crisis team work with women and girls over the age of 13 who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any point in their lives. This includes child sexual abuse, recent and non-recent rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, women involved in prostitution, trafficking and female genital mutilation. North London Rape Crisis is part of the Pan-London Rape Crisis and Gateway service for survivors of Rape and Sexual Abuse working to ensure access to support is easily available across London.

The Rape Crisis service runs a free and anonymous helpline open daily to offer support as well as a regular caller service. The helpline provides specialist emotional support and confidential information about options and services available. The Rape Crisis Service co-locates ISVAs with partners including police and children's centres across Enfield, Haringey, Barnet, Islington, Camden, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea.

Specialist advocates, counsellors, group therapists and helpline workers provide non-directive emotional and practical support and information to help women understand the impact of abuse, recover from the trauma they have experienced, and if a woman chooses, dedicated support through the Criminal Justice System from report to court and afterwards. They also provide support and advice for the friends and family of survivors, as well as professionals working alongside them.

Holistic therapies

We run a variety of groups, well-being classes, as well as one-to-one body therapies to help survivors' recovery from trauma. Our group work includes: Trauma Informed Yoga, Tension and Trauma Releasing Exercises, Lesbian and Bisexual Group, Creative Group, Psychoeducational Group, Quarterly Women's Group.

Our work with children and young people, from the age of 4 to 18, has trained art and drama therapists, who use art, drama and play to help explore their feelings around the violence they have experienced, understand

that they are not to blame and rebuild vital relationships with their mother, carer, peers and siblings. 100% of children and young people expressed that using creative mediums was most helpful and the most enjoyable part of the therapy process which facilitated them processing and expressing feelings and memories that were hard to talk about.

Therapeutic Services outcomes

Ascent Counselling

- 95% felt an increase in wellbeing after counselling.
- 89% felt an increase in motivation after counselling.
- 87% felt an increase in self-esteem after counselling.
- 87% are more aware of their rights and are able to make clearer choices with their future.
- 84% felt an increase in confidence after counselling.

North London Rape Crisis

- 84% felt an increase in emotional and mental wellbeing.
- 84% had an increased understanding of survivors' rights and choices.

PREVENTION

Children and Young People

Our Children and Young People's (CYP) team deliver a range of services for families and young people living in the community. Such prevention work is a key strand in Solace's medium to long term strategy.

The POW Project

The 'Protect Our Women' project is a community-based programme for young people in primary and secondary schools aged 10-25 years in Haringey. Young people in schools and youth clubs complete 10 AQA accredited workshops on the topic of Violence against Women and Girls. The programme engages young people in creative ways with a Champions programme supporting young people to take learning back into their communities.

Hear2Change (Women and Girls Initiative)

Funded by the Big Lottery, the Hear2Change project works with young people in schools and community settings across Haringey and Islington with the aim of changing attitudes to Violence Against Women and Girls.

The project is led by a steering group of young women who meet regularly to decide on project priorities. The project also provides support to young people through workshops, assemblies and one-to-one advocacy work for those who have experienced, or are at risk of, violence and abuse.

Young Change Makers

On the back of the invaluable work with the steering group, a Young Change Maker group of Young People has been set up to raise awareness of VAWG through empowering young people to present their experiences and ensure their voices are heard. This aims to equip young people with specific skills and introduce them to useful strategies (whilst building their confidence and knowledge) in order to design and deliver campaigns of their own. These will be presented in a variety of mediums of their choice (art, drama, music, photography, poetry) and a range of audiences and venues (schools, libraries, community facilities).

Major Trauma Centre - in partnership with Redthread Youth Violence Intervention Programme

Solace, commissioned by The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), has teamed up with Redthread, a London-based youth violence charity, to allocate Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) in London's four major trauma centres. Our IDVAs provide specialist support for young people aged 11 – 25 who are admitted into hospital due to domestic and/or sexual violence and abuse.

Lighthouse

We are part of the first innovative Child House pilots in the UK, bringing together statutory and voluntary sector partners to address Child Sexual Abuse. The Lighthouse is the UK's first Child House, a service where children are put at the centre and given the support they need to recover and rebuild their lives. Specially trained medical, advocacy, social care, police, and therapeutic support is delivered from one place, working together to provide a coordinated approach to supporting children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse. The project is led by University College Hospital and NSPCC with Solace providing a vital role in the Advocacy team.

CouRAGEus

We have joined together with a number of partner organisations (led by Women and Girls Network) to support BAME children and young people Pan London. Solace provides a CYP counsellor, a multi-disadvantage advocate and a community engagement worker to provide support and therapy for CYP experiencing various forms of VAWG as well as raising the profile of VAWG with children and young people.

Children and Young People outcomes

- Helped and supported 359 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 4,284 lives.

Working with perpetrators

Solace Domestic Violence Prevention Programme (SDVPP) is for men who have had a history of being violent or abusive towards a partner and want support to change this behaviour. The main objective of the programme is to increase safety for victims and children.

This is delivered in conjunction with our advocacy work in Southwark and outcomes included above in that section.

Training

We increased delivery of our training and learning programmes to an even wider audience and transferring our courses, webinars and policy consultancy work to online platforms finding exciting new ways to teach and raise awareness.

It has allowed us to be totally flexible in what material we produce and has taught us that there are many ways in which we can deliver it – webinars, Q&As, interactive training. Additionally, anyone can now join from anywhere in the country allowing us to have an even wider impact.

Training outcomes

- We have trained 2,659 learners during the year.
- We supported another 26 new workplace champions in completing our 3-day training programme.
- We now have 30 unique training packages available.

PARTNERSHIP WORK

Solace works in partnership with 42 other organisations in London as part of the London Violence Against Women and Girls' consortium and working in partnership is central to our approach to provide a comprehensive range of specialist support to meet the needs of women and children. We are an active member of the London VAWG Consortium and The Rights of Women legal advice, training and legal guides have provided an essential resource to our service users and professionals at a time when access to Legal Aid is severely diminished. We are also now in partnership with our Labyrinth sister organisations and partnerships including The Traveller Movement and The Connection at St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

The Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership

Solace leads the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership which has gone from strength to strength over the last eight years. We are continuing to deliver vital, high quality, specialist, advice, counselling, legal and NRPF services to women and girls affected by all forms of VAWG across the whole of London. This is the largest partnership delivering specialist VAWG services across London.

The 14 partners have worked well together through a hub and spoke model to aid thousands of women and girls in their safety, recovery and journey to independence. The services provided under this strand have enabled our service users to access therapeutic support and longer term group work, as well as advice, in recognition of the fact that each survivor recovers at their own pace and require access to specialist services led by and for women and BME specialists to aid their recovery.

Details of partners in the Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership are outlined in Note 3b of the Accounts.

The Ascent Advice & Counselling (A&C) Partnership outcomes

Our Social Impact Analysis identified that the Ascent A&C partnership created £6 of social value for every £1 spent on its services.

Over the eight years of the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership we have achieved great success, working with over 70,000 new users, achieving a huge range of positive outcomes such as advice and support in obtaining secure immigration status, positive living situation, improved health and well-being, increased safety and reduced risk for service users across London. We have worked in partnership with stakeholders to identify and respond to unmet needs and to provide vital, and often life-saving services to women and girls.

The services provided under this strand have enabled service users to access therapeutic support, bespoke group work, specialist advice and support; in recognition of the fact that each survivor recovers at their own pace and require access to specialist services led by and for those groups, to aid women's recovery.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the work of the Ascent A&C partnership, with all services being provided remotely during this period. Partners made this transition smoothly, ensuring that women and girls were able to access continuous support despite government restrictions. The work carried out by the strand has changed in response to women's needs. Women have presented to the project with higher levels of risk and need than prior to the pandemic. Mental health needs have become more acute, and women are requiring more intensive and longer support. Survivors have required support to access basic necessities, such as food parcels, and more stabilisation before being able to engage in trauma-work through counselling.

Despite these challenges, survivor satisfaction has remained extremely high, averaging 98% in the year 2020/21, reflecting the support offered by the partnership. During 2020/21, the partnership:

- supported 7,484 service users to access advice, advocacy, and casework support;
- delivered 14,358 individual counselling sessions, supporting women's self-esteem, confidence, and wellbeing, and enabling them to move towards independence;
- delivered 531 groupwork sessions; and
- supported 19 women with no recourse to public funds by providing them with accommodation and living expenses.

This service delivery enabled the achievement of the following outcomes:

- 3,985 service users reported reduced fear and/or greater feelings of safety;
- 2,509 women had improved self-esteem, motivation, and confidence to rebuild their lives; and
- 1,904 service users reported improve emotional health and wellbeing and physical health, are felt able to rebuild their lives.

Ascent Advice Plus provided a valuable increase in capacity, particularly in the partnership hubs, which helped to meet increases in demand following the easing of government restrictions. Capacity was also increased across the advice partners and hubs for 9 months through Covid-19 emergency funding from the Ministry of Justice, which also provided funding to support changes to IT infrastructure.

During 2020/21, Ascent Advice Plus enabled the partnership to:

- reach an additional 4,250 new service users;
- answer an additional 2,987 calls to the advice lines and 534 calls to the legal line; and
- provide casework support to an extra 797 service users, including over 12 weeks of support to 384 service users.

Specialist resettlement support is provided throughout the tenancy and beyond, to longer-term secure accommodation. The referral and allocations process is supported by the Clearing House, run by St. Mungo's. In 2020/21 20 women have been supported by the project and our specialist partners with a 100% tenancy sustainment rate.

The Emergency Accommodation Project

In May 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, Solace and Southall Black Sisters launched a Crisis Project which offers safe emergency accommodation with specialist support to women and children fleeing domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), across London during the Covid-19 pandemic. The project was supported by Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust.

The project is coordinated by Solace with support for women with no recourse to public funds provided by partners Southall Black Sisters. The project provides women with crisis accommodation for three months to enable them to flee domestic abuse/ VAWG during the Covid-19 pandemic and has supported 192 women including 64 women with no recourse to public funds. During their time at the project women are offered therapeutic support, assistance from specialist refuge workers and resettlement support.

The Emergency Accommodation Project outcomes

This service delivery enabled the achievement of the following outcomes:

- supported 192 women, including 64 women with no recourse to public funds during lockdown; and

- the project has been extended into the coming year due to the ongoing nature of the pandemic.

Labyrinth

We were awarded £1,614,288 by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) through the Tampon Tax Fund in November 2020 which will fund the Labyrinth project up to September 2022. We are thrilled to be working with women's organisations across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Labyrinth project was designed as a national response to support women's centres, women's groups and networks to help them, and the women they support, to emerge stronger from the damage that the Covid-19 pandemic is having on women's lives. The Labyrinth project aims to help women get to an empowered position – or the centre – through providing holistic wide-ranging support. The project is needs led and service user focused, placing women at the centre of their own interventions.

Labyrinth outcomes

- The project was mobilised and developed partnership networks during the financial year; and it incorporates a Grant scheme, The Empowering Women Fund, and has created a Centre of Excellence.

CASA

Solace has continued to lead the Casa Project with resettlement support provided by Ashiana Network, EACH Counselling and Support, IKWRO Women's Rights Organisation, Latin American Women's Aid and The nia Project. It is a partnership within the London Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Consortium which enables women to move-on from refuges to high quality, self-contained accommodation with affordable rents, for up to 2 years.

CASA outcomes

- The project was supported more than 20 women during the year.

Other

Solace is a member of National Women's Aid and Rape Crisis England and Wales which are both national federations leading on policy change and campaigns to meet the needs of women and children experiencing domestic and sexual abuse. We are members of Domestic and Sexual Violence Forums across London boroughs and attend MARACs (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) across a number of boroughs and work closely with local services and stakeholders.

We work in partnership with Jewish Women's Aid to deliver advocacy and support services in Barnet. Refuge accommodation is provided through leasing agreements with Housing Associations and other partnerships; we have a partnership with Barnet Homes Ltd in Barnet to provide refuge services to women and with Asha in Lambeth to provide refuge accommodation for South Asian women. We have continued to build on our relationship with Commonweal Housing through the Amari and Rhea Projects.

Solace is the lead for the WiSER project for women with multiple disadvantages and partners Against Violence and Abuse (AVA), Fulfilling Lives Islington and Camden (FLIC), Hopscotch, IMECE Women's Centre, nia and Women at the Well.

The CASA project is a new partnership since last year within the London Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Consortium, coordinated by Solace, with specialist resettlement support provided by members of the

London VAWG Consortium: Ashiana Network, EACH Counselling and Support, IKWRO Women's Rights Organisation, Latin American Women's Aid and The nia Project.

We work in partnership with Single Homeless Project (SHP) and FLIC on a Housing First service Islington and continue to work in partnership with Redthread to provide specialist support to young people affected by VAWG in three major trauma centres in London.

Solace is one of the partners in the 'London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS) 'No Recourse Fund', funded by MOPAC and led by Southall Black Sisters to meet the needs of women and children who are victims of domestic and sexual violence and other forms of gendered violence.

Women's Voices

Our women's involvement programme offers fortnightly peer support with input into policy and project development. Service users contribute to the development of all services in the organisation through Women's Voices.

Solace Ambassadors

Our Ambassador programme was launched in 2019 and we are creating a group of survivors who can draw on their experiences to help us raise awareness and campaign for change. They are supported to speak up for women on issues as experts by experience.

Public Affairs and Communications and outcomes

Public affairs

In 2020/21, we created a dedicated public affairs function to support the organisation to improve the lives of those who have been subjected to violence against women and girls, using the knowledge of survivors and of our frontline workers, and our experience in services to bring expertise to decision makers.

Our public affairs work seeks to use Solace's frontline expertise to influence policy, legislation and practice that will improve the lives of service users and establish Solace as a key voice on VAWG issues in Westminster and across London.

In the first year, Solace's public affairs function has set up a strategy for 2021-2024 (based on the current Westminster electoral cycle) and developed a public affairs and parliamentary policy which has been shared with staff. Three of our priorities for the year were to ensure that:

- women have access to safe housing to begin their recovery from abuse;
- The Domestic Abuse Bill protects migrant women and provides support for children who have experienced abuse; and
- services that support women and children who have experienced violence are adequately and sustainably funded.

In November we put together a briefing on the housing needs for VAWG survivors during the second lockdown to accompany our Empty fundraising campaign and based on our Safe as Houses report. This was shared with parliamentarians and led to a meeting with Shadow Minister for Communities and Local Government, Naz Shah MP, and an invitation to a housing focus group on the Domestic Abuse Bill draft statutory guidance.

As the Domestic Abuse Bill (now Act) went through the Houses of Parliament, we lobbied for improvements including extending the Bill to migrant women and the removal of the local connection test – our priorities for the Bill can be [found here](#) and we sent briefings to MPs and peers outlining this key areas for improvement as the Bill progressed.

In March, we published an update to [the Safe as Houses Report](#) with a series of recommendations for the UK Government, GLA and local councils. The report was launched at event with two London MPs, Florence Eshalomi MP and Neil Coyle MP, Pragna Patel from Southall Black Sisters and one of our Solace Ambassadors. The report was shared with ministers, shadow ministers, parliamentarians, Government officials and local authority housing and VAWG leads.

In March, Solace responded to the [Home Office's call for evidence](#) on their new VAWG strategy to set out our key recommendations on what Government should be doing to prevent VAWG and support survivors.

Solace has also responded to the following parliamentary inquiries:

- Public Accounts Select Committee inquiry on [Covid-19 and rough sleeping](#);
- APPG on ending homelessness inquiry into [Housing First](#);
- Home Affairs Select Committee inquiry on [Home Office preparedness for Covid-19](#); and
- House of Lords Public Services Select Committee inquiry into child vulnerability.

Media and Communications

As part of our strategy to engage with audiences old and new and constantly raise public awareness, we held a significant online event called Voices for Change: Activism and Solidarity. On the eve of the UN 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence, we were proud to host a panel of intersectional feminist activists. Our key speakers being:

- **Mona Eltahawy**, an award-winning columnist and international public speaker on global feminism. She is the author of *"Headscarves and Hymens: Why the Middle East Needs a Sexual Revolution"* and *"The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls"*;
- **Jenn Selby**, freelance journalist, writer, editor and women's rights campaigner. She writes for Glamour, Grazia, The Stylist, the Independent and the BBC;
- **Ngozi Fulani**, founder of Sistah Space, an organisation supporting African heritage women and girls affected by domestic and sexual abuse; and
- **Huda Jawad**, founder of Safety Across Faith and Ethnic Communities, supporting faith and BME communities to improve the response to domestic abuse and gender-based violence.

We also had the support of STACK agency who developed a campaign called Love bombing: Affection today. Abuse tomorrow.

The campaign was designed to highlight how abusers shower their partners with affection as another chance to use coercive control and gives a stark reminder of how 'love bombing' can play a part in the cycle of abuse. Just like in real life, abuser's romantic words are soon replaced with intimidating behaviour and other forms of abuse. Women in abusive relationships live their lives in a hyper-alert, anxious state, not knowing what mood or message awaits them each day. We put together information about love-bombing and coercive control from the work we do on the frontline supporting survivors of abuse and increased awareness and shared information on coercive control to our supporters.

In addition, we focus on reaching out to survivors, their families and friends so they know where to get help and how Solace can help them. This is one of our major communications objectives: making sure that victims of abuse know we are here.

We had a highly successful year with TV appearances and media inserts as part of the media's focus on domestic abuse and sexual violence as a result of the pandemic.

Quality Management

The quality of Solace's services reflects the commitment of our staff team and our determination to continuously improve our standards. We have invested in accredited training for staff and expanded our business development and resources infrastructure to ensure we have robust systems in place to deliver excellent services.

In 2020/21, we achieved a number of kite marks demonstrating the quality of Solace's work, including:

- Rape Crisis National Service Standards;
- SafeLives Leading Lights;
- Investors In People;
- Disability Confident Employer;
- Advice Quality Standard;
- ISO 9001 (achieved June 2021); and
- CHAS (The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme).

Volunteers

We received 3,961 (2019/20: 11,151) volunteer and professional hours from individuals and students who help us with our advice, advocacy, therapeutic and refuge services, alongside pro bono corporate supporters who contribute to various projects and awareness campaigns.

The value of professional pro bono services provided to Solace was valued at £88,553 (2019/20: £85,907) with a large proportion attributable to apprentice levy funding received from our corporate supporter Expedia and National Grid and specialist pro bono support from STACK Agency, Wavemaker, PHA Group and Roll Nine Productions.

We manage a programme of using volunteers to help with our services, especially therapeutic services and provide women volunteers with specialist training to enhance their skills. 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 £42,977. We also received many hours of volunteer support from our corporate partner McKinseys.

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.

Fundraising

We would like to thank all of our supporters during 2020/21, including those who have chosen to remain anonymous.

We have been successful in raising a combined value of £1,575,694 (2019/20: £336,432) in voluntary income through the diversification of our income streams.

Our work is made possible by the generous support and donations from individual donors, community groups and companies over the past year.

Our Emergency Appeal was an outstanding success with support coming from our loyal individual supporters, from Trusts and Foundations and Corporate donations. It made such a difference to women's lives who were

coming to us destitute having fled abusive relationships with nothing. We were able to pay for hotels when our refuges were full, buy food, clothes and medicine and support them and their children until we managed to find a refuge space or help them to move on. These funds helped with travel, moving costs and basic furniture packs, bedding and cooking equipment. We have never been more grateful that we could act swiftly in a dangerous situation throughout the pandemic.

Our staff also make a huge contribution to raising funds and our Immigration Solicitor organised a fantastic comedy fundraiser for Solace at raising valuable funds for our work. We ran our most successful Christmas Fundraising campaign ever with the help of the brilliant STACK agency, who also supported our Valentine's Day campaign.

As the year drew to a close we celebrated International Women's Day. Feminist journalist, Laura Bates, talked with gold-medal winning Olympian Tessa Sanderson CBE on the theme of strength through adversity

Our approach to fundraising

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 very 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 2020/21.

Plans for the future

We have just completed the final year of our Strategic Plan 2016-2021 and have agreed on our next Strategy from 2021-2026.

As we started to develop our new strategy, the Covid-19 Pandemic and all its devastating impacts, started to change the way that we work and deliver services. At the same time, as an organisation working intersectionally, we took time to review our approach to our feminism in the light of Black Lives Matters and providing support to Trans Women, as well as focussing on other areas including disability and class. This strategy has thus been developed in light of the lasting impacts of Covid-19 and our bold ambitions for change, equity and inclusion.

As we have grown as an organisation, we have become more visionary about what we want to do to support survivors of all forms of violence and abuse. We have diversified and strengthened our services to provide holistic support packages to women, children and men who need them. We have started to strengthen and build on our existing partnerships and develop our influencing work at all levels – amplifying the voices of the 23,000 people we work with each year.

Our new focus for the next strategy will naturally include continuing to focus on meeting the needs of women, children and young people, while offering services to male victim/survivors and to perpetrators of domestic abuse who wish to change their behaviour. We have six key outcomes that we are working towards: strategic influencing, partnership and leadership; organisational development and growth; long-lasting recovery and

lasting change; aspirations, education and employment; children and young people, and empowerment, engagement and accessibility.

Our aspirations to support ever more survivors of abuse is coupled with developing a strong and healthy workforce. Our ambition for the period 2021-2026 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. As we grow, we will do so making sure we keep our grassroots focus that makes our support so valuable to service users. We are working with all staff to realign our values as part of our People Strategy review for the next 5 years.

Trustees are looking to bring in an interim CEO following the departure of Ms Fiona Dwyer as CEO of Solace on 30 September 2021. Whilst the recruitment and appointment of an interim CEO is underway, Ms Judith Banjoko and Ms Retnadevi Thevarajah have been requested by the Board of Trustees to step in and lead Solace. With the interim CEO, the trustees plan to undertake an organisational cultural review which will support ongoing development of the charity.

In 2021/22 we will work with partners to ensure that our services are accessible to all women. Intersectionality is a key principle of the work that we do at Solace and underpinning this strategy and we will recognise the multiple and intersecting barriers that women face.

In 2021/22 we will implement a business development programme which will support income generation, in particular by increasing unrestricted funds to further enable us to meet the varied needs of our service users. We will develop our infrastructure within business development and other central services to support the organisation's growth.

We will continue to develop a cost benefit analysis for each of our services to demonstrate the incredible value provided by our specialist staff.

Financial review

The financial results for the year ended 31 March 2021 are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities, balance sheet, cash flow statement and notes to the accounts on pages 34 onwards.

Income

For the financial year 2020/21, total incoming resources grew by 40% from to £11,586,962 to £16,265,804. This is primarily due to new contracts and additional funding secured during the year across all our services and our Emergency Accommodation project during the pandemic. The demand for our services grew during the year which resulted in overwhelming support from our statutory partners, trusts and foundations, corporates and the public at large to enable us set up crisis projects, many of which with other partners, to support our beneficiaries.

Our refuge services grew by £218,052 with improvements in core rental income. Community based advice and advocacy services grew by £694,911 with new projects in Tower Hamlets and additional funding for specialist Covid-19 support.

Partnership projects for specialist advice, funding for women with 'no recourse to public funding' and crisis accommodation contributed to increased revenues of £2,446,247 during the year. This has enabled Solace to support 192 women including 64 women with no recourse to public funds during the pandemic, providing a crucial life line to the women. London Councils funding for our Ascent partnership work for more than £1.4million is detailed in note 3b of the financial statements.

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 30% of our funding base, followed by refuge provision 23%, Ascent and other partnership work at 23%, and therapeutic at 9%. Children and young people services focussed on prevention activities was at 4% and remains a core strategic goal for Solace.

Voluntary income from donations grew by nearly 368% from £336,432 to £1,575,694 through the support of the public, corporates and trusts and foundations. We received an overwhelming response to our Emergency Appeal during the pandemic which has helped the charity manage its overall financial position during the unprecedented year.

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

Expenditure

Growth through new activities has correspondingly increased resources expended by 34% from £11,626,761 to £15,592,165. The staff needed to deliver these charitable services has resulted in an increase in staff costs of £1,168,458 from £7,369,159 to £8,907,668 and similarly, delivering specialist support with partners increased partnership costs by £950,005. We directly supported women with meals, accommodation and other welfare needs and increased our direct spending by £908,762 to our beneficiaries.

During the year, we continued to focus expenditure to modernise our information technology and review of digital offerings to enable remote working provision for staff and a wider reach to our service users. This has resulted in higher spending on IT and service administration expenditure as illustrated in note 4 of the financial statements.

Solace remains focused on tight cost management and supplier contracts are reviewed periodically for better value for money propositions. The blended average annual cost per service user at £665 (2019/20: £424) was higher reflecting the costs of emergency projects and Covid-19 related costs during the 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 surplus of £673,639 (2019/20: deficit of £39,799). The surplus arose due to our successful efforts in fundraising and the Emergency Appeal which raised unrestricted funds enabling a sum of £350,000 to be designated for use towards ongoing Covid-19 expenditure in the coming year. 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.

Total fund balances at 31 March 2021 were £2,668,731 (2019/20: £1,995,092) of which £1,300,672 (2019/20: £1,030,643) were set aside as designated funds and the remaining £1,368,059 (2019/20: £964,449) represented general funds.

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. Unexpected and sudden changes in risks would be scrutinised by trustees over and above planned meetings.

The principal risks facing the charity are financial, operational, reputational and regulatory as 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 which adds further pressures on cash flow and overall financial management. In the coming year, a higher number of contracts are due for renewal which increases overall financial risks.

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 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 monitoring and projections. The use of key performance indicators for cash balances forms an important monitoring tool to ensure adequacy of liquid funds to meet our ongoing obligations.

Increased financial risks arising from a higher number of contract renewals in 2021/22 are mitigated through TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment) arrangements and the maintenance of adequate reserves to absorb central costs currently covered by contracts. Scenario planning has also been prepared to ensure that Solace continues to have sufficient resources to continue its operations and maintain 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. The operational risks are our services do not provide sufficient support for our service users, which could be 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, 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.

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.

As other charities operating in the sector, Solace has been challenged with equality, diversity and inclusiveness and has been put on the spotlight post year end with negative publications on racism. Solace is committed to being an anti-racist charity and has reviewed its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan with trustees, staff and volunteers. Progress against the plan is being monitored closely by trustees and the senior management team. Specialist training and awareness programmes are being delivered to all staff.

Regulatory

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.

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 2021 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, a minimum general reserves level of £1,296,128 would be considered adequate with a higher optimal target level of £1,351,010. The current unrestricted free reserves of £1,368,059 (unrestricted reserves less those related to tangible fixed assets and designations) is above the target reserve level and positions the charity to meet the increased financial challenges arising from additional contracts renewals in the coming year. The trustees have designated £350,000 as a Covid-19 fund out of the free reserves for ongoing crisis support beyond the year ended March 2021. 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 in regard to the 2020/21 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.

LEGAL 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	Devonshire House 60 Goswell Road London, EC1M 7AD
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. Helen Hughes	Chair
Ms. Natalia Schiffrin	Secretary and Vice Chair (Retired 12 December 2020)
Ms. Kirsty Telford	Vice Chair (from 24 June 2021)
Ms. Jasbir Sandhu	Treasurer (returned from maternity leave on 26 January 2021)
Ms. Vivien Ma	(Appointed 22 April 2020) Acting Treasurer (From 25 June 2020 up to 25 January 2021)
Ms. Yasmin Becker	(Appointed 22 April 2020)
Ms. Alice Dyke	(Resigned 25 March 2021)
Ms. Teresa Hoey	
Ms. Maureen Hopcroft	(Appointed 22 April 2020)
Ms. Emily Florence Hutchings	
Ms. Heather Mah	
Ms. Margaret Osimen	

Principal staff

Ms. Fiona Dwyer	Chief Executive Officer (left 30 September 2021)
Ms. Retna Thevarajah	Chief Operating Officer (up to 30 September 2021) Joint Interim Chief Executive Officers (wef 1 October 2021)
Ms. Judith Banjoko	Director of Services (up to 30 September 2021) Joint Interim Chief Executive Officers (wef 1 October 2021)
Ms. Jane Jutsum	Director of Business Development

Bankers	HSBC plc 1 Aldermans Hill London, N13 4YE
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Solicitors	Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP 134 Edmund Street Birmingham, B3 2ES
	Bates Wells & Braithwaite London LLP 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE

Auditor	Moore Kingston Smith Devonshire House 60 Goswell Road, London, EC1M 7AD
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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. One third of members must resign each year, with the longest standing members resigning first.

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 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. Helen Hughes
Secretary	Ms. Natalia Schiffrin
Vice Chair	Ms. Natalia Schiffrin (retired 12 December 2020) Ms. Kirsty Telford (appointed 25 March 2021)
Treasurer	Ms. Jasbir Sandhu (returned from maternity leave on 26 January 2021) Ms. Vivien Ma (acting treasurer from 25 June 2020 to 25 January 2021)

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. Yasmin Becker.

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. Chair – Ms. Jasbir Sandhu.

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. Teresa Hoey.

Services sub-committee: Scrutinises operational top-level reports and internal audits; discusses policy, devises and reviews the service operations strategy. Chair – Ms. Maureen Hopcroft.

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 (Business Development); Ms. Helena Dollimore (Business Development); Ms. Kerri Podobnik (Finance and Resources); and Ms. Jennifer Bosjacki (Finance and Resources).

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 a Deputy Director of Service Excellence, five Heads of Services and one Deputy who meet with the Directors and CEO on a fortnightly monthly basis.

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

Related party transactions

Related party transaction during the year related to professional pro bono services and valued at £2,500 (2020: £1,500), and donations from 4 trustees totalling £1,300 (2019: £1,661).

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.

In so 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 2021 was 12 (2019/20 - 14). 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 3 November and signed on their behalf by



Helen Hughes - Chair

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Solace Women's Aid ('the company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of 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 2021 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. 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.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, 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 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 or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the

work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

- 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 [x], 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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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 2 December 2021

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

Devonshire House
60 Goswell Road
London
EC1M 7AD

Solace Women's Aid

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

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	1,235,971	339,723	1,575,694	317,739	18,693	336,432
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	3	3,393,459	420,402	3,813,861	3,181,191	414,618	3,595,809
Community based advice, advocacy and support	3	4,090,444	825,408	4,915,852	3,708,526	512,415	4,220,941
Therapeutic	3	43,400	1,424,363	1,467,763	43,400	1,489,722	1,533,122
Children and Young People	3	242,301	392,429	634,730	73,853	499,031	572,884
Other services	3	82,975	100,664	183,639	97,472	-	97,472
Partnership work							
Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships	3	-	3,674,265	3,674,265	-	1,228,018	1,228,018
Investments		-	-	-	2,284	-	2,284
Total income		9,088,550	7,177,254	16,265,804	7,424,465	4,162,497	11,586,962
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	251,761	376,000	627,761	164,606	18,693	183,299
Charitable activities							
Provision and Prevention							
Refuge accommodation	4	3,341,986	428,440	3,770,426	3,039,181	414,618	3,453,799
Community based advice, advocacy and support	4	4,258,349	881,253	5,139,602	3,915,583	587,938	4,503,521
Therapeutic	4	52,328	1,439,674	1,492,002	53,054	1,496,532	1,549,586
Children and Young People	4	245,835	399,743	645,578	81,888	500,009	581,897
Other services	4	113,507	113,533	227,040	111,750	-	111,750
Partnership work							
Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships	4	9,336	3,680,420	3,689,756	1,369	1,241,540	1,242,909
Total expenditure		8,273,102	7,319,063	15,592,165	7,367,431	4,259,330	11,626,761
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	5	815,448	(141,809)	673,639	57,034	(96,833)	(39,799)
Transfers between funds		(141,809)	141,809	-	(96,833)	96,833	-
Net movement in funds		673,639	-	673,639	(39,799)	-	(39,799)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		1,995,092	-	1,995,092	2,034,891	-	2,034,891
Total funds carried forward		2,668,731	-	2,668,731	1,995,092	-	1,995,092

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.

Solace Women's Aid

Balance sheet

Company no. 3376716

As at 31 March 2021

	Note	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible fixed assets	10		950,672		995,643
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	2,095,461		1,595,816	
Cash at bank and in hand		2,676,142		1,042,666	
			<u>4,771,603</u>	<u>2,638,482</u>	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>3,053,544</u>		<u>1,639,033</u>	
Net current assets			<u>1,718,059</u>		999,449
Total assets	14		<u><u>2,668,731</u></u>		<u><u>1,995,092</u></u>
The funds of the charity:	15				
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		1,300,672		1,030,643	
General funds		1,368,059		964,449	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>2,668,731</u>		<u>1,995,092</u>
Total charity funds			<u><u>2,668,731</u></u>		<u><u>1,995,092</u></u>

Approved by the trustees on 3 November and signed on their behalf by

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.



Helen Hughes
Chair



Jasbir Sandhu
Treasurer

Solace Women's Aid

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	£	2020 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities:	16				
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities			1,676,219		301,363
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		-		2,284	
Purchase of fixed assets		(42,743)		(178,190)	
Net cash used in investing activities			(42,743)		(175,906)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			1,633,476		125,457
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			1,042,666		917,209
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			2,676,142		1,042,666

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 Devonshire House, 60 Goswell Road, London EC1M 7AD.

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) Public benefit entity

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

d) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The impact of COVID-19 has been considered by the trustees and adjustments made for income generating activities which are at risk within the next reporting period. Funding from the Emergency Appeal which ran throughout the summer of 2020 has been designated by the Board of Trustees towards managing ongoing costs arising from the pandemic.

In addition, a three year loan from the government backed Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan was approved and paid to the charity to support liquidity management for at least 12 months after year end.

The reserves policy was revised during the year to establish adequate levels of reserves to safeguard the charity against unexpected fluctuations in cash holdings. Cash flow forecasts are regularly produced and reviewed with the trustees and these confirm the Charity is able to meet its obligations as and when they arise.

On this basis the trustees have concluded that they charity is able to meet its obligations as they fall due for at least 12 months following approval of the financial statements and accordingly the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

e) Income

Income is recognised when 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.

Rental income is recognised on an accrual basis and personal charges from service users on a receipts basis as this is the most certain form of income recognition.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service or subject to permanence conditions, is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

f) 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, refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

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.

g) 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.

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. 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.

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

i) 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 voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services and other charitable activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

j) 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 the following basis which are 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. The costs of running the communications service forms part of support costs.

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on transaction activity and staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

● Cost of raising funds	7%
<i>Provision and Prevention</i>	
● Refuge accommodation	33%
● Community based advice, advocacy and support	31%
● Therapeutic	11%
● Children and Young People	5%
● Other services	1%
<i>Partnership work</i>	
● Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	12%

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 attributable to the strategic management of the charity's activities.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

1 Accounting policies (continued)**k) Operating leases**

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

l) 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 shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

● Freehold land	Not depreciated
● Freehold buildings	2% on cost
● Office equipment, fixtures and fittings, IT and play area	25% on cost

m) Debtors

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

Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

n) 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 months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

o) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present 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 and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

p) Pensions

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 (*)	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Individuals	441,078	4,873	445,951	137,671
Community fundraising and events	86,733	600	87,333	61,103
Corporates	443,916	–	443,916	40,595
Legacy	–	–	–	5,000
Trust and Foundations	144,050	334,250	478,300	6,156
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (Furlough)	31,641	–	31,641	–
Donated services	88,553	–	88,553	85,907
	1,235,971	339,723	1,575,694	336,432

(*) restricted income raised from our Emergency Appeal for expenditure during the pandemic and utilised during the year.

Solace Women's Aid

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

3a Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Provision and Prevention				
Local Boroughs	1,213,725	77,829	1,291,554	1,236,025
Core Rents	1,854,325	-	1,854,325	1,586,116
Core rents (second stage)	213,547	-	213,547	241,905
Personal Charges	111,862	-	111,862	113,322
London Councils (note 3b)	-	249,816	249,816	249,816
MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	56,406	56,406	-
National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities)	-	-	-	97,307
The Tudor Capital	-	20,000	20,000	25,000
Hollick Foundation	-	6,707	6,707	8,849
Other	-	9,644	9,644	37,469
Sub-total for Refuge Accommodation	3,393,459	420,402	3,813,861	3,595,809
Local Boroughs	4,089,944	45,767	4,135,711	3,109,393
London Councils (note 3b)	-	226,863	226,863	226,863
National Lottery Community Fund	-	152,611	152,611	58,212
Cripplegate Foundation	-	31,105	31,105	32,150
MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	-	-	599,133
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Emigrant Support Programme (this grant restricted to Irish Traveller activities)	-	35,000	35,000	35,000
Trust For London	-	69,000	69,000	64,985
Comic Relief	-	42,910	42,910	52,878
Irish Youth Foundation	-	16,000	16,000	9,000
Southall Black Sisters	-	196,152	196,152	9,701
Cloudesley	-	10,000	10,000	23,626
Other	500	-	500	-
Sub-total for Community based advice, advocacy and support	4,090,444	825,408	4,915,852	4,220,941
Local Boroughs	-	240,170	240,170	94,947
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	43,400	574,374	617,774	637,820
Parliament	-	84,640	84,640	309,846
NHSE	-	132,118	132,118	117,139
London Councils (note 3b)	-	190,052	190,052	190,053
Tri-borough Angelou	-	68,904	68,904	76,561
Women and Girls Network	-	73,841	73,841	49,468
BBC Children in Need	-	45,264	45,264	44,788
Cloudesley	-	15,000	15,000	12,500
Sub-total for Therapeutic	43,400	1,424,363	1,467,763	1,533,122

Solace Women's Aid

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

3a Income from charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	142,800	142,800	140,000
National Lottery Community Fund	-	139,103	139,103	151,301
NSPCC	183,118	-	183,118	176,009
CYPS	57,349	-	57,349	57,349
Women and Girls Network	-	93,943	93,943	26,304
London Councils (note 3b)/(Tender Education & Arts)	-	-	-	16,504
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	16,583	16,583	5,417
Other	1,834	-	1,834	-
Sub-total for Children and Young People	242,301	392,429	634,730	572,884
External training	82,975	-	82,975	97,472
MOPAC	-	56,482	56,482	-
Respect	-	37,996	37,996	-
Other	-	6,186	6,186	-
Sub-total for Other services	82,975	100,664	183,639	97,472
Partnership work				
London Councils (Ascent, note 3b)	-	1,044,846	1,044,846	1,044,845
Wansworth Councils	-	21,623	21,623	-
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	-	2,141,622	2,141,622	144,168
MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	149,361	149,361	39,005
Greater London Authority	-	92,395	92,395	39,005
Department of Culture, Media and Digital	-	224,418	224,418	-
Sub-total for Ascent, CRISIS and other Partnerships	-	3,674,265	3,674,265	1,267,023
Total income from charitable activities	7,852,579	6,837,531	14,690,110	11,287,251

Solace Women's Aid

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

3b. Section 37 Statement

* Grant funding of £1,425,238 was received in 2021 (2020 £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. There was no unspent funding as at 31 March 2021.

	2021 Grant awarded £	2021 Grant spent £	2020 Grant awarded £	2020 Grant spent £
Ascent Advice and Counselling				
Solace lead partner	463,150	463,150	463,150	463,150
Rights of Women	67,555	67,555	67,555	67,555
Women and Girls Network	296,272	296,272	296,272	296,272
Ashiana Network	81,777	81,777	81,777	81,777
Nia	36,849	36,849	36,849	36,849
IMECE	69,583	69,583	69,583	69,583
IKWRO	76,267	76,267	76,267	76,267
LAWRS	72,861	72,861	72,861	72,861
Jewish Women's Aid	23,674	23,674	23,674	23,674
EACH counselling	90,489	90,489	90,489	90,489
Southall Black Sisters	53,619	53,619	53,619	53,619
RASASC	19,184	19,184	19,184	19,184
Asian Women's Resource Centre	36,979	36,979	36,979	36,979
CIAC	36,979	36,979	36,979	36,979
	<u>1,425,238</u>	<u>1,425,238</u>	<u>1,425,238</u>	<u>1,425,238</u>
Breakdown by expenditure:				
Staff costs	1,205,254	1,211,934	1,205,254	1,220,083
Beneficiary costs	56,221	50,669	56,221	54,558
Other costs	163,763	162,635	163,763	150,597
	<u>1,425,238</u>	<u>1,425,238</u>	<u>1,425,238</u>	<u>1,425,238</u>
London Council funding with other lead partners:				
Ascent Prevention	-	-	16,504	16,504
Ascent Refuges	286,339	286,339	286,339	286,339
	<u>286,339</u>	<u>286,339</u>	<u>302,843</u>	<u>302,843</u>
TOTAL LONDON COUNCIL FUNDING	<u>1,711,577</u>	<u>1,711,577</u>	<u>1,728,081</u>	<u>1,728,081</u>
As per note 3a) for all London Council funding:		2021	2020	
		£	£	
Refuge services		249,816	249,816	
Community advice advocacy and support		226,863	226,863	
Therapeutic		190,052	190,053	
Children and Young People		-	16,504	
Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership		1,044,846	1,044,845	
		<u>1,711,577</u>	<u>1,728,081</u>	

Solace Women's Aid

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

4 Analysis of expenditure

	Charitable activities							Support costs £	Governance costs £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
	Provision and Prevention				Partnership						
	Cost of raising funds (*) £	Refuge accomo- dation £	Community advice, advocacy and support £	Therapeutic £	Children and Young People £	Other services £	Ascent, CRISIS and other partnerships £				
Staff (Note 6)	321,872	1,668,257	3,640,403	1,165,330	508,704	120,868	525,959	893,127	63,148	8,907,668	7,369,159
Partnerships		84,915	247,654	-	-	-	2,051,235	15,000	-	2,398,804	1,448,799
Children and service users	50,364	75,860	221,404	5,208	2,858	3,013	819,332	663	-	1,178,702	269,940
IT and Facilities	102,995	221,146	283,981	78,838	38,683	39,210	59,491	121,077	12,612	958,033	572,662
Occupancy, Maintenance and Services	21,250	1,187,597	215,201	65,838	12,171	5,243	17,526	85,594	20,178	1,630,598	1,464,779
Professional Fees and Other	29,086	41,390	61,115	6,893	17,516	45,392	21,344	280,484	15,140	518,360	501,422
	525,567	3,279,165	4,669,758	1,322,107	579,932	213,726	3,494,887	1,395,945	111,078	15,592,165	11,626,761
Support costs	98,049	465,401	433,017	159,805	60,736	11,628	167,308	-	-	-	-
Governance costs	4,145	25,860	36,827	10,090	4,910	1,686	27,561	-	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2021	627,761	3,770,426	5,139,602	1,492,002	645,578	227,040	3,689,756	(1,395,945)	(111,078)	15,592,165	11,626,761
Total expenditure 2020	183,299	3,453,799	4,503,521	1,549,586	581,897	111,750	1,242,909	-	-	11,626,761	

Of the total expenditure, £8,273,102 was unrestricted (2020: £7,367,431) and £7,319,063 was restricted (2020: £4,259,330).

(*) includes expenditure amounting to £376,000 relating to funds raised from Emergency Appeal during the pandemic

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

5 Net (expenditure)/income for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Depreciation	87,714	45,738
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	875,509	827,457
Other	12,470	9,079
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit (statutory audit)	12,200	10,300
Trustee expenses	90	623
	<u>875,509</u>	<u>827,457</u>

There was no payment or reimbursement of travel expenses to trustees in 2021 (2020: Nil).

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

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Salaries and wages	6,822,622	5,575,881
Social security costs	602,996	492,571
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	177,871	150,738
Staff training, supervision, travel and volunteer costs	204,836	224,705
Sessional counsellors and self employed	452,070	354,031
Agency & locum staff	568,072	542,093
Other forms of employee benefits	79,201	29,140
	<u>8,907,668</u>	<u>7,369,159</u>

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

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
£60,000 – £69,999	2	1
£70,000 – £79,999	1	1
£80,000 – £89,999	1	–
	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>

The total employee benefits including pension contributions of the key management personnel were £334,492 (2019: £315,594).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2020: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2020: £nil). See note 5 for trustee expenses.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

7 Staff numbers

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

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Raising funds	2.5	1.8
Refuge services	56.7	64.4
Community advice, advocacy and support	128.9	101.7
Therapeutic	34.4	26.7
Children and Young People	16.2	14.6
Other services	2.0	2.0
Ascent CRISIS and other partnerships	3.0	1.8
Support and governance	21.8	17.5
	265.5	230.5

8 Related party transactions

Total donations from 4 trustees were £1,300 (2020: £1,661).

Related party transactions during the year related to pro bono professional services valued at £2,500 (2020: £1,000)

9 Taxation

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

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold property £	Play area £	Fixtures and fittings £	IT & Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation					
At the start of the year	961,662	51,908	236,013	230,467	1,480,050
Additions in year	-	-		42,743	42,743
At the end of the year	961,662	51,908	236,013	273,210	1,522,793
Depreciation					
At the start of the year	148,302	51,908	161,071	123,126	484,407
Charge for the year	11,383	-	24,456	51,875	87,714
At the end of the year	159,685	51,908	185,527	175,001	572,121
Net book value					
At the end of the year	801,977	-	50,486	98,209	950,672
At the start of the year	813,360	-	74,942	107,341	995,643

Land with a value of £480,831 (2020: £480,831) is included within freehold property and not depreciated.

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

11 Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Amounts due from Local Authorities and government agencies	1,211,372	738,125
Other debtors	79,256	46,053
Prepayments	128,734	143,624
Accrued income	676,099	668,014
	2,095,461	1,595,816

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	747,786	393,107
Taxation and social security	253,847	327,740
Other creditors	41,970	56,606
Provision	105,000	80,919
Funds held on behalf of clients	43,936	27,889
Accruals	782,387	317,042
Deferred income – see 13 below	1,078,618	435,730
	3,053,544	1,639,033

13 Deferred income

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

	2021 £	2020 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	435,730	370,914
Amount released to income in the year	(435,730)	(370,914)
Amount deferred in the year	1,078,618	435,730
Balance at the end of the year	1,078,618	435,730

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

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	–	950,672	–	950,672
Net current assets	1,368,059	350,000	–	1,718,059
Net assets at the end of the year	1,368,059	1,300,672	–	2,668,731

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

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	–	995,643	–	995,643
Net current assets	964,449	35,000	–	999,449
Net assets at the end of the year	964,449	1,030,643	–	1,995,092

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At the start of the year £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:					
Voluntary income	-	339,723	(376,000)	36,277	-
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	-	420,402	(428,440)	8,038	-
Community advice, advocacy & support	-	825,408	(881,253)	55,845	-
Therapeutic	-	1,424,363	(1,439,674)	15,311	-
Children and Young People	-	392,429	(399,743)	7,314	-
Other services	-	100,664	(113,533)	12,869	-
Partnership work					
Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership	-	3,674,265	(3,680,420)	6,155	-
Total restricted funds	-	7,177,254	(7,319,063)	141,809	-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	995,643	-	(87,714)	42,743	950,672
COVID-19 appeal	-	-	-	350,000	350,000
Staff Contingency	20,000	-	(20,000)	-	-
Building Emergency Repairs	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
Strategic initiatives	10,000	-	(10,000)	-	-
Total designated funds	1,030,643	-	(122,714)	392,743	1,300,672
General funds	964,449	9,088,550	(8,150,388)	(534,552)	1,368,059
Total unrestricted funds	1,995,092	9,088,550	(8,273,102)	(141,809)	2,668,731
Total funds	1,995,092	16,265,804	(15,592,165)	-	2,668,731

15b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At the start of the year £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:					
Voluntary income	-	18,693	(18,693)	-	-
Provision and Prevention					
Refuge services	-	414,618	(414,618)	-	-
Community advice, advocacy & support	-	512,415	(587,938)	75,523	-
Therapeutic	-	1,489,722	(1,496,532)	6,810	-
Children and Young People	-	499,031	(500,009)	978	-
Other services	-	-	-	-	-
Partnership work					
Ascent Advice and Counselling	-	1,228,018	(1,241,540)	13,522	-
Total restricted funds	-	4,162,497	(4,259,330)	96,833	-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Capital	863,191	-	(45,738)	178,190	995,643
Staff Contingency	50,000	-	(30,000)	-	20,000
Building Emergency Repairs	30,000	-	(25,000)	-	5,000
Strategic initiatives	15,000	-	(5,000)	-	10,000
Total designated funds	958,191	-	(105,738)	178,190	1,030,643
General funds	1,076,700	7,424,465	(7,261,693)	(275,023)	964,449
Total unrestricted funds	2,034,891	7,424,465	(7,367,431)	(96,833)	1,995,092
Total funds	2,034,891	11,586,962	(11,626,761)	-	1,995,092

15 Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Voluntary income: Funding from individual donors and trusts towards the impact of COVID-19 on Solace services.

Refuge services: This fund is dedicated to help the women and children staying in our refuges. The main funders are London Councils' funding for the complex needs refuge in Camden, Tudor Capital's funding towards a family support worker in Islington and National Lottery Community Fund's funding for a family support worker in Haringey and Lambeth refuges. In the current year, MHCLG and London Boroughs of Bexley and Islington also provided emergency funding to maintain services at our refuges. Other funders outlined in note 3a.

Community advice, advocacy and support: This fund is for the advice, advocacy and outreach work to survivors of domestic violence. London Councils funded our Ascent Advice hub. In the current year, Solace received funding from the National Lottery Community Fund towards additional counsellors and well being workers. Other funders include funding from Comic Relief, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Programme for the Irish and Irish Traveller communities, Cripplegate for the Women Resilience and Awareness project, Trust for London towards the Immigration advice lawyer and National Lottery Community Fund for the Silver project helping those over 55.

The Emigrant Support Programme included 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 which was deferred from 2019/20 and utilised in 2020/21. 9 months of the grant income received in 2020/21 was utilised in the period to 31 March 2021 and 3 months grant income amounting to £8,750 has been deferred to the 2021/22 financial year and will be utilised by 30th June 2021.

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 London Councils, MOPAC, NHS England, Tri-borough Angelou, Women and Girls Network and the Ministry of Justice and more recently Richard

Children and Young People (CYP): MOPAC funded our work delivered to youths in hospitals with Redthread and NSPCC funds our work on the Lighthouse project with young people who are victims of sexual abuse. The BBC CIN funded various Art Therapies programmes with young children. In October 2016, the Women and Young Girls project 'Hear to Change' was launched which runs workshops and various support activities for women and young girls in London, this project is a five year project with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund. Garfield Weston Foundation continued to support a CYP worker this year.

Ascent Advice and Counselling Partnership: This fund was for the provision of Violence against Women and Girls services delivered through the partners outlined in Note 3b (S37 statement). London Councils awarded £1,044,846 for the management and delivery of the partnership strand.

Due to the pandemic, MOPAC and MHCLG jointly funded the CRISIS accommodation project with £2,141,622 and £149,361 respectively. Additional funding was secured from Wandsworth Councils for £21,623 and used with partners. The Department of Culture, Digital and Media have funded the Labyrinth project up to September 2022 and a total amount of £224,418 was used for women in 2020/21.

We received restricted donations from trusts and foundations including £150,000 from the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust and £133,750 from The Generation Foundation which helped our charitable emergency projects and services during the pandemic.

Purposes of designated funds

Capital: This fund represents the net book value of all tangible fixed assets.

COVID 19: Transfers have been made to create a designated fund for the ongoing life saving work and increased demand in services following lockdown in March 2020. The fund will be used towards emergency grants for survivors and crisis support staff in the coming year and will be fully utilised by March 2022.

Prior year designations for staff, building repairs and strategic initiatives have been utilised and future need in these expenditure categories considered within Solace's general reserves requirements.

16 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Net (expenditure) / income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	673,639	(39,799)
Interest received		(2,284)
Depreciation charges	87,714	45,738
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(499,645)	23,816
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	1,414,511	273,892
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	1,676,219	301,363

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	
	2021 £	2020 £	2021 £	2020 £
Up to one year	788,655	810,078	15,479	12,470
One to five years	66,379	208,142	39,429	9,011
	855,034	1,018,220	54,908	21,481

18 Capital commitments

Capital commitments as at year end related to IT infrastructure amounting to £22,950 (2020: £17,132).

19 Post balance sheet transaction

Solace received a Business Interruption Loan from the Social Investment Bank for £500,000 in June 2021 which is to be repaid in 3 years time with the first year interest payment covered by the Government. This is to support the charity with liquidity management during the ongoing pandemic.

20 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.