



The Haven Wolverhampton  
**IMPACT REPORT**  
2021/2022

Supporting women and children  
who are affected by domestic  
abuse and homelessness

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## The Haven's Mission

Our Mission is to provide support to women and children who are vulnerable to domestic violence, abuse and homelessness.

We achieve this by providing safe, emergency accommodation and community-based support services. We provide a 24-hour telephone helpline, a web-based live chat and one-to-one support in a safe environment.

## The Haven's Vision

Our Vision is for all women and children to live in a society free from oppression, homelessness, violence and abuse, and to promote and uphold human rights.



# Welcome

'Thank you' doesn't begin to express our appreciation to all our staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to provide a 24/7 service. They have ensured that we maintain the critical safety measures essential to safeguard women and children, and have focused on embedding new regulations and implementing best practice processes across all our services.



The challenges continued as we navigated the transition from the impact of COVID-19 to focus on accessing funding and resources to strengthen our service provision to respond to the ever-increasing complex and diverse needs for everyone who needs our support. We are grateful for the tremendous support of our donors, funders and partners enabling us to progress digital innovations to drive service user engagement, and continue developing our property portfolio, to provide a broader range of safe spaces so that families can be kept together as they rebuild their confidence and regain their independence to move on.

We will continue to ensure that we meet and exceed the standards of good governance as laid down by the Charity Commission and work towards our vision of being recognised as the partner of choice; for services to women and children experiencing domestic abuse.

**Stephanie Harris and Andrea Spence Ferguson**  
Co-chairs of the Board of Trustees

As challenging as this year has been, we are committed to delivering high quality safe services. We have continued with our plans to develop safe accommodation which includes a range of safe spaces providing women and children with options based on their specific needs.



Helpline Services developed a range of new initiatives in order to effectively manage calls and enquiries from both women and agencies seeking advice and referral. We are looking forward to achieving Helpline Accreditation status next year.

This year we have further explored digital transformation with the agile development of digital tools that will ensure women and children have a voice in shaping policy as well as enhancing service delivery.

We are grateful to all our partners who continue to work tirelessly with us, and our donors and supporters all of whom ensure that we live up to our vision and values.

None of this would be possible without our award-winning team who have been recognised for "innovation" in providing "excellent support". It is an honour to be recognised for the work that we do and I am proud of the entire team for the demonstrable impact we have made.

**Popinder Kaur**  
Chief Executive

## SPOTLIGHT ON

# Prioritising safety

## Supporting vulnerable people

Offering a “haven” to vulnerable women and children as a specialist provider requires a lot more than just acquiring properties and placing people in them; it goes way beyond simply offering a roof over heads.

As part of our ongoing commitment to developing services that centre the needs of women and children, we held consultations with the women in our services to look at ways in which we can make our accommodations even better.

During the last year, because of these consultations, we have continued to increase and vary our provision of safe accommodation. We have been able to increase the number of our safe houses and safe independent apartment units.



### What does it mean to provide "more than just a roof"?

- Providing holistic practical and emotional support for those we support.
- Working with police to place panic alarms and SIG markers on all properties so that calls are treated as urgent.
- Installing CCTV cameras outside all properties.
- Dynamically assessing risk.
- Providing consistent out of hours support.
- Prioritising safety and values in our recruitment practices.
- Designated Safeguarding Leads ensuring a robust response to safeguarding concerns across services.
- Progressing ongoing relationships with Public Protection Units, MARAC team and other key agencies.
- Fostering useful partnerships across the city to enhance support and service delivery.

# What women say about us...

"I feel positive about the future and can see myself living a better life without relying on anyone else. I feel I am now able to find a job and build a good future for myself. I no longer feel afraid or unstable. My self-worth has improved significantly." - **Deb**

"Coming into the refuge has helped me overcome my fears of going out alone. My controlling husband and in-laws told me that if I go out, I will be murdered and raped. I am now beginning to overcome my social anxiety. I have been able to gain my independence and overcome my fears by communicating and making friends with other residents, which has also helped me to build my confidence and self-esteem." - **Amandeep**

"I have been supported with a safe roof over my head, and access to support and benefits. My keyworkers are very nice and approachable, and they support me every time. My confidence has been built since being here. I have felt welcomed and accepted since coming here and I feel as though this is my home." - **Simone**

"Before calling The Haven's helpline and coming into refuge I was having a very traumatic time in Birmingham. I am so grateful for the amazing support that I have been given. There is definitely help here." - **Natalie**

"I have grown and taken so much from these sessions at The Haven. I have learnt so much about myself. I have a life. I have a future. I am strong. I know all the help and strength I have garnered from our sessions have made me grow and become strong enough to move on and be happy and to realise it is ok to have a bad day without being too hard on myself." - **Adi**

## SPOTLIGHT ON

## Challenging gender norms

## Rethinking gender and refocusing power

This year our Architect of Stories was one of the speakers at TEDx Wolverhampton. Her well received “idea worth sharing” was that rethinking gender and refocusing power could potentially bring an end to violence against women and girls. Breaking the cycle of domestic abuse and violence requires open conversations with young people about gendered norms and stereotypes that are deep rooted in a lot of our cultural beliefs and patriarchal value systems.

As a lead provider of Domestic Abuse services in the city of Wolverhampton for almost 50 years, we have seen consistently how the power dynamics play out in abusive relationships. It was with this in mind, that our MENgage and EmpowHER programme for students in year 9 and above was created. The programme covers topics like consent and respecting boundaries, misogyny, gender inequality etc., all relating to healthy relationships and the end of violence against women and girls.

Following last year’s soft launch, this year we aligned the programme with the requirements of the Education Inspection Framework, showing schools how the programme can be seen to support Ofsted outcomes, while illustrating their commitment to improving the behaviours and attitudes of their pupils.

For our 16 Days of Activism campaign this year, we discussed the topics explored in the programme via our digital channels and shared useful and easily accessible resources. For example, we demystified some myths and misconceptions about consent, we shared body safety rules that children and young people should learn to enable them to create boundaries, and we examined how society normalises rape, sexual assault and abuse and the impact this has on victims and society as a whole.

**“In one school, prior to the sessions, only 60 percent of students participating in the MENgage programme strongly agreed that violence against women and girls is unacceptable.**

**After the sessions, the majority recognised that they were not aware of the prevalence of abuse and violence. This lack of awareness can sometimes create an environment that enables abuse.”**

**– #haveninschools,  
16 Days of Activism  
Campaign, The Haven  
Wolverhampton**



## CASE STUDY

"Safe enough to disclose" – *Leanne's story*

Today we were encouraged to explore gender inequalities. We discussed the power dynamics in families, friendships, and communities. I was able to reflect on my own experiences and I felt safe enough to disclose that I had been sexually assaulted by a former student.

Initially, we were good friends, and we spent a lot of time together. After a few months, he started touching my thighs and making lewd comments about my chest. He would ask me to send him nude pictures, but I never did. I told him repeatedly that I was uncomfortable with this behaviour, but the harassment carried on until he left the school.

I had no idea who to speak to at school about the incidents and there was too much going on at home. I wondered whether I was overthinking things. I was worried that a complaint would not be taken seriously.

This session helped me recognise that I need support. I am thankful that my school chose to deliver the MENgage & EmpowHER programme. Without the support of the

"I had no idea who to speak to at school about the incidents and there was too much going on at home." - **Leanne**

coordinator, I do not think I would have disclosed my experiences to the school.

I have now been allocated a counsellor. I was also able to talk about the physical and emotional abuse I have been subjected to at home and my history of self-harming. I feel a lot more supported than I did before. I feel like I am in a better place.

**"I have learnt that consent is always needed from both people. Never have sex with a drunk person. Never have sex with an unconscious person." - *Tobi***

**"I have learnt about consent and to respect everyone's boundaries." - *Aryan***

**"It made me feel better to express my feelings without being scared I will be judged." - *Lee***

**"Today's session has made me feel more passionate about gender equality." - *Brian***



Please note that names have been changed to protect the identity of individuals.



# Helpline: 08000 194 400

Historically the focus of our Helpline has been to provide callers with safe housing or community-based support with the additional offering of practical and emotional support. This year, we have received a considerable number of calls from both service users and other agencies looking specifically for other support like our Counselling and Therapeutic Service without requiring accommodation services.

The Helpline remains the City of Wolverhampton's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for refuge and high-risk MARAC referrals and operates on a 24-hour basis.

We have continued to diversify and consistently promote the various means through which potential service users can reach us. This year saw an increase of nearly 50 % in the use of other means of contact such as Live Chat and WhatsApp.

Since last year's increase in self referrals, service users have continued to come to us directly, many of whom were referred to counselling without requiring housing or additional community support.

Our expertly trained, multilingual helpline team will continue to provide callers with a wide range of emotional and practical support, while also signposting to partners and other services if required, ensuring that wrap around support is identified and put in place at the point of admission.



"Without The Haven's helpline I would have been lost. They made me value myself. The person on the other end of the phone had a wonderful way of talking. She was very empathic and if I had a golden star I would have given it to her. This service was a great source of comfort. It is a wonderful service." - Yara



# Counselling & therapy



This year we introduced a 12-week programme of engagement for women accessing our counselling and therapeutic services. This was increased following feedback that eight sessions were not enough.

We have a well-established, well-led counselling and therapeutic team that operates efficiently with professionalism, adaptability, and a commitment to helping service users with their journey to recovery. Counselling is available in the following languages: English, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Pashto (Afghan), Arabic, Somali, Miburi, Swahili, Italian and Turkish.

We developed structured and solutions-focused support programmes that explored empowerment, recovery from trauma, and developing healthy relationships with the women. These programmes were designed to enable women to identify early warning signs and give them the knowledge necessary for them to make informed decisions to break the cycle of abuse.

**Free to Transform Programme:** helping survivors to identify abuse, recognise the impact and empowering them to develop strategies to recover from abuse and embark on their new journey of transformation. This is a 10-week programme, delivered virtually with weekly 1.5hrs sessions in groups of 6-10 women.

**The Dolphin Programme:** supporting survivors with parenting after domestic abuse by help them develop strategies to maintain balance in their child or children's lives, and guide them towards lasting health, happiness and success. This is a 6-week programme, delivered via MS Teams with weekly 1.5hrs sessions in groups of 6-10 women.

"It was a cathartic experience to be able to disclose everything that was on mind and talk about the feelings I was having. Having that outlet to express myself was extremely beneficial to my healing." - Cathy

"I really enjoyed our counselling sessions and I was gutted when they ended. I didn't feel pressured to speak about things I did not want to and we went at my pace. This is the best thing I have done for myself. It was really good for me. I don't think I've ever had a counsellor as good as you before and I've had a few!" - Sab

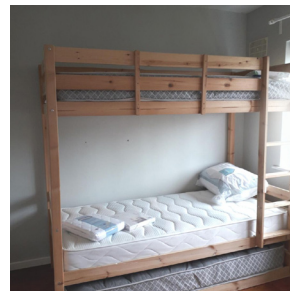
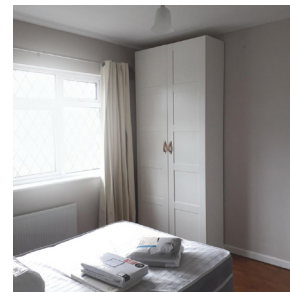
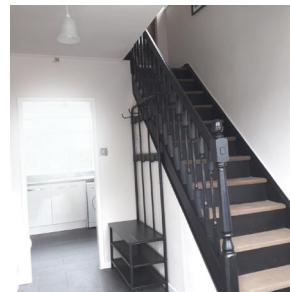
# Accommodation



Our communal accommodations continue to play a critical role in providing safety and support for vulnerable women and children; especially those who are at high risk and in need of emergency support. This year we introduced a Safe Accommodation Manager who oversees these accommodations and ensures safety remains a priority.

Following consultations with the women we support, we recognise that there is a demand for different types of safe accommodation based on individual needs and requirements. We have progressed the development of self-contained accommodation for homeless, single women with less complex needs. This will enable them to maintain an independent home temporarily as a steppingstone towards accessing permanent accommodation that they can make their forever homes.

The women and children in our accommodations continue to have access to practical support which includes legal and financial advice, benefits and immigration advice, and support with access to education or employment. Our offering of emotional support to help recovery from trauma and abuse also remains, with access to counselling, parenting support, peer to peer support and social events.



Images of our most recent safe house.

# Community

Even though national restrictions due to COVID-19 continued into this year, our team continued to offer support as flexibly as possible to meet the needs of women and children outside of our safe accommodation. These are women and children who remain in their own homes, often still living with the perpetrator or still at risk of domestic abuse.

Digital communications were used to engage service users, with some meetings remaining online, whilst face to face contact was available where it was safe to do so. As soon as restrictions were lifted, we were once again able to support service users at meetings and in court.

Our IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors) team supported high-risk victims of domestic abuse at multi agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) and in court. They also supported with safeguarding advice, safety planning, obtaining protective orders, finding safe accommodation and child contact arrangements, emotional wellbeing, and advice throughout the criminal prosecution of perpetrators.

Our community intervention team supported victims and survivors who had been assessed as lower risk of harm or homicide, to offer not only practical and emotional support, but to also act as a preventative service, focused on ensuring women's risk did not increase and they remained safe.

We have strengthened our partnerships across the city and the wider region, for example developing a partnership with Birmingham LGBT, as well as working alongside the domestic abuse team at Wolverhampton Homes to ensure that their clients at high-risk of harm or homicide with housing needs are able to access specialist support from an IDVA.

Partnership working with community organisations like these, or agencies such as Public Protection Units, children's services and health providers enables us to work together to provide wrap-around holistic support that is best placed to meet all the needs of our services users.



# Substance misuse



Our Substance Misuse service helps women understand their addictions and makes them aware of the support that is available to them. We recognise that there is limited provision for women experiencing domestic abuse and substance misuse and as a result, some women don't disclose out of fear that they will be unable to access safe emergency accommodation:

"I was desperate, and I thought if I told the truth, I would be denied the space." - **Claire**

We have also found that some women don't realise they have a problem:

"I did not think I had an issue with substances, until my key worker recommended that I engage in substance misuse support." - **Lin**

Since recruiting a Substance Misuse Case Worker in 2020, we have evidenced that the needs of those we support in this service can be complex and co-occurring. We have consistently identified the need for mental health support as most of the women we have supported this year, previously accessed support for mental health through their GP. Those who have not accessed mental health support, have all reported struggles with their mental health.

In order to respond to this growing need, we have enrolled all relevant staff in accredited Mental Health First Aid training to enhance the support that they can provide in the event of a crisis or an emergency.

One woman we supported said she would have carried on drinking alcohol and doesn't know where she would be if refuge spaces weren't available. Another said she would never have accessed support if she had not moved into refuge and discovered there was a substance misuse programme.

## CASE STUDY

# "He took my baby" – *Rosie's story*

I was carrying my two-month-old baby in my arms when I was attacked by my husband in the presence of my mother-in-law. They were both intoxicated and it wasn't the first time. I called the police as I knew I had to leave. I was scared and I felt very unsafe.

The police agreed that it was best for me to leave but they advised that I left the baby behind as she was asleep at the time. This made me very unhappy and anxious. I knew instinctively that I shouldn't leave my baby behind but with everything that was going on, I thought it was best to follow the advice of the authorities.

After I left, my husband refused to give me access to my baby despite my numerous attempts to get her back. He said I was a drug addict and cannot be trusted with a child. I had used substances recreationally in the past. We had done together, but I wasn't an addict. At least I didn't think so. But I knew he was going to use this against me.

I believe he was trying to send me into a downward spiral of substance abuse, by refusing me access to my child. I was worried that I would fall into bad habits and start bingeing to cope. In desperation, I contacted The Haven Wolverhampton via Live Chat on their website.

I was assessed by a Substance Misuse Caseworker at The Haven Wolverhampton and a plan was put in place to keep me on the right track. We agreed that I would take random drug tests which would not only keep me motivated but also provide evidence to prove my

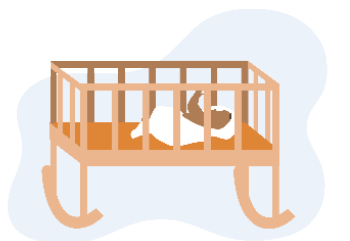
"I believe he was trying to send me into a downward spiral of substance abuse, by refusing me access to my child. " - **Rosie**

innocence in court. These tests were fully funded by The Haven Wolverhampton. I was randomly tested for cocaine, cannabis, and opiates. Each time, negative results were produced for all three substances.

At my custody hearing, my solicitor was able to present a spreadsheet with my drug test results, as well as a supporting letter from my case worker. I was very nervous, but my case worker had been very supportive, and she helped me to stay positive and hopeful.

Then the news came – I was getting my baby back! I have The Haven Wolverhampton to thank for this victory. I don't think the judge would have ruled in my favour without evidence that I had been drug-free. I am extremely grateful for the support that I received from The Haven Wolverhampton.

I have decided to continue taking random drug tests to keep me on track and to support any further court cases or support plans.



# Sexual violence & abuse

Our expert Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) and Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (CHISVA) work with women and children who have been subjected to sexual abuse, violence and exploitation, to identify risks and implement safety measures to overcome them.

Although this has been a challenging year with delays due to COVID-19 restrictions, the team has strengthened its work to support service users with taking action through the criminal justice system.

The team have assisted service users by providing statements, preparing for court, attending court dates and implementing special measures where required; for example ensuring that a victim can give evidence in court from behind a screen so that they do not have to come face to face with their perpetrator in court.

Additional support was provided to help service users with access to health services, sexual health testing, and pregnancy testing as and when needed.

Working together with our counselling team, service users were also offered counselling and therapeutic support as well as access to wellbeing groups and peer support to assist recovery and empower them to overcome the challenges they may be met with.



## CASE STUDY

# "I had nowhere to go" – *Fatima's story*

I contacted The Haven while still living with my boyfriend, after my neighbours gave me the helpline number. My boyfriend had been subjecting me to “rough sex” persistently. The neighbours heard my screams and advised me to get help.

I was allocated an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor, offered Safety planning advice and emotional support. The day after contacting The Haven, my boyfriend told me to get out of his property. I had only been in the UK for five weeks and I had no where to go.

I came to the UK to meet my boyfriend. We had been dating for a year and had discussed getting married. Luckily, I had my passport on me when he told me to leave. He didnt allow me to take anything. I was not entitled to benefits and I was reliant on him.

Even though he promised to support me and my children before I came to the UK, he never did and whenever I asked for anything, he got angry. He was very aggressive. He never hit me, but the sexual violence was unbearable, as well as the constant emotional abuse. He would tell me to get out of his house and go back to my home country whenever we had a disagreement.

He checked my phone regularly and would rush back home after work. I wasn't allowed to leave the house unless he said so. After I had a miscarriage, I asked if I could attend a local church. He let me but one Sunday, the Pastor asked to hold my hand to pray for me. He was

"My boyfriend had been subjecting me to “rough sex” persistently. The neighbours heard my screams and advised me to get help." - **Fatima**

extremely angry about this and he raped me. It was after this assault that I found the courage to contact The Haven.

When I arrived in refuge I had only my passport and the clothes on my back but The Haven gave me a food parcel to see me through my first few days whilst I settled in.

Through counselling I was able to disclose my history of ongoing abuse that I had been subjected to throughout my childhood and adult life. I had never spoken to anyone about this before. I was supported with weekly welfare payments which I was able to use for essential shopping and to get vitamins following the miscarriage.

I was not entitled to free health care, so I received a bill from the hospital for the care I received after the miscarriage. The Haven contacted the NHS to explain my situation and this cost was waived. I was very grateful.

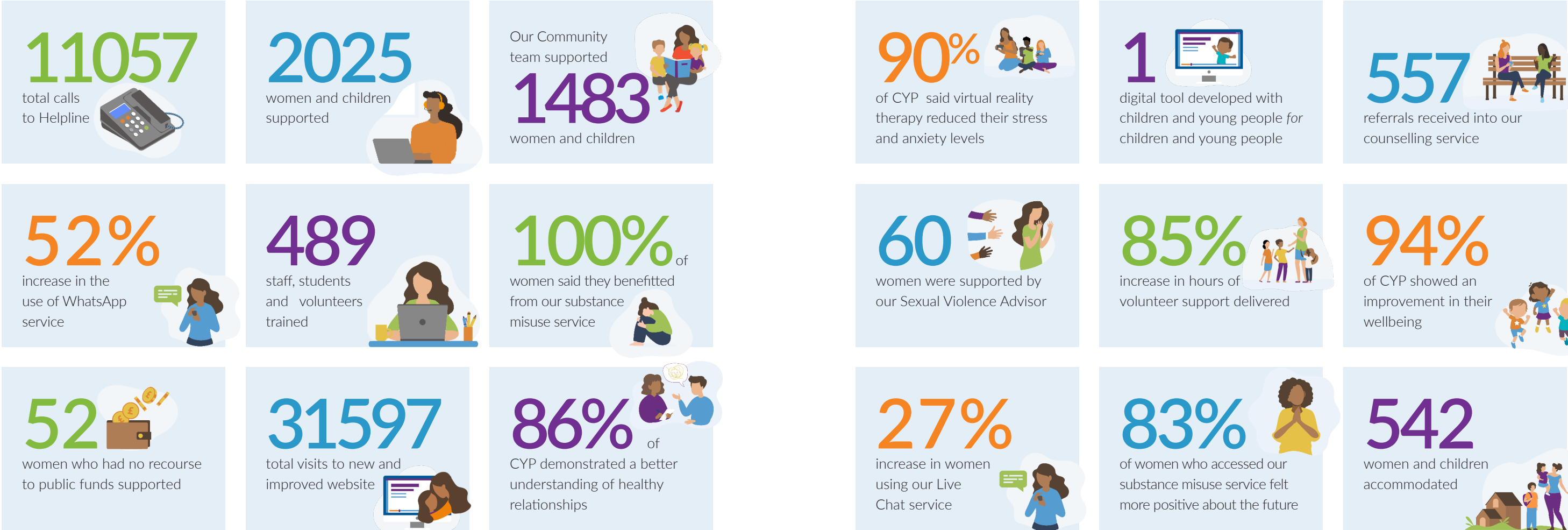
With all the support I received from The Haven, I felt empowered to return to my home country on my own terms. I no longer felt helpless. I felt safe, strong and confident in making my return journey home, but also starting my healing journey.

Please note that names have been changed to protect the identity of individuals.



# The Haven Wolverhampton

2021/2022 year in review



# No recourse to public funds

Women who live without access to benefits and other public funding remain extremely vulnerable and at a heightened risk of abuse and exploitation. Yet these women were left out of the **Domestic Abuse Act**. Until that changes, we are committed to doing our bit to stand in the gap and help uphold the rights of women with no recourse to public funds by providing holistic practical and emotional support.

Our capacity to support women with no recourse increased this year and we were able to allocate additional bedspaces as a direct result of increased funding and additional support from grant funders, Local Authority Children’s Services, Destitution Domestic Violence Concessions (DDVC) and European Economic Area (EEA).

We have found that some of the women we support reported that they were not aware that they could access help and advice. As a result they took longer to report the abuse due to their status. The majority have reported a sense of empowerment and a feeling of reclaiming their lives since engaging with our services and are looking forward to a future that is free from abuse.

	Number of women
Supported in refuge	14
Supported in the community	38
Total supported	52



"I feel empowered. I feel free and able to make my own decisions. I feel more confident and in control of my own life and my finances. I had no confidence and never thought I could do anything for myself or my son. I feel independent after a long time. I have staff who I can speak with any time of the day or night-especially in the days when I was feeling very low. I can go to staff and ask for support, and they will always have time for me and my son." - *Sunita*

## CASE STUDY

# "I felt really lonely..." – *Sunita's story*

For five years I was subjected to physical, emotional and financial abuse, as well as what I now know is coercive control. I never tried to get any help because I thought none was available to me since I have no recourse to public funds.

I called the police after an incident that involved my 11-year-old son and social services became involved. My son was put on a child protection plan because of the abuse he witnessed.

My husband was arrested, and an injunction order was put in place to prevent him from returning to our family home. When this injunction expired, I had to leave the home. I was supported by social services who referred me to The Haven.

Going into refuge was hard at first. I have no family in the UK so I felt really lonely and isolated. My husband was so controlling that he ensured all my friends were his friends. I stopped taking my medication for depression and I had days when I wanted to return to my husband.

I was referred for Counselling and The Haven’s Free to Transform programme which helped me understand what I had gone through. It took me a while to open up but when I did, I felt so much better. At night when I couldn’t sleep and felt unsettled, I would sit up with night staff and talk. I felt I could approach any member of staff for support if I needed it, at any time of the day.

"I never tried to get any help because I thought none was available to me since I have no recourse to public funds." - *Sunita*

I was also supported to register with a local GP and to complete a Homeless Housing Application. I was granted a destitution domestic violence concession which enabled me to bid for properties. I was also given access to free legal advice to support my application for indefinite leave to remain.

My son was supported with 1-2-1 sessions and admission into school. He has settled into his new school which works very closely with The Haven and his social worker to ensure that his needs are met.

I have also been given additional information about other organisations that provide support that I may find useful. My key worker supports my son to maintain contact with his father on a fortnightly basis so that he doesn’t feel completely estranged from him.

As I await decisions on my applications for housing and indefinite leave to remain, I am looking forward to the possibility of creating a safe and stable home for myself and my son. I can’t wait to live a happier life. I would like to study and work to create a better future for both of us.

Please note that names have been changed to protect the identity of individuals.

# Children & young people (CYP)

Last year the **Domestic Abuse Act** highlighted children as victims of domestic abuse, whether they have been directly abused or witnessed abuse. The law recognised that a child who sees, hears, or experiences domestic abuse and is related to either the person being abused or the perpetrator, is also a victim of domestic abuse.

While we are hopeful that this will now shape and inform local, regional and national multi-agency responses to safeguarding children, we remain pro-active and continue to develop this critical service. This year the CYP service has grown immensely with the addition of new staff, volunteers and students on placements.

Our key highlights and successes have been:

**Learning through play** – robust and durable outdoor play equipment have been installed at every refuge and smaller domestic play equipment have been provided for each safe house.

**Child friendly environments** – using designs created by the children, our playrooms have all been re-decorated. Local partnerships provided volunteers to support with this.

**Making memories** – the children and their mothers have been supported to access a range of day trips throughout the year. These have included trips to **Drayton Manor Park, The Wolverhampton Grand Theatre**, and **Kingswood Trust**.



**Virtual Reality Therapy (VR Therapy) & Gaming Service** – VR Therapy is now expanding to include a gaming service with Nintendo switches and tabletop games.

**Children & Young Person's (CYP) Online Tool** – Having achieved funding last year, this year we consulted with children and young people and outlined our plan to develop a digital tool, designed to empower children and support them as they try to cope with the impact of domestic abuse. Following consultations which highlighted that CYP wanted a tool that is fun and interactive and can help them identify in simple terms what is okay at home and what is not okay, we are now in the final stages of development of a new website called **NOAH**. **NOAH** is the moniker given to the avatar in the tool by the children engaged in consultations, as **NOAH** is an acronym of **Not Okay At Home**. A soft launch is scheduled for May 2022.

# What CYP say about our services...

"Thank you for helping me through all this, it's so much to get your head around but you were there every step of the way, you made it all seem easy step by step. I know now that it's not my fault I was sexually abused. I feel strong enough to face my abuser in court now with you by my side." - **Lucy, aged 14**

"I really enjoyed all of my sessions with the CYP worker and I was very sad when they ended. Thank you very much for making me feel better. I have decided to celebrate my CYP worker as my 'Hero' for an assembly presentation at my school. I think she is amazing at what she does and I was lucky to meet her." - **Dionne, aged 7**

"I have a better relationship with my mom since your support." - **Ali, aged 9**

"I really enjoyed my sessions and they helped me to manage all the changes I was going through." - **Ed, aged 9**

"Thank you very much for all the help you have given my family and I. I'm sad it's finished now. I wanted the sessions to continue forever." - **Ange, aged 11**

"It is embarrassing to talk about. People don't think this happens to boys, but you listen to me and understand. I don't feel so alone anymore." - **Ty, aged 10**

"I am now able to talk about what makes me feel sad and I can control my behaviours using strategies I have learned in sessions, this really helps me to focus on the positives." - **Hazma, aged 8**

"I feel more confident and happier to know I have someone here to help me when I am feeling down." - **Sam, aged 7**

CASE STUDY

# Sensory summer house

**Where:** Communal accomodation

**Who:** 11 families who have been subjected to domestic abuse, violence or homelessness

**What:** Sensory multipurpose summer house and garden space for relaxation, mindfulness and 1:1 emotional health and wellbeing sessions

“The summer house is so relaxing. I would sit there all day if I could. I dont want to come out when my online class has finshed!”- **Ryan, aged 9**

“Wow! Look at all the lights. They change colours too! This is awesome!”- **Mariam, aged 7**

“I like the house because when I'm feeling sad I can have some time to relax and I feel happy again.” - **Keegan, aged 10**

“I like the sand tray draw and the arts and crafts.” - **Traci, aged 5**

“This is better than the playroom because its more private.” - **Liz, aged 12**

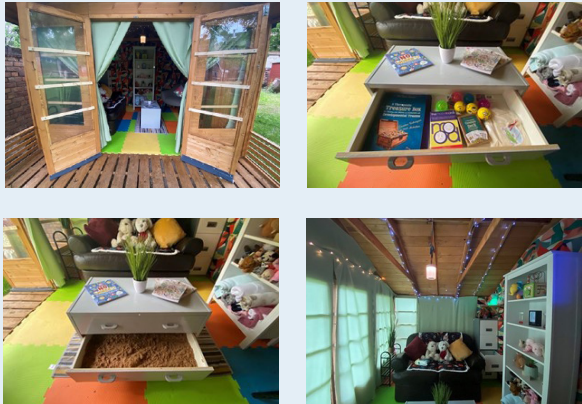
“My son loves it in there. I think he'd stay in there all day if he could.” - **Sara, mum**

Moving into refuge can be stressful for children and young people. Imagine leaving behind everything you’ve ever known for the unknown. Sometimes, they must leave at short notice. At other times, it’s in the middle of the night with nothing but the clothes on their backs. It is often very difficult for them to understand why they have to leave, and they can experience feelings of loneliness, anger, guilt and shame.

As such, we aim to

- provide emotional and behavioural support through our counselling therapies,
- ensure children are given the opportunity to identify and develop their skills,
- enable children to have fun while developing healthy relationships and sharing positive experiences with their new friends,
- support children to bond with their mothers, recognising that perpetrators of abuse can sometimes undermine the relationship between mother and child.

In one of our communal accommodations, there was a lot of outdoor space but not enough space within the property to create a sensory area for therapeutic sessions. It was decided that a sensory outdoor summer house in the garden would be ideal.



This summer house incorporates sensory and mood lighting. Comforting blankets, hot water bottles and relaxing aromatherapy aids are also made available. Children and young people can engage in sand tray therapy drawing, emotions drawing and use sensory toys. There are battery operated speakers that can be connected to any devise via Bluetooth for relaxing sounds. Therapeutic resources and crafts are also available.

The children and young people have enjoyed making use of the summer house especially when they are experiencing high levels of stress. This is a safe space where they can relax and access quiet time either on their own or with a member of the team if counselling and therapeutic sessions are required.



# Volunteering



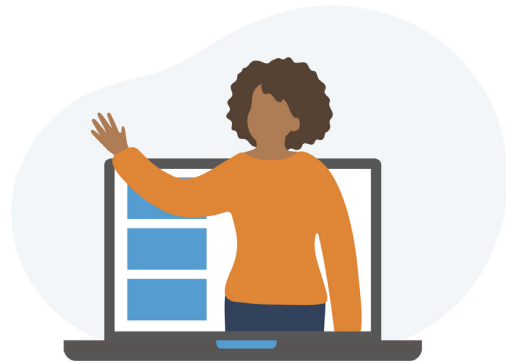
This year we initially placed a hold on on-site volunteer support and student placements. As COVID-19 restrictions were gradually lifted by the Government, we were able to accommodate Social Work student placements through the local University as well as some limited on-site volunteer support.

Our Counselling & Therapeutic and Children's Services benefitted from remote and online volunteer support, as well as structured student placements.

We were supported by 85 volunteers and student placements, all making a significant contribution in support hours across our services. We are thankful for all their invaluable support and look forward to welcoming more volunteers into our services next year.



# The Haven Training



This year we have retained most of our external training online while delivering a few in-person sessions. Our internal training also continues to grow and develop and now includes ten specialist sessions on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) which are delivered to enhance the knowledge of our staff.

After launching The Purple Pledge Campaign last year, we have continued to roll it out in a bid to support employers with Domestic Abuse awareness and help them develop the right policies and training packages for their staff. We consulted on West Midlands Combined Authority's Domestic Abuse policy and delivered an awareness presentation to their staff. We were also part of the steering group on their recommendations to make public transport safer for women and girls.

We have worked with councils and other organisations from a range of sectors supporting them with

Domestic Abuse policies as well as delivering awareness training. These include Birmingham City Council, Telford & Wrekin Council, Trafford Council, Ronald McDonald Charity, Paycare and Metro Bank.

## New training and qualifications highlights:

- Level 4 Supporting High risk Domestic Abuse Qualification with the Open College Network launched.
- Domestic abuse awareness training delivered for frontline staff at housing providers.
- VAWG and Domestic Abuse Awareness training delivered to the sporting sector in addition to supporting clubs like Wolverhampton Wanderers and Birmingham City Football Club with Domestic Abuse policies.
- Launched new CPD accredited Domestic Abuse courses covering a range of areas including but not limited to Domestic Abuse and the Over 55s and Supporting Children and Young People with Play and Therapeutic Interventions.
- Domestic abuse awareness and Domestic Abuse Champion training delivered to the Community Ambassadors of Wolverhampton Business Improvement District.

# What people say about our training...

"I really enjoyed learning about the concept of systematic invisibility, and how we all need to do things to change that." - **Attendee, Over 55s Training**

"This new OCN West Midlands Level 4 Award is a research-informed, needs-led, practice-focused qualification that will recognise and enhance the skills of the workforce supporting survivors of domestic abuse. The qualification has been designed to equip staff with a multi-level understanding of domestic abuse, from the individual lived experience, through the civil and criminal justice frameworks, to the social and cultural context... I am honoured to have been involved in its development." - **Professor Elizabeth Yardley, Criminologist, Birmingham City University**



**Criminologist, Birmingham City University**

"I would never have realised it was any form of abuse without The Haven's Domestic Abuse Awareness training. I just thought I was married to a horrible man for twenty years. Learning that my children could be affected by all of this is also something I need to explore with them. What I learned really opened my eyes. I now know the signs and the best ways to respond." - **Attendee, Domestic Abuse Awareness Training**

"The training has boosted my confidence in dealing with disclosures of domestic abuse. I now know the right words to use when dealing with a victim, so they don't think they are at fault at any point." - **Housing Support Worker**

"The trainer was a confident, knowledgeable trainer. The training was well structured, and the information provided was aimed at the right level for participants. Very good training environment with opportunities for attendees to participate and ask questions." - **Senior Social Worker**

"Brilliant level of research used to develop this training, lots of up to date information, and recent stats, etc. Really informative training, trainer knew the subject area inside out, encouraged good conversations within the group." - **Senior IDVA**

# Public relations



"The Haven is run by skilled, knowledgeable staff who demonstrated clear commitment to the charity's strategic direction." - **Lisa Weeks, Assistant Director, Leadership and Organisational Development, at The King's Fund**

We are delighted to announce that we were selected to win this year's **GSK IMPACT Awards**, managed in partnership with **The King's Fund**. This is a major national award which recognises and rewards charities that are doing excellent work to improve people's health and wellbeing.

We were commended for significantly scaling up our counselling service and our innovative new approach to engaging young people affected by domestic abuse through Virtual Reality Therapy.

We are also proud to have won the **Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce Award** for

**Excellence in the Third Sector.** Judges noted the exceptional support that we provide through a variety of services, specifically highlighting our helpline and counselling services.

Our children and young people's (CYP) team was shortlisted in two award categories at this year's **CYP Now Awards**. A member of the team was shortlisted for the CYP Champion of the Year Award and our Virtual Reality Therapy was shortlisted for the Mental Health and Well-being Award and recognised for being innovative.

During the year, we launched our new and improved website which will be a conduit for women's stories while also serving as the digital hub for all our awareness raising campaigns across all our social media platforms, as well as updates and information about our services.

This new website also serves as a resource as we continue to share digital guides and provide access to digital tools that are user friendly and accessible.



# Public relations

Our key PR campaigns for the year focussed on three main events:

- **EURO 2020** – In line with developing training for the sporting sector and leading up to this major sporting event, we launched a campaign calling for people to *give violence the red card*. The aim was to flag the heightened risk of domestic abuse and violence linked to football and encourage people to blow the whistle and report abuse.
- **16 Days of Activism** – As stated in our spotlight on page 5, this year our focus was on challenging gender norms and stereotypes. For sixteen days we shared content that discussed key topics relating to violence against women and girls, and emphasised the need to engage with young people now to prevent incidents of abuse in the future. Using the hashtag **#haveninschools** we shared and overview of our **MENgage** and **EmpowHER** programme.
- **EMPURPLE Week** – We took a two-pronged approach, reflecting on UN Women's official theme for International Women's Day which was "break the bias". We explored how gender bias and stereotypes can be directly linked to domestic abuse through the use of control and the abuse of power dynamics. We also shared stories of hope from some of the women we support, in line with **The Big Give's Match Her Dream** campaign.

We have maintained our relationships with local press and media; appearing in various articles and radio interviews to discuss our fundraising efforts as well as our response to the **Domestic Abuse Bill** which subsequently became the **Domestic Abuse Act**, our award nominations and the news of the late Sarah Everard's death amongst other things.



# Fundraising



We would like to say a special thank you to all our supporters. Whether you have taken on a running challenge, baked delicious cakes to sell, hosted a dress down day, or made a donation – you are all incredible and we couldn't continue our work without you.

## Our key fundraising successes:

- **Fire Walk** – 46 brave souls took on the hot coals at the return of our sponsored Fire Walk event this year. **£9,000 raised.**
- **The 104 Challenge** – 18 individuals and businesses combined took part in our challenge in to raise awareness of the 104 women on average that are killed each year by running, walking or cycling 104 miles during June. Individuals totted up the miles either out on the road or in the gym, whilst local businesses hired The Haven's static bike and got their whole office involved in reaching the 104 miles total. **£6,500 raised.**

- **Golf Day** – This year tickets sold out and the event which was sponsored by TRiM Barbershops was a huge success. 18 teams joined us from local businesses and the local area. **£6,500 raised.**
- **Quiz Nights** – Our in-person Quiz Nights returned after a full year of virtual quizzing. We ran 3 Quiz nights sponsored by Paycare. **£1,800 raised.**
- **Female Empowerment Convention** – We launched our first ever Female Empowerment Convention this year bringing together a host of successful female entrepreneurs, well-being coaches, and all-round amazing women to lead a range of virtual sessions for women. **£5,000 raised.**
- **Christmas Donations** – We are grateful to all our donors who made financial donations, brought in gifts and contributed vouchers towards Christmas dinner – ensuring women and children could have a full festive experience. **£9,000 raised + vouchers.**
- **Matched Giving campaigns** – Our incredible supporters got behind three separate appeals last year helping us to raise funds for restricted projects of service delivery, from welfare (supporting women to flee abuse through emergency travel and to make their new homes feel safe with additional locks) through to household items needed to make spaces feel welcoming and homely. **£26,500 raised.**

## CASE STUDY

# The true impact of your donations



**What:** Big Give Women and Girl's Match Fund

**When:** March 2022

**Why:** We were selected as one of the organisations to benefit from The Big Give's inaugural Women and Girl's matched giving campaign. This campaign solely funded projects that supported women and girls. Donations to the challenge which went live on International Women's Day were doubled.

**How:** We called on our donors and supporters to help us match the dreams of the women we support by donating to this fund. Some of the women shared dreams about being independent and owning their own property, earning their own money and being able to walk around without fear. Our goal for this campaign was to raise funds to support women on their journey to safety and independence.

**The Impact:** Your generous donations helped us to:

- Cover taxi costs so women can safely flee abuse.
- Purchase food and essentials such as nappies for their babies.
- Cover transport so women can set up a bank account/register with a GP and regain their independence.
- Purchase clothing for themselves and their children.
- Purchase essential household items when they are ready to resettle into the community, such as white goods.
- Ensure their new homes are safe and secure, through additional locks or alarms.

**£15,500**

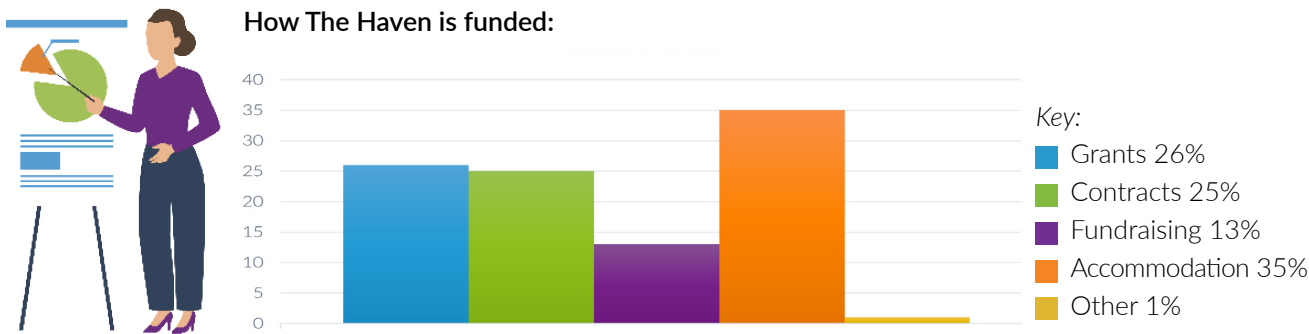
raised through the Big Give Women and Girl's Match Fund

**£243,829**

total raised through fundraising efforts



# Finances



**94%**  
of our expenditure was spent on services.  
*Industry average is 85%.*

**£350,064**  
total value of volunteer support hours.  
This is calculated based on National Living Wage.

The Haven was able to spend  
**£70,000**  
worth of donations on the purchase of its fourth safe house.

Unrestricted net current assets' were **£707,195**  
This is on par with three months running costs, in line with charity sector best practice.  
The remaining **£1,418,100** in 'unrestricted funds' were fixed assets – essentially buildings from which The Haven's services are delivered.

# Acknowledgements

The board, staff and volunteers of The Haven Wolverhampton would like to thank all our partners, funders, stakeholders and supporters. With your assistance, we continue to support women and children affected by domestic abuse and ensure that their voices are heard.

- Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust
- Barclays 100x100 UK COVID-19 Community Relief Fund
- BBC Children in Need
- BBC Children in Need's COVID-19 Next Steps Programme part funded by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)
- Norfolk Community Foundation through Bolton Trust Revenue Fund
- Bothwell Charitable Trust
- Charles Hayward Foundation
- Tech vs Abuse, a joint initiative between Comic Relief, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Clothworkers' Foundation
- DMF Ellis Charitable Trust
- Sainsbury's Helping Everyone Eat Better Community Grant Scheme
- Schroder Charity Trust
- Swire Charitable Trust
- The 29th May 1961 Charity
- The Eveson Charitable Trust
- The Rowlands Trust
- Volant Charitable Trust
- William Cadbury Charitable Trust

City of Wolverhampton Council  
Police and Crime Commissioner

Thornes Solicitors  
ITWorks  
Paycare  
Human Results Ltd  
H&S Consultancy: Zebra Safety Ltd  
Data Protection: Brite Advice Ltd

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