

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020 / 2021

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**Women's Rape &  
Sexual Abuse Centre**  
Dundee & Angus

# INTRODUCTION

## WRASAC: An Introduction

Dundee and Angus WRASAC are a specialist agency providing free and confidential support services to survivors who have been raped, sexually abused, or sexually exploited at any time in their life.

Dundee and Angus WRASAC was originally Dundee Rape Crisis Centre but over time we realised that a large proportion of women who access our service for support are survivors of historical sexual abuse and so we moved from 'crisis' to Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre.

Over the last 35 years we have grown our service from a small team, working voluntarily in Dundee to a locally and nationally funded service.

We work with women and children across Dundee and Angus but also occasionally cover parts of Fife and Perthshire and now offer a variety of services supporting survivors:

- Women's Support Service/Angus Outreach Service
- Advocacy Service
- Dundee & Angus Young Survivors (DAYS)
- Sexual Violence Prevention Service
- Vice Versa (Women involved in Commercial Sexual Exploitation)

# AIMS AND OBJECTIVES



## Mission Statement

To support women, children and young people affected by all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation and to raise public awareness of the damaging and life-changing effects of rape and sexual abuse.

## Our Vision

- WRASAC's vision is an end to all violence against women, children and young people and a society in which they have equality, freedom and choice to lead their lives as they would like.
- WRASAC will provide a quality support service to all women, children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse, violence and/or exploitation, through individual support and group activities.



**Supporting Survivors**

Women, including trans women, with experience of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation receive the support they need when they need it.



**Supporting Young People**

Young people with experience of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation receive age appropriate the support they need where and when they need it.



**Changing Attitudes**

We will change attitudes by promoting equality, raising public awareness of the causes of sexual violence and its damaging and life-changing effects.



**Quality**

WRASAC is recognised as a high quality service.



**Resilient**

WRASAC has strong and stable governance; resilient leadership team and staff team and is financially stable and enterprising.

## **Objectives of WRASAC as per Articles of Association**

The objective of the charity is to promote the relief of distress of women, children and young people, (including boys and young men up to the age of 18) who have experienced rape and/or sexual abuse at any time in their lives.

In furtherance of the above objects but not otherwise, the company shall have the power:

1. To promote awareness of the nature and extent of sexual violence and/or abuse and encourage the understanding and support of the public and other relevant bodies.
2. To promote and develop good practices within the company.
3. To promote and develop satellite and/or autonomous service user groups.
4. To support and assist the development of other relevant groups/organisations.
5. To undertake and encourage relevant research (providing such research is compatible with the aims of the company).
6. To write, produce, publish and circulate; pamphlets, magazines, books, journals, leaflets, reports, any other documents or visual/audio .





# WELCOME

**Welcome to our annual report for the year 2020-2021. You will see from the report that yet again, it has been a very busy year for our charity with many challenges not least the impact of COVID-19.**

## **Covid-19: Impact and Legacy.**

Early 2020 saw COVID-19 hit the headlines and by the end of March 2020, the country then entered a national lockdown. At the start of this reporting period, in April 2020 the true impact of the COVID 19 worldwide pandemic was still unknown but like all charities and face to face support agencies, the impact of lockdown restrictions was significant.

The initial impact of COVID meant that we had to completely transform our service and ways of working to ensure that we could continue our work supporting survivors. Temporary Manager Heather Williams did an amazing job of responding to this and had to move all services within our organisation from face to face to completely online working within a matter of weeks. Funding was sought for laptops and mobile phones allowing staff to work remotely with clients where suitable and safe to do so.

As the year progressed and the pandemic continued to affect all aspects of day-to-day life and as such our work, we have had to continually adapt our ways of working not just with survivors but with other agencies, professionals and colleagues. Board meetings have moved online, interviewing took place via Zoom, partnership meetings and working has been fully virtual for much of the year.

We saw restrictions lift and then tighten again in the winter of 2020 with a further national lockdown in January 2021. The changing rules and guidance have meant that policy and procedure have had to be regularly revisited and reworked to ensure the protection and safety of all survivors and staff.

All staff have been extremely flexible and adaptable, ensuring that a high quality of service was consistently delivered. The board are extremely grateful to all.

# FUNDING

## Funding

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, all the current Scottish Government funding streams were extended for a further year until they could be brought under the new Delivering Equally Safe (DES) funding that will now begin in October 2021. Work has begun to produce an application for this new funding as it brings together 4 current Scottish Government funding streams and is a key source of income for our service.

DELIVERING  
EQUALLY SAFE

Funding for our Vice Versa service ran out and we were initially funded for this service through the Encompass Fund for 6 months. As the year progressed and COVID-19 continued to exist and impact, the Scottish Government announced a COVID bridging grant and we were able to secure funding for Vice Versa to continue to deliver this vital and valuable work with the women in this service.

Prior to Heather leaving she was successful in securing new funding from the National Lottery for a 35-hour workers post to expand our Young Peoples Service (DAYS).



Funding was also obtained from Clothworkers Foundation to allow us to move support services online and enable the purchase of laptops and mobiles for staff that did not have these already to enable all staff to work remotely.

In response to the demands on the Advocacy service a joint application was also made with Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS) to increase the Advocacy service, which has continued to have an influx of survivors accessing for support but no survivors exiting the service due to the impact of COVID on the Criminal Justice System.

A further joint bid was put in with RCS to the Tampon Tax to fund a part time Access and Inclusion worker, this was also successful, and we are currently out to recruit for this role at present.

Towards the end of this reporting period, Katie was able to secure funding for the Angus Outreach worker for a further 6 months and this will be reviewed mid-year to see if this can be extended to 12 months. Katie will also explore alternative funding sources to support and grow this project due to the continued high demand of survivors looking to access support in the Angus area.



# STAFFING UPDATES

## **New Board Members**

In November 2020 we welcomed our new board member, Louise Stanley, and in January 2021 a further board member, Nicola Brown, joined us. Both bring a background of business and board membership and they have greatly boosted the skills of the board.

This gave the board an opportunity to assign specialist roles to each member with Board Chair Angela leading on Strategy and Business, Nicola taking on the role of Treasurer, Louise leading on Risk Management, Jacky leading on Human Resources (HR) and Emma leading on Funding and Fundraising.

## **Manager Recruitment**

In March 2020 we finally recruited a new Manager, Katie Hardy-Jensen. Katie is passionate about working in the Violence Against Women and Girl's (VAWG) arena and brings a wealth of experience with her previously managing services for offenders, vulnerable adults and children, and children and young people's domestic abuse therapeutic support service. Due to COVID restrictions, Katie was unable to take up her post until later in the year as she had to relocate from North Yorkshire.

In June the interviews for the Deputy Manager took place and we were successful in recruiting Kristina Piggott who is local to the area and has a wide variety of experience across voluntary and multiagency projects. Kristina has worked for several years in Violence Against Women Services and Family Support Services across the Tayside area. Kristina has a background in providing 1:1 support to women, children, men and volunteers. Along with this Kristina has vast experience of developing services and managing teams of staff and volunteers.

Our new managers took up their posts in August 2020. It has been a tough start for them, starting their posts during a pandemic, initially only able to meet the team and key partners virtually. They have both hit the ground running and immediately began to review and adapt the service and bring in new working practises to allow the service to work safely during COVID whilst still meeting survivors needs. Kristina has begun a full review of the Women's Support Service, staff handbook and terms and conditions along with reviewing and updating WRASAC's current policies and procedures. There has also been a great deal of work undertaken to identify and ensure the continuation of funding across services and this is well underway with Katie currently writing applications for the Delivering Equally Safe (DES) and Children in Need (CIN).

They have both worked 'above and beyond' and for this the Board are very grateful.

# STAFFING UPDATES

## Staffing Levels

We retained all staff posts across services during this reporting period and there were limited risks to staffing through funding due to the Scottish Government COVID extension funding. We began the year with 18 paid posts and ended it with 20 paid posts across our team, with the new Deputy Manager post and new Children and Young Person's Trauma Support Worker post in DAYS increasing our numbers.

We have funding to begin a new post for an Access and Inclusion worker. They will be focusing on increasing our reach to all of the communities across Dundee and Angus, raising awareness of our services and looking at different ways to reach survivors and take our services to them.

We are currently reviewing staffing levels in response to our increasing waiting lists and we predict that the next year will be a busier year, following the lifting and relaxing of many of the COVID-19 restrictions due to the availability of the vaccine.

## Student Counsellors

We welcomed 5 new Student Volunteer Counsellors to WRASAC in the New Year of 2020. The student counsellors come from local universities and are currently undertaking their degrees in counselling and as part of their course must undertake 100 hours of counselling practice. This is a wonderful opportunity for the students to get first-hand experience of working 1:1 and is an excellent support to WRASAC, assisting us in reducing waiting times for survivors.

Each student is supported by a member of the Women's Support Service along with their local universities during this placement. Our student counsellors meet weekly with their mentor within the Women's Support Service for support along with receiving external clinical supervision. In addition, all student counsellors took part in a 12-session induction programme in partnership with local Rape Crisis centres whilst also completing In-House mandatory training and induction to prepare them for the volunteer counselling role.

Our volunteer counsellors initially will support one survivor and then may offer additional support to more than one survivor going forward. This is discussed and supported by their mentor within the Women's Support Service and the Deputy Manager.

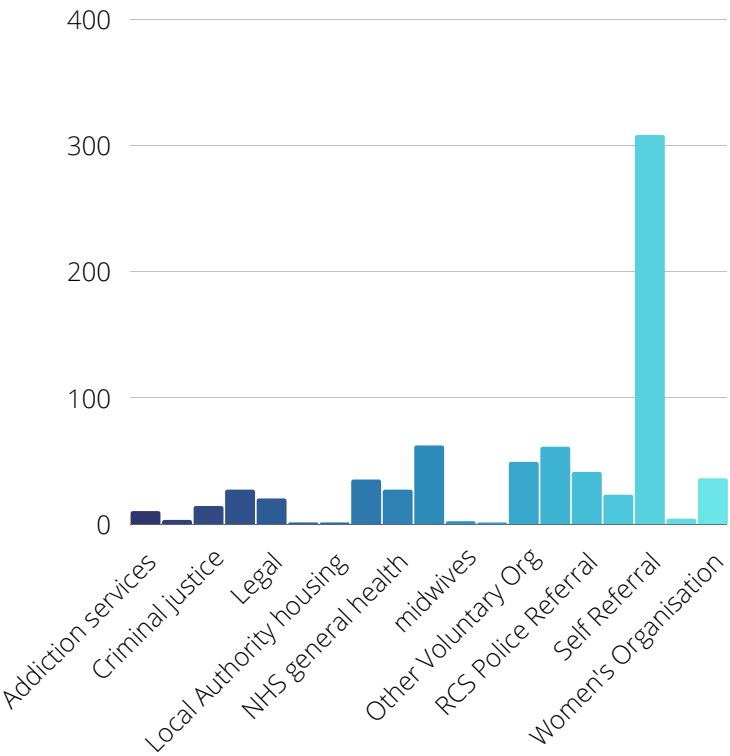
# THE DIFFERENCE WE MADE THIS YEAR



Despite the pandemic and two enforced national lockdowns during this period we have worked with 572 survivors across our services delivering 7892 hours of support. Survivors accessing our services were predominantly adults during this year.

Due to schools being closed we saw a decrease in the number of children who were referred in at certain periods during the year. However, we were having to hold Children and Young People who were in our service for longer as deeper therapeutic work was not always possible so numbers in service and waiting lists increased to reflect this through the year.

The majority of our referrals during the first half of this year were self-referrals. We believe this increase is attributable to the impact of COVID-19. During the first lockdown, some services were closed or not operating at capacity, therefore fewer referrals were coming via them, to WRASAC. It is also possible that women spent more time online in lockdown and as such, they may have searched for the support online. WRASAC believe this may be how some women discovered our service, resulting in a major increase in self-referrals. We also saw an increase in social prescribing and statutory mental health referrals. We believe that this is due to positive partnership working and awareness-raising within these teams.



During the initial lockdown, we did close our doors and stop providing face to face support, and for 3 months worked virtually/via phone. Prior to COVID-19. We offered support via a range of different options: face-to-face, telephone and email, with the majority being face-to-face. However, with the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns we had to move support to be virtual, or to be delivered via telephone or email. At first, we were not sure how women would feel about this but through the year they have told us time and time again how delivering support in this way has made it more accessible to them.

Since we reopened in early summer, we have never completely closed our doors again; face-to-face work and outreach work began again and we have worked flexibly using a blended approach to support survivors through the pandemic.

What we have learnt as a result of the changes to the ways we work through the pandemic is that we will be keeping a blended model of support approaches going forward to suit our survivors; but for some survivors' face-to-face still remains the best option.

We gather evaluation information from exit evaluations, feedback from survivors, partner agencies and staff observations. These show that despite the changes in service delivery due to the pandemic we have continued to provide survivors with a safe and supportive space.

*I have come such a long way since I started here, and I am doing so much better. I am worried about sliding backwards because of what is happening just now (coronavirus). I think phone support will really help with this*

*I felt my support offered was quick, when COVID hit it was good that support did not stop it just changed over quickly to the phone. I asked to put long term support on hold until I returned to university and this was good and not an issue. During the break it allowed me to have time to reflect.*

*I honestly cannot think of any ways to improve, even during the pandemic Gillian was able to keep me supported and help me try new ways to help myself.*

*Excellent from start to finish, WRASAC was there as much as I needed. All staff I came into contact with were flexible and it is never a service you really want to need but when you do I can't fault the support*

# PARTNERSHIP WORK

## Partnership Working Focus

A key aim and focus identified by the new manager Katie when coming into the post was to continue to improve and increase partnership working for WRASAC, building on the great work in this area that the previous manager Heather Williams had begun.

Katie and Kristina have made it a priority in their first year to raise WRASAC's profile through effective partnership working, strengthening WRASAC's position across Dundee and Angus and raising awareness of our services and the support we provide.

By partnership working this will help identify and enable more effective ways of working, by being able to tap into partners' knowledge and resources and share our own; so that survivors of sexual violence can access the right support for them more readily and easily.

## Multi-Agency Working and Training

In the last year, WRASAC have continued to engage with both the Dundee Violence Against Women Partnership and the Angus Violence Against Women Partnership including attending, supporting and sitting on multiagency subgroups for training, Gender Based Violence (GBV), Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Children Young People (CYP) and Comms and Information.



All members of the WRASAC team have developed and delivered training and information raising sessions for multi-agency staff in these areas, covering the following topics.

WRASAC took a pivotal role in 16 DAYS awareness-raising and training sessions that were held virtually across both VAWP partnerships and supported Angus in launching a survey reviewing attitudes about Gender Based Violence (GBV).

This continued commitment to partnership working has been commented on by both Violence Against Women Partnership (VAWP) leads.



We plan advertise and deliver our training quarterly. Upcoming sessions can be viewed on Eventbrite by following The Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre Dundee & Angus. We also advertise regularly on our website and social media.

## Commonly offered training / information sessions

### WRASAC Open Day

We are a specialist agency providing free and confidential trauma informed support services to women and young people who have been raped, sexually abused or sexually exploited at any time in their life. Join us for an Open Day and learn about our Centre, the services we offer and referral processes and how you can use this knowledge in your day to day working lives to support those affected by sexual violence.

### Trauma

WRASAC works with women and young people who have experienced sexual violence at any time in their lives. The women we work with may come in to contact with many agencies and knowing how trauma has affected them can help professionals to make sure their needs are met sensitively. These information and education sessions are for those who may come in to contact with survivors in the course of their work, even if you are not aware of this.

### Introduction to Commercial Sexual Exploitation

There is no fixed definition of commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), but a useful definition is:

"Sexual exploitation is a practice by which person(s) achieve sexual gratification, or financial gain, or advancement through the abuse of a person's sexuality by abrogating that person's human right to dignity, equality, autonomy, and physical and mental well-being."

This workshop looks at what sexual exploitation is and the needs of those involved.

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"The presentation was very thorough and concise, providing relevant information – it is useful that you have sent it out for us to refer back as well." ~ Open Day Attendee

"I would definitely recommend future sessions to colleagues. I think specific sessions on the children and young people work you do, and the advocacy role would be interesting" ~ Open Day Attendee

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"I really enjoyed this training; it was very informative and I will be sharing knowledge gained within my team to better inform us all." ~ Trauma Training Attendee

"I found it very interesting and educational" ~ Trauma Training Attendee

"Always enjoy these sessions, important to keep yourself refreshed. Thank you" ~ Trauma Training Attendee

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"As an introduction I thought Jenna did a great job in covering a lot of ground in a short period of time. Jenna's delivery was brilliant, she has a very down to earth nature about her which made the training engaging and you can tell that she knows her stuff and is passionate. Inspiring." ~ CSE Training Attendee

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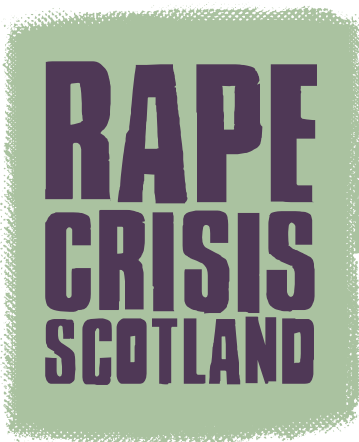


### Working with our Colleagues at Rape Crisis Scotland

During their first months in post Katie and Kristina also worked hard to create strong working relationships across the Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS) network (particularly with Fife, Perth & Kinross, Aberdeen and Highlands). We planned and ran a joint virtual induction training programme which consisted of 12 sessions that ran for new staff, volunteers and board members across Tayside and Fife with staff from each centre contributing to this programme. This is going to be put on again later in the year and positive feedback was received from all who attended.

The managers (with the support of staff from the Advocacy Workers) have re-established regular meetings with the Police in relation to Advocacy work and Kristina attends the multi-agency Sexual Assault Referral Network (SARN) meetings to support, review and feedback on the implementation of the new Sexual Offences Bill.

**PARTNERSHIP WORK HAS BEEN ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED ACROSS SERVICES AND THIS IS A THEME THAT RUNS THROUGHOUT THIS YEAR'S REPORT.**



Rape Crisis Grampian  
Rape & Sexual Abuse Support



# OVERVIEW OF SERVICES

## Advocacy

Whilst it has been a difficult year for us all, survivors accessing the justice system were facing more challenges than ever before. For a period of approximately 6 months, the High Court was not able to run any jury trials, this was also the case in the Sheriff Courts. The judiciary had to look at how to manage the situation in which most (if not all) of the court rooms were not fit for purpose due to the pandemic as they were not big enough to allow for social distancing, in particular with regards to juries.

Around September time the High Courts began to trial using cinemas as a way to get the system running again. The Sheriff Courts also started using these, but they did not start back until later.

This was agreed nationally as a way to move forward and as such we began to see some movement in the justice system, but by this point there were huge backlogs in a system that was already struggling to cope pre-Covid.

Although court cases were back up and running, priority was given to custody cases and those involving children and the most vulnerable, which meant that some rape and sexual assault cases were put on hold for a period of time.

Whilst this situation was unavoidable it has been an extremely difficult and challenging time for survivors, further prolonging the court process that for many survivors already makes a significant impact on their daily lives. There are plans to open more high courts to help deal with the backlog in cases which is a positive development. We are also getting more cases where evidence on commission is being allowed. This allows survivors to give their evidence ahead of trial in a less formal setting and at a specified date and time, helping to ease some of the anxiety that survivors face when attending at trial.



## Sexual Assault Referral Network (SARN).

The challenges of COVID have meant the Advocacy Service has had to adapt and change how and what we offer. The focus of the past year has been on supporting survivors to cope with and stay engaged with the justice system. We have not been able to do our "normal" tasks for most of the year with courts not running and additional restrictions meaning that we can't offer other services like in person support for police statements and support during forensic exams. The uncertainty and having no clear idea on timescales has been difficult for our survivors to cope with so our focus has been on providing ongoing emotional support. Due to no movement in cases, our Advocacy team are holding cases for longer time periods than before which has increased the number of survivors receiving support from our service and higher caseloads for staff, as survivors are being supported in our service for longer periods of time than ever before due to court delays. With things opening again and restrictions easing, we anticipate that the next year will be a busy one as the justice system works hard to clear the backlog in cases.

Our Advocacy Service also covers the Sexual Assault Referral Network (SARN) phone line 2 and a half days per week. The SARN is available to survivors who are over 16 and have been raped or sexually assaulted within the past 7 days. The SARN is a partnership between WRASAC Dundee and Angus, Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre Perth and Kinross, Rape Crisis Scotland, and NHS Tayside.



The SARN offers the opportunity for individuals to be referred for forensic medical examination following a rape and/or sexual assault who do not wish to report the incident to the police at that time. Having a forensic medical examination can mean that if you later (within 8 years) decided to make a report to Police Scotland, any valuable forensic evidence will have been stored.

Our Advocacy staff take referrals from the SARN line and offer support to survivors who call, along with working in partnership with the forensic medical team at NHS Tayside to arrange for a forensic examination to be carried out. Pre-Covid our advocacy staff would attend with survivors for forensic medical examination if asked by the survivor but due to COVID this was unfortunately put on hold. However, our Advocacy Team kept in phone contact with survivors pre and post examination to answer any questions, advocate for survivors and offer emotional support.

# ADVOCACY CASE STUDY



I began working with survivor K in July 2020 and by this point she had already had her trial postponed due to the pandemic so she was feeling quite despondent and anxious about when her case would call again. We kept in contact, and I liaised with the crown office on her behalf to ensure they were keeping us up to date with timescales and for reassurance for Survivor K that her case would call this year.

In November 2020 survivor K was given her citation for court and we began our court prep work and she had requested myself as her court supporter and a screen. I spoke with the VIA officer who was allocated this trial and ensured that these measures had been granted and he assured me that they had. On the day of the trial survivor K was very anxious and required a lot of emotional support. Due to the pandemic, she wasn't allowed to bring her close friend with her to court, but I made sure that arrangements were in place so that she could meet with her friend at the lunch break. Whilst giving her evidence she became very upset but was able to continue to give all her evidence and she did so well and answered all the questions put to her.

On completion of her evidence, we did some grounding work as she was struggling to manage and understand how she was feeling following her evidence. Survivor K was very grateful that I was able to be there with her at court.

The following day I checked in with the VIA officer at the Crown Office and was told that the accused had been found guilty and sentencing is set for January.

I then called survivor K to deliver the good news to her and she was elated. She said that this is the first time in her life she feels she has succeeded at something and said she can now see the possibilities of her having a more positive future and said it has given her motivation to start to piece her life back together again and this starts with beginning her therapeutic journey in dealing with the trauma she has endured since she was a child.

My work with survivor K now is focused on transitioning her into Women's Support Service to begin her therapeutic work.

# CLICK



CLiCK is an inclusive and confidential service supporting the well-being and safety of women, trans women and non-binary people across Scotland who are involved in selling or exchanging sex or sexual images online.

From CLiCK's infancy it became clear that it would be an onerous task for CLiCK Women's Workers to engage with women involved in selling or exchanging sex online. Appealing to an unknown demographical entity was always going to be a challenge and this was compounded by minimal research to provide evidence of need. In addition to CLiCK being a new pilot service, it was also operating in a contentious landscape where political views created a very palpable imbalance and divide.



To prevent the transmission of coronavirus, lockdown provisions were introduced on the 24th of March 2020, and this led to financial destitution for many women involved in selling or exchanging sex. Women began contacting CLiCK Women's Workers via the helpline and the online messenger. We saw an increase in engagement from women who were able to access support with funding that women's services were given from the Scottish Government which could be allocated to women to cover their living costs.

WRASAC's CLiCK Women's Worker, Linzi, was able to complete research undertaking a scoping exercise of the escorting websites AdultWork, Vivastreet, Craigslist and OnlyFans. The trends and statistics that were documented from the research were included in a Scottish Government report and used in training, which was designed collaboratively by the CLiCK and the Vice Versa Workers. This training will be piloted in April 2021 and is intended to promote awareness and to ultimately challenge the stigmatic views which women involved in selling or exchanging sex are confronted with in society.



# DUNDEE AND ANGUS YOUNG SURVIVORS

## Impact of COVID-19

As with our other services the pandemic had a huge impact on DAYS and the way the team worked. We had to completely change the way young people accessed the service moving support to telephone, online or in some cases via text and email but often a combination of them all. The staff in the team did a fantastic job reaching and engaging young people via these methods.

However, working online safely and therapeutically can be difficult with children and young people and is not always possible or the right thing for that young person, and for some of our young people this was not what they wanted; they preferred face to face. For those who working virtually or over the phone would not work for we offered regular check-ins with them and/or their parents and guardians to see if there was any support, they needed during this time along with signposting to other agencies if required for additional support.

We also sent out wellbeing and crafting packs to some young people during this time if this was deemed appropriate and we tailored these to the individual and what they might need to help and support them at that time.

An additional issue for us created by the pandemic is that referrals from schools dropped off and this was previously our main referral point for the service. This was because Children and Young People were not in school due to the pandemic and when they returned, they were then only in contact for limited days/lessons, and contact was initially being limited between adults and children in schools.

This we believe made it harder for young people and their teachers, and other supporting adults to build enough rapport to be able to perhaps disclose or feel safe enough to tell them what was going on for them. This was further compounded by the fact that our prevention worker who runs sessions raising awareness of GBV and sexual violence and related in issues in schools was not delivering in schools and only has been able to run a limited number of sessions online. We tried to address this and reach out to YP via our DAYS and Prevention social media pages by creating online activities and surveys, we tried running sessions out of school hours, and vlogging with other professionals about Sexual Violence and GBV issues.

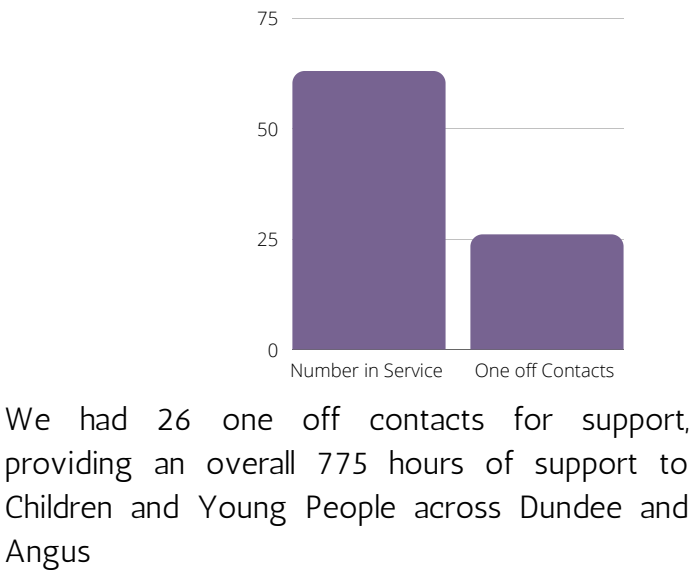
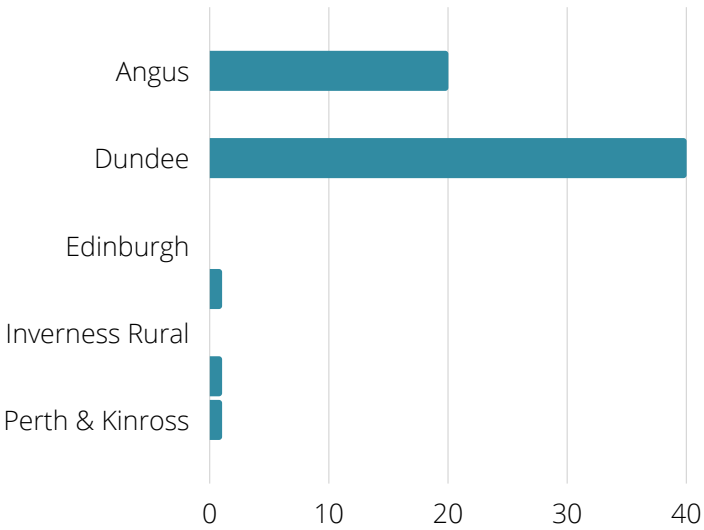


**Impact of COVID-19 on Children and Young Persons' Support**

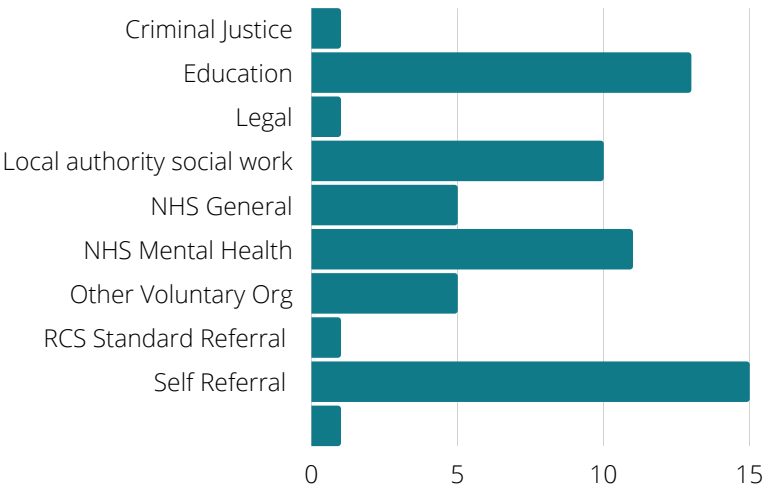
As soon as we could facilitate it for the young people who requested it, we began face-to-face work. In some cases we did walk and talk, some schools had space we could use, but for others we had to look at new venues as schools were closed or not open to adults who were not staff. There were also restrictions on working across different schools in the same day. However, due to COVID and lockdown occurring again from 26th December 2020, it was difficult for the team to continue with face-to-face support as we rely on schools as a safe space to meet with young people and for young people their home is not always a place where they can access the privacy for support. Face-to-face support was put on hold again for most clients from January 2021, however, as we move to the latter half of this reporting period, we have been able to begin face-to-face support again and we are hopeful that this will now continue uninterrupted.

**The Difference We Made**

In DAYS we worked with 63 young people across Dundee and Angus, the majority were from Dundee and Angus, but we also supported young people from Fife.



The referral sources for Children and Young Persons' support aligned with the increase we saw in self referrals across other services.



# DAYS - CASE STUDY

*"Ava is 17 years old and was referred to DAYS service after disclosing an incident of sexual abuse to her guidance teacher. Ava was friendly and welcoming to giving support a go through video call (due to the ongoing lockdown restrictions)."*

*Ava attended her first support session in May. Ava wanted to use the time with her support worker to talk about what happened and address unresolved feelings around this. Ava shared how she often experienced flashback and nightmares of what happened and key experiences in her and her ex-partner's relationship and that she experienced "triggers" when in local areas. Together through timeline work, Ava and her support worker identified key themes which would appear in her flashbacks and explored the feelings and emotions she experienced at this time such as feeling guilty. Doing this, helped Ava process what happened and realise that she was not to blame for what happened. Ava also used metaphors well to describe her thoughts and feeling such as scenes from films she enjoyed.*

*As the support sessions progressed, Ava experienced several high and low points. One of these was telling a family member about the abuse. Ava was concerned she wouldn't be believed but was keen to expand her support network beyond her support worker. Ava was initially wanting to plan this moment but was surprised how it naturally came out in conversation – she shared how she felt calmer now someone in her family knew and how supporting and believing they were towards her. A low moment for Ava was when she saw her ex in public once lockdown restrictions eased. She shared how she felt shocked, panicked and frightened and became very aware of her surroundings and who was communicating with her. Ava described how in this moment she felt like she needed to work on coping strategies so she can cope better when in these difficult situations.*

*A priority for Ava was finding ways to keep herself grounded and calm when in public. Together we explored what resources she had around her which she could use. Ava started listening to empowering music when out and about – this made her feel like she had control. Ava even challenged herself to go to "trigger zones" and would re-associate these places with positive memories with her friends and family. She would also practice self-care after sessions and would spend time doing creative activities such as drawing and painting before and after sessions. Over time Ava had a different energy when she came to sessions – she was enthusiastic, energetic and joyful. Ava shared one sessions she began journaling and found this was the best way for her to share difficult emotions/experiences and look at them in a different way. Ava described how journaling had opened new doors for her and she now sees a world of opportunity and that the darkness has now been lifted. Whenever she thought she saw her ex and / or found herself in trigger areas she no longer felt fear.*

*When asked what she had learned about herself from support sessions Ava shared "I have learned that I am stronger than I thought I was"*

*\*Please note this has been changed to maintain the survivor's confidentiality*



# DAYS - OVERVIEW

## Looking forward

Looking forward we are hoping to get back to regular face-to-face support across the service as soon as it is safe to do so. This also includes resuming face-to-face group work with plans to run an Outdoor Group for young survivors later in 2021.



## DAYS Outdoors Overview

We are planning to pilot an outdoor group for young survivors aged 8-12 in the school summer holidays.

The group will take place at Templeton Woods and use forest school principles.

We are hoping that the children will be able to participate in activities such as den building, woodland crafts, simple whittling, and campfire cooking.

Through this group we aim to promote a sense of safety; support the young people to understand and express their emotions; build confidence and self-esteem; and increase their capacity for self-regulation and coping.




**DAYS**  
**OUTDOORS**  
Over 5 mornings  
**10:00am – 12:30pm**  
**Monday 2nd August –**  
**Friday 6th August**


**If you would like to make a referral or to get more information about the project please contact us on [days@wrasac.org.uk](mailto:days@wrasac.org.uk)**

**We are hoping to include activities like crafts, den building, simple whittling, and small campfire.**

Outdoor play “promotes mental, social and emotional wellbeing9-11 by helping to reduce stress, increase self-esteem and confidence, develop emotional resilience,12-13 and build children and young people’s confidence in their own capabilities and ability to manage risks and deal with uncertainty.” (National-Position-Statement-Dec-2020.pdf (inspiringScotland.org.uk))



**Women’s Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre**  
Dundee & Angus



**DAYS**  
dundee & angus young survivors project

# DAYS - CREATIVE GROUP

One of our other challenges and one that we had not anticipated was getting a DAYS' online group up and running. This initially was not a success! The young people who had been in the original face-to-face group called the BB Group, prior to COVID restrictions, did not want to engage in this; which was a surprise for us as we thought that as CYP are digital citizens that something online would appeal.

We tried several ways to engage them including sending wellbeing packs, offering a range of dates and times and ideas for the group. As restrictions began to ease in the summer, we arranged a picnic with the BB Group at Slessor Gardens. It was great to see the girls and catch up with how the lockdown had been for them. Whilst face-to-face we tried to explore some of these options and from this, we got an agreement for a bi-monthly catch up online.

For our catch-up at Christmas, we made a quiz and played some party games. Eventually, in early 2021 we got to pilot a new Creative Group that was set up and run online.

Throughout January – April, we piloted a 6-week creative group with 4 young survivors.

The group was held online via Zoom and involved themed weeks such as self-care, nightmares, encouragement, stress and coping strategies.

Each week the group would make a creative craft such as a mug, dreamcatcher, Play-doh model and memory jars, which would then be added to a "self-care kit" designed by the young people. The group also encouraged the survivors to share their experiences around each of the themes which led to open and honest conversations as to how to cope with the challenges they have in their life.

The girls have found this to be a welcome source of support during lockdown and a place for them to come and speak about difficulties they are facing.



# DAYS - CREATIVE GROUP



A 6-Week Creative Program that we have designed to get young people engaged in discussions about their wellbeing and use creative methods to express themselves. The themes for each of the weeks were as follows:

- Introductions – use of play-doh to shape yourself, your story, and your interests.
- Self-Care – a discussion around how it can be difficult to put aside time for yourself, especially during a pandemic. This week the YP paint their own mug.
- Stress – conversations around how to manage stress by creating a stress ball and a feelings jar.
- Nightmares – the activity for this week is creating their own dreamcatchers. Flashbacks can also be incorporated into this session.
- Self-Esteem – a focus on positivity, YP can write down positive things about themselves or positive quotes.
- Endings – designing of the coping skills box that they can hold all their previous weeks, creations in.

The group shared that they found doing the creative activities quite therapeutic which helped them to relax and discuss challenging subjects. They also enjoyed how they could customise certain parts of their craft to match their interests and that it was unique to them. We hope to run a creative group again next year and if restrictions allow to do this face-to-face.

# DAYS - FRIENDS AND FAMILY SUPPORT

## **Family and Friends Support**

Our DAYS service also offers up to 8 sessions of support for family and friends of survivors. This is a safe space to explore their own feelings as a result of what has happened to their family member or friend and receive their own support along with learning new coping skills/techniques to improve their own mental wellbeing and find ways to support the survivor. In 2020/21 we provided support to 21 individuals and had 31 one off contacts.

### **Family and Friends Support Case Study**

Sarah is mother to John. John is 8 years old and was referred into the DAYS service for support by his school after disclosing sexual abuse by another, older, young person in the community.

When we spoke with Sarah about support for John, we also told her about the family support service that we offer, and Sarah said that she would like this support. Sarah explained that she was finding things difficult emotionally coping with what happened to her son. She was also struggling with managing her children's safety when out and about in the community as the perpetrator lived locally.

Sarah received five face-to-face support sessions in which her support worker helped her to explore her feelings in relation to what happened to John; taught her about trauma responses and helped her to understand some of John's behaviours better; and helped her with developing ways that she could support John in his recovery, such as creating a safe space for him to go to at home when he felt overwhelmed, and maintaining consistent boundaries for him.

Sarah said that this support made a big difference for her she found it helpful to be able to talk about things that she felt uncomfortable sharing with her family, and she now feels that she understands more about what happened to John.

Sarah got back in touch with the service several months after both her and John's support had ended looking for further support as the family were struggling. At the time the country was in lockdown and so we were unable to offer face-to-face support. Sarah had her children at home with her full time and so it was difficult to find a regular time to call for support when she could get privacy to talk.

We therefore agreed to try text message support. Through her text support Sarah's worker was able to help her with how to listen and support her son when he wanted to talk about what happened to him; ideas for how to support him to express his emotions, particularly his anger; the impact that lockdown was having on John's mental health and the importance for him of being able to do the things he enjoys and play with his friends.

# SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION SERVICE

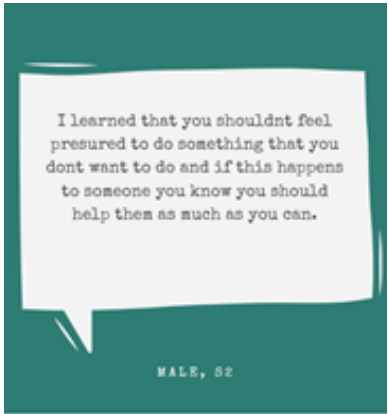


## Prevention in Lockdown

### Schools

We have remained in contact with schools throughout the pandemic and interactions have remained very positive despite not being able to go in and deliver workshops. We have had workshops booked in throughout the year, however these all had to be cancelled due to a combination of home-learning, COVID and local guidance.

Our prevention worker adapted the Being an Active Bystander Resource with the support of the ROSEY Project in Glasgow, and sent around to all the schools they have a contact in or who have engaged in workshops. This was a gender-neutral resource with a focus on image-based abuse and how to take an active role in preventing violence and supporting survivors.



Cancelled workshops have now been rescheduled and these are now planned for May 2021. Lauren our Prevention Worker has worked tirelessly during this period to engage with young people, producing a wide range of resources including blogs, quizzes, online information sessions and sharing content on the Prevention Facebook page. She has also continued to send schools over information about the DAYS and Prevention Services to ensure they have up-to-date contact details and resources.

# SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION SERVICE

## Higher Education

Lauren has had some contact with the colleges and universities in Dundee throughout lockdown, however, much like schools, prevention work has been put on hold for the time being. Nevertheless, Lauren has continued to keep the profile of prevention work raised and as such a priority for the local universities. She has achieved this by:

- attending a meeting with Abertay about input to the Student Association and ESHE First Responder Training, and they were keen to get involved in the coming 2021-2022 academic year.
- liaising with Sarah Browne at Dundee University, speaking about the Peer Support Training from the Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities (ESHE) Toolkit, and moving this to an online format to be delivered in universities; with the University of Dundee is onboard with this. Dundee University is also interested in having the ESHE First Responder Training delivered again next academic year 2021 – 2022.
- Lauren also delivered the ESHE First Responder Training with Niamh (RCS) to Dundee & Angus College just before Christmas and Linzi (Click, WRASAC) shadowed this to build capacity for delivery of this in the future.

## Training Topics Provided

These are the training packages that the Prevention Service currently offer, co-facilitate or have been involved in creating.

- Young People and Pornography
- Young People and Gender-Based Violence (delivered in partnership with Dundee Women's Aid for Education staff in Dundee)
- The Gender Trap (helped in the creation of)
- DVAWP Training (helped in the creation of)
- What is Sexual Violence? (16 – 25 from the National Prevention Pack)
- Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities First Responder Training (delivered in partnership with Rape Crisis Scotland)
- Being An Active Bystander: Men Only Resource (currently creating)

## Partnership Working in Prevention

Lauren has engaged in several partnership working opportunities during the lockdown and has continued to build positive relationships with other organisations. Below she explains who she has been working with and the work they have undertaken:

*"Police Scotland (Mentor in Violence Program) contact Scott Memuir and I created some blogs to be sent around schools. These were 2 minutes long and covered a range of topics. I created one around What is Sexual Violence, and this was sent out to all high schools in Dundee (approx. 3000 young people).*

*Dundee Women's Aid Prevention Worker is someone I have always had a strong working relationship with. Throughout the pandemic, we have co-delivered some training and are also on the advisory panel for the NSPCC campaign. She has also been a source of support during the lockdown as she understands the barriers facing prevention now.*

*NSPCC, Dundee City Council, YWM campaign has been an ongoing piece of work since last August. I am on the panel in an advisory capacity and the aim is to create a toolkit that focusses on peer sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and healthy relationships.*

*Angus Violence Against Women Partnership Subgroup and I have been working on training called The Gender Trap. This has been created by Social Work, Education, NHS and WRASAC and aims to highlight gender bias, stereotypes, and unconscious bias. We are currently piloting the resource with 2 colleagues from each of our workplaces to give feedback on the training. Rape Crisis Scotland and I facilitated the Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities First Responder Training to Dundee & Angus College in November 2020. This was well-received, and the feedback was very positive."*

The Future of Prevention We would love to continue to grow the prevention service, not just at WRASAC but also across Dundee. This is something we have had conversations about with the Violence Against Women Partnership and Katie is exploring options with the council for how we can facilitate this growth.



# VICE VERSA

Vice Versa supports women who are involved in or at risk of involvement in prostitution or Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Dundee.

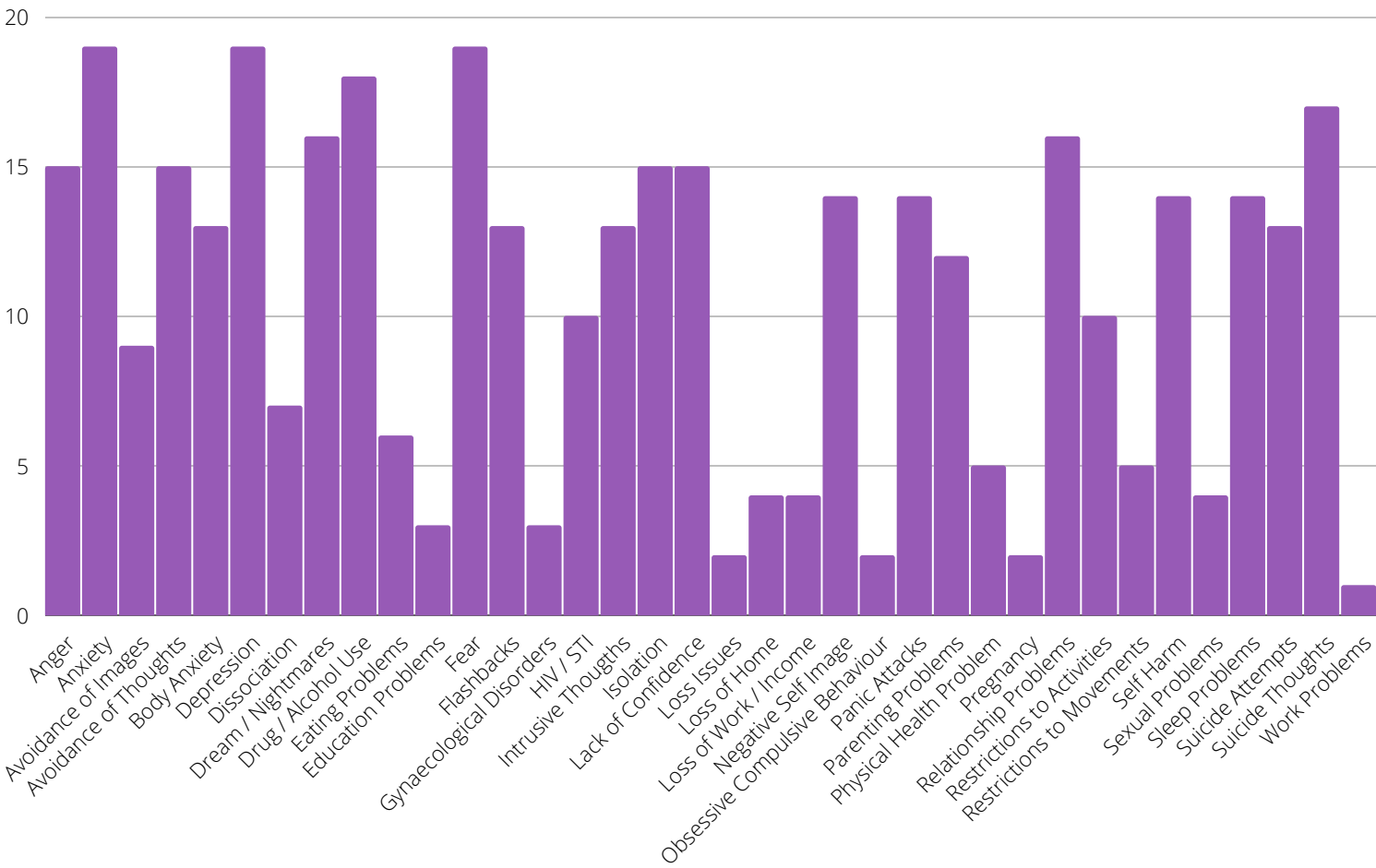
It has been a tricky year for funding for Vice Versa, with funding from the Dundee ADP due to end 30th June 2020. We received 3 months funding from 1st of July until the 30th of September and then from 1st October 2020 – 31st March 2021 from Scottish Government via Rape Crisis Scotland. This has now been confirmed as being until the end of September 2021. WRASAC Manager Katie is exploring continuation funding options to ensure that the vital work this project does can continue and has plans to review the Vice Versa service to support future applications.

## The Difference We Made

From 2020 – 2021 Vice Versa supported 28 women on a 1:1 basis and had 25 one off contacts for support, equating to 867 hours of support.

The women we work with in this service often have complex needs – such as substance use, homelessness, mental health issues and extensive experience of sexual violence and trauma.

### THE IMPACT OF ABUSE





## Vice Versa Case Study



Sarah is a 29 year old woman from Dundee who is currently being supported by Vice Versa. Sarah has a history of child sexual abuse, substance misuse, self-harm and homelessness, as well as ongoing trauma from her current situation and involvement in on-street prostitution.

Sarah was referred to Vice Versa via a substance misuse service in February 2020. Upon our first meeting, Sarah identified that she needed a lot of support and did not know where to start – she was currently homeless and sleeping rough, using heroin and street valium, did not have a bank card or any financial support set up, and felt suicidal.

*Sarah was begging and involved in on-street prostitution in order to sustain herself – she spoke about being approached by men whilst begging who recognised how vulnerable she was. Sarah did not recognise this as CSE or 'prostitution' and referred to this as 'doing what she needed to do'. She spent a long time speaking about her past experiences which included child sexual abuse by a family member, her mother's recent suicide and the removal of her child who had now been adopted.*

*Vice Versa, alongside substance misuse service, supported Sarah into homeless accommodation and provided some clothing, toiletries, a phone and a food parcel. Once safety was established, Vice Versa then supported Sarah to attend a bank to set up a bank account. This proved difficult as Sarah did not have any photographic identification – however was eventually able to set up a bank account using a supporting letter from Vice Versa and her tenancy agreement for the homeless accommodation.*

*Vice Versa then supported Sarah to attend the job centre and set up a Universal Credit claim – however this was also difficult as Sarah had previously had a claim and had set it up so it would go into another person's bank account out of necessity at the time, this person had now been receiving Sarah's monthly payment for several months now.*

*The job centre could not refund the money and Sarah would now have to wait yet another month to receive any payment at all. From this point, Vice Versa then supported Sarah to claim a crisis grant from the Scottish Welfare Fund – they provided Sarah with £80 of food vouchers.*

*Vice Versa then supported Sarah to the shop to purchase goods. Vice Versa would continue to support Sarah by providing toiletries and referrals to foodbanks, as well as ongoing emotional support via phone and in person. Due to Sarah's limited access to internet and general distrust and anxiety around the benefits system, Sarah asked if I could keep her Universal Credit log in details and occasionally check it for any updates.*

### **Vice Versa Case Study continued**

*Due to COVID-19 lockdown, Vice Versa contact with Sarah was limited to via phone. This meant that contact was often sporadic, but Sarah disclosed that she had previously been diagnosed with Hepatitis C but had not had any treatment. Vice Versa contacted the homeless outreach nurses (who were still able to have face-to-face contact) and asked that they make contact with Sarah and advise her around this issue. Sarah did not engage with the nurses. Vice Versa then lost contact with Sarah.*

*In May 2020, Sarah made contact with Vice Versa and let them know that she had moved in with her ex-partner (and father of removed child). There were concerns around this arrangement as there had previously been domestic violence in the relationship as well as substance misuse. Vice Versa again provided a phone so she could engage with services. This living situation did not last long as her partner was arrested and remanded in custody. Over the course of Sarah's disengagement with Vice Versa, Sarah did engage with a housing association – this meant that they were able to provide her with a flat of her own.*

*Sarah found the experience of getting a new flat on her own very overwhelming and did not feel she could cope. She told Vice Versa that she did not have any furniture, white goods or cooking facilities and had resorted to shoplifting ready-made sandwiches, returned to on-street prostitution, using heroin and self-harming.*

*Vice Versa provided a food parcel of ready-to-eat food and toiletries, as well as providing a 'safety pack' and gave advice and information to Sarah regarding safety whilst involved in on-street prostitution and harm reduction advice regarding her substance use and overdose risk. Vice Versa made contact with the housing association.*

*Vice Versa then successfully applied for a Community Care Grant from the Scottish Welfare fund which would supply her with white goods. Vice Versa also applied to another charity – Starter Packs – to provide Sarah with other household essentials. Vice Versa used their funding to provide Sarah with a freeview box, as Sarah identified that she was struggling with boredom and felt it was negatively impacting her mental health and increasing her substance use.*

*With Sarah's permission, Vice Versa again referred Sarah to the homeless outreach nurses and organised a joint visit with the nurse due to concerns regarding Sarah's self-harm and IV drug use, as well as her mental health. When Vice Versa and the nurse turned up for the visit, Sarah did not engage. Vice Versa has re-organised a joint visit to Sarah by the homeless outreach nurse and the outreach mental health nurse the following week.*

*Vice Versa plans in the future to support Sarah to engage with substance misuse services and sexual health services. Vice Versa also plans to approach welfare support services regarding Sarah's criteria to receive an alternative benefit – such as PIP, as Vice Versa feels she is in no position to 'look for work'.*

*This case shows the difficulty for some vulnerable women to establish basic safety and stabilisation, such as being able to open up a bank account and receive basic benefits and the limited short term options they have often lead to more negative long term consequences (e.g. putting benefits into another person's bank account).*

*Without support from Vice Versa, Sarah would not have been able to start this process and would still potentially be rough-sleeping and begging. Although Sarah's life is still chaotic, she is better able to engage with services and receives support from Vice Versa to reduce harm as much as possible.*

**Encompass Fund**

The Encompass Fund was Scottish Government money which was available across services in Scotland to support women involved in/at risk of involvement in Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) who were struggling financially as a direct result of the impact of the pandemic. 9 women were supported by Encompass Fund during 2020-2021, 5 women were supported on two different occasions throughout the year.



Women were supported by Encompass Fund for gas/electric payments, service charge for temporary accommodation, food vouchers, clothing, bus pass and basic housing necessities (for example a fridge). Without this financial support – women would have had to engage in selling sex for funds, putting them at further risk. Women also would have struggled to sustain their tenancies without financial support (e.g., with gas/electric) and likely would have been forced to stay with others or again rely on selling sex.

**ClickCast**

Vice Versa contributed to ClickCast – a podcast facilitated by Click which explores the different challenges women who sell, or exchange sex or images are facing during the coronavirus pandemic. This is an opportunity to hear directly from women and support services who work with them about the reality for some women and how the pandemic has impacted on them.



(<https://www.clickmagazine.online/click-cast.html>)



**Women's Rape &  
Sexual Abuse Centre**  
Dundee & Angus



## **Vice Versa Partnership**

### **Scotty Centre**

Vice Versa has continued to support Scotty Centre evening drop-in (when covid restrictions permitted) alongside We Are With You, Maryfield Police and Community Nursing team. We are now looking to expand this work with further drop-ins going forward.

Vice Versa has supported the SafeZone bus – aiming to support those who are most vulnerable and not engaged with services.

Vice Versa continued to signpost, liaise and advocate on behalf of women to other agencies and organisations.

### **Commercial Sexual Exploitation Working Group**

Vice Versa supported with the creation of Multi-Agency Guidance for Commercial Sexual Exploitation, alongside other members of Dundee VAWP. In January 2021 WRASAC manager Katie took over chairing this multiagency group and the focus for 2021 is to create interactive guidance and work to support the set-up of more multiagency drop-ins. .

### **Scottish Government Consultation on Men's Demand**

WRASAC provided a response to the Scottish Governments Consultation on "Equally Safe: A consultation on challenging men's demand for prostitution, working to reduce the harms associated with prostitution and helping women to exit"

They also supported the writing and responses of other agencies and contributed information for the Dundee Violence Against Women Partnership and co-wrote the Angus Violence Against Women partnership response.

**Multi-Agency Training**

Vice Versa worker Jenna and CLiCK worker Linzi provided a number of training and information sessions entitled 'Introduction to Commercial Sexual Exploitation' to professionals from Dundee and Angus in November and December 2020.

Alongside Manager Katie they also developed and provided a full-day training session in February 2021.



**Zoom training for professionals**  
**Dundee**  
**Commercial Sexual**  
**Exploitation**

**Overview of the Training**

"The training will provide participants with an understanding of Commercial Sexual Exploitation in a familiar and local context by examining the reality for women in Dundee in 2021, as well as addressing historical and modern examples of Commercial Sexual Exploitation with opportunities to explore societal attitudes.

We will outline the law and how it works against women and describe the support available at WRASAC. The day will be interactive and there will be opportunities to discuss different disputed aspects of CSE such as language, models and selling sex online, as well as what you can do to make a difference."

**Feedback from the training delivered:**

"Thank you for having me I found the session very informative. Keep up the great work, well done"

"This session has been great and totally in line with the women I work with and more for me to think about :)"

"As an introduction I thought Jenna did a great job in covering a lot of ground in a short period of time. Jenna's delivery was brilliant, she has a very down to earth nature about her which made the training engaging and you can tell that she knows her stuff and is passionate. Inspiring."

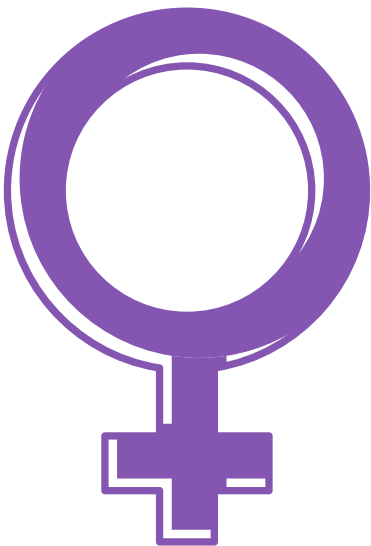
# WOMENS SUPPORT SERVICE



The Women's Support Service provides trauma informed support to survivors in a one-to-one and group setting. We offer emotional and practical support and women are empowered to speak about their abuse in a safe and confidential space.

The Women's Support Service (WSS) delivered 4347 hours of support to survivors across Dundee and Angus, working with 332 women during the year delivering 1:1 sessions via virtual technologies, telephone, letter, email and face to face, in our centre and in our communities.

The service provided 28 one off contacts where survivors rang for information, support or advice



## Increasing access to our service

During the lockdown, we introduced an online chat facility to run alongside the support line and extended our phone support line hours during the first national lockdown, as drop-in was not possible for women at this time.

The online chat facility was initially used better than the phone support but the use of this facility tailed off and we are reviewing if we will continue the use of this currently.

During the months of July 2021, we trialled offering evening support line hours from 7 pm – 9 pm on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Despite advertising this across social media and sharing with partner agencies we but found this was not being accessed and therefore we went back to just offering our regular support line hours 10 am – 4 pm Monday to Thursday in August.



**Supporting Women Through the Pandemic**

Prior to the start of this period, we had begun preparing for the coronavirus and started having conversations with survivors we were supporting about moving away from face-to-face work and by the middle of March Heather had got all the WSS team set up and working from home. With this reporting period beginning during a national lockdown, support was provided remotely by phone, email and video calling. Moving to this new way of working was a concern for us and we did not know how women would respond to this and the impact it may have.

However, this transition has initially worked well for many survivors, with engagement levels having been higher overall across the service. This we believe can be attributed to the fact that it has made sessions more accessible for some survivors, they do not need to leave their home to access support and if a session is cancelled prior to this trying to get a slot booked back in was determined by not just survivor/worker availability but also by when the rooms were free; virtually this is much easier to re-arrange.

Feedback from survivors has included:



***"I'm in my own comfortable space at home and my Support Worker manages to create warmth – it's almost like she is here with me. It has been easy to talk about intimate things."***  
*(Support over Zoom, no face to face throughout)"*

***"It's actually better for me this way. I'm someone who worries about how I look and reading body language. So much more relaxing way to get support."***  
*(Support by telephone, has previously had face to face at WRASAC)"*

**Still the Survivor's Choice - Holding space for survivors who want face-to-face**

We did have a low number of survivors on our waiting list who opted to wait until face-to-face support could resume. These women are aware we have no timescales, but we regularly checked in with the women every 6-8 weeks via phone or text to see how they were. We also offered responsive support to survivors on our waiting list, they can call for up to 3 responsive support sessions with a Women's Support worker by contacting our support line.

Group Work

WRASAC moved our Women's Peer Support Group and ran mindfulness and understanding anxiety sessions. The Peer Support Group meets every Monday evening and can range from 2 – 10 survivors attending on a weekly basis via Zoom. Our staff member also runs introductions to Zoom for any survivors keen to come along to the group but who are not confident using technology. This group has been regularly attended (even though initially some survivors felt apprehensive about moving online) and has reduced isolation and helped survivors feel connected through lockdown. We moved our group work online introducing a peer support group and one woman fed back the following about the peer support group:

“ S had enjoyed the Zoom peer group session and her partner, who was not in the same room as the call, had said afterwards that this was the first time he had heard her laugh in a long time. ”

WRASAC normally offer a range of complementary therapies, yoga and alternative workshops but due to the pandemic had to stop delivering these.

When we realised that restrictions were likely to remain/we would be moving in and out of lockdown; we worked with the providers to develop, or we devised online versions of these sessions, sending packs out in the post to enable survivors to take part. This has ensured survivors still feel supported and connected to WRASAC during the pandemic.

We have put on yoga, in partnership with Headspace. Participants had the option to keep their camera and microphones off during some sessions as we have had feedback that it has been difficult for some survivors to be able to engage with Zoom etc.

Self Care Menu

Take a few deep breaths .....	5 MINS
Stretch your body .....	5 MINS
Listen to your favourite song .....	5 MINS
Meditate .....	15 MINS
Read a chapter of your favourite book .....	15 MINS
Journal your thoughts .....	15 MINS
Take a walk outside .....	30 MINS
Get Crafty .....	30 MINS
Cook a new recipe .....	30 MINS

We also ran Burlesque, Chocolate Making, Sound Healing and Body Butter and Massage workshops in partnership with The Flourishing Well as part of our Wellbeing Event for survivors in March 2021.

WRASAC has funded Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) sessions for survivors online via The Flourishing Well.

“ *First half was very chilled and relaxing and in the second half I really liked being given options for how to get a deeper stretch if I wanted it, which I did, I could really feel it the next day* ”

“ *You helped me to find new ways of looking at things, made me realize my self-worth and how much I was appreciated, that I was being as careful as I could be. And it was safe and healthy to express my needs and take time for me too* ”



# ANGUS OUTREACH



In April 2020, after a break due to loss of funding, we were successful in securing funding from Angus Council and The Volant Trust (£21k match-funding from each partner). This support allowed WRASAC to recruit a new worker dedicated to the Angus area. What this means for the women of Angus is that there is a separate waiting list run for this area and there is a worker who can come to them and work in the community – an Angus Outreach Worker.



Since starting her role in April 2020, our Outreach Worker Helen has met with women across Angus, using Zoom, WhatsApp, e-mail and phone to provide therapeutic support to women; aged 16 upwards, from right across the area.



Due to the pandemic, we could not offer face to face at that time. However, few women opted to wait for support in person and WRASAC has been pleased with the response and the effectiveness for those women supported through these mediums.

As restrictions lifted at the start of summer, Helen began to offer some in person support where it was required, seeing women in our Dundee Centre and out in the community.

Spaces for Helen to work were identified in Arbroath, Forfar and Brechin, as the premises we had originally planned to use was not available due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Operating out of Angus and online enables us to work with the women in a trauma informed way, the women get to see us when they want and need, and in a way that they request.

While we work with them through the safety and stabilisation stage of support this availability and flexibility is/can be vital to ensuring that they continue to attend sessions with us. By being locally based and online, we remove many of the barriers for women to attend; being anxious about travel on their own, bumping into people that they associate with the assault, social anxiety and scared to leave the house, costs of travel, being able to see us within school hours or out of work hours.



Map of Angus

## **The Difference we made**

Over the last 12 months, we have received 57 new referrals for our dedicated 1:1 support from women in the Angus area. During this period, we have supported 82 women within the Angus area, delivering 1099 hours of support through 1:1 sessions. By comparison in 2017/18, we delivered support to 37 women. In the space of 3 years, our work within the Angus area for 1:1 support work has doubled; and this has been during COVID and without a permanent base in the Angus area.

## **Impact of our work in Angus**

Over the last 12 months, it is hard to analyse the true impact of the funding we have received, as our work (like everybody else's) has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic but our support hour numbers highlight how our service has adapted and continued to provide this invaluable support.

Having a dedicated outreach worker in the Angus area enables us to more readily offer face to face support to women survivors of sexual violence, and we are able to begin seeing them sooner.

Here are some of the things women told us following the first few weeks of Helen being in post and working online with the survivors:

**"I've laughed for the first time in ages this week ... a proper belly laugh."**

**"I don't feel judged, other people judge me."**

**"I'm feeling stronger and more able to speak up."**

And from Helen,

**"Going online has been incredible, so powerful. Women feel like I am there with them, in their home."**

However, whilst the lockdown and pandemic have been challenging, because we have been able to deliver support to women via online video conferencing, telephone, email and What's App; we have also been able to provide more resources to the Angus area; moving more survivors from the waiting list into service, thus them spending less time on the waiting list.

From the figures above it is clear to see that we have grown substantially over the past 12 months; due to having dedicated funding for an Angus Outreach worker. Our worker is supporting survivors throughout the large geographic area which is Angus, and we feel this invaluable service will continue to offer specialised support to survivors within the Angus area; where there is a lack of specialised support for survivors who are experiencing or have had an experience of any kind of sexual abuse, violence or exploitation.

## **Case Study - Protective Partnership Working**

*I have been working with J since September. She has young children and lives alone in an isolated area of Angus. Jan was diagnosed with complex PTSD and traits of personality disorder. She had a Community Mental Health Nurse when we started working together. She is also working with a WRASAC advocacy worker around the criminal justice process. This has involved ongoing contact with the Procurator Fiscal and others for the Advocacy Worker.*

*J experienced a violent and sustained sexual assault by her partner following several years of coercive controlling behaviour. She had been able to move away from him but continued to fear the threat he posed. J experiences sustained periods of flashbacks and has few resources to help her manage. J has little consistent supportive contact with any family or friends.*

*We began working by Zoom video as face to face was not possible. J had little voice, she found it very hard to express herself verbally. Nevertheless, she said that she felt safe and supported by me, to the extent that she could relate experiences that she had not told anyone about.*

*J was working with Community Mental Health, and I contacted the nurse to introduce myself. We agreed our respective roles and also explored difficulties in the working relationship between her and J. J wanted another nurse and I advocated on her behalf.*

*Over a few weeks J's condition started to deteriorate. Issues in the criminal justice process were having a significant impact. J was having many frightening flashbacks and was barely sleeping. Through my contact with the Community Mental Health Nurse J was invited for further assessment of her mental health. I was also communicating with Social Work and Advocacy during this period to ensure I had necessary information to better support J; but also, to contribute to investigations regarding child protection concerns.*

*This network of professionals around J has further developed there is consistent sharing of appropriate information such that I am now able to work with J in both the Community Mental Health centre and the hospital as required. I feel my contributions to decisions are respected. J has been clear that my involvement both in working with and as an intermediary with partners has been helpful for her.*

## **Case Study - Women's Support Service**

We received a referral in from MIA for a Polish survivor for WRASAC support. Kristina met with Barnardo's worker, survivor, and interpreter at the survivor's home to plan how we can support this lady going forward at WRASAC. There are ongoing issues due to lack of funds for interpreters and this would be a piece of work Kristina would be keen to develop and try and get some funding for going forward. Dundee has a high eastern European population, but survivors do not have the same opportunities to access support due to not speaking English. Social work has agreed to fund limited interpreter costs at present due to ongoing child protection issues.

# SERVICE UPDATES



## Office Move

New premises were located for our office at Sangobeg House, in Francis Street. From April to June of 2020, the office was packed up and moved to our new premises on Francis Street. This was all achieved through the national lockdown and early restrictions.

## **Returning after lockdown**

Upon beginning their posts in August, Katie and Kristina began to encourage and support the move back to the office for staff by using a bubble system so that staff could come back to the office and deliver face-to-face work with survivors who had requested this and had not wanted to work virtually. Alas, just as it felt we were opening back up and getting into the swing of the new ways of working, the second national lockdown was announced in the winter of 20/21 and the centre remained closed following the Christmas break for the first month of the year.

## **Back to the office**

From February onwards, staff were able to return to work face-to-face with the most vulnerable of clients, and moving toward the end of this reporting period the office was moved around and adapted to facilitate working in the office and maintaining the government guidance concerning COVID restrictions.

We are looking forward to getting settled into our new office space more during 21/22.

# AWARENESS RAISING

## November 2020 - 16 DAYS

Due to the pandemic our usual plans to do the Reclaim the Night March were put on hold. Instead we hosted 7 training and workshop events, which were attended by 100 people from Dundee and Angus.

Training taster sessions were offered, including Trauma and its impact, Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Young People and Pornography.

WRASAC also held Open Days virtually to raise awareness of our Service.

Although this 16 days was a challenge due to the restrictions put in place for Covid-19 we are extremely proud to have been able to take part, raise awareness and educate society on the issue of Gender Based Violence.

We have already been inundated with requests for more training and workshop sessions, which we are very excited to continue offering.

We have used our platforms to raise awareness and understanding of sexual violence. We have ran campaigns such as 16Ways 4 16Days - which details how people can fight back against discrimination, sexism, rape culture and toxic masculinity.



**Women's Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre**  
Dundee & Angus



Every day we have the opportunity to examine our behaviours and beliefs for biases that permit rape culture to continue. From the attitudes we have about gender identities to the policies we support in our communities, we can all take action to stand against rape culture.

### 16. Start—or join—the conversation.

Talk to family and friends about how you can work together to end rape culture in your communities. Whether it's hosting a conversation club that unpacks the meaning of masculinity, fundraising for a women's rights organization, or joining forces to protest rape-affirming decisions and policies, it will take all of us to stand united against rape culture.

Source: UN Women

**#16DaysOfAction**

## #16DaysOfAction PASS THE MIC!

Dundee Women's Aid

has been supporting women, children and young people who are experiencing Domestic Abuse for over 40 years

We have a public office in the heart of the city centre with lift access and staff available to assist if you require additional help to access our top floor office. We offer support over the phone, in our office and in the community.

Workers will listen to you and support you to make the decisions that are right for you and your children (if you have any). We will respect your choices.

We offer...

Confidential, and non-judgemental service to women, young people and children who have experienced domestic abuse. The abuse may be from a partner, ex-partner or someone they are living with.

We strive to provide an inclusive service and support women from all backgrounds regardless of substance misuse issues, mental/physical health, race/ethnicity, religion, age, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation.



Dundee Women's Aid is a registered Charity No. SC006691 & a Company limited by Guarantee SC0124795



Enterprise House,  
45 North Lindsay Street  
DD1 1PW



01382 220 803



@DundeeWomensAid



@DundeeWomensAid



@DundeeWomensAid

We also ran a 'Pass the Mic' campaign – where we dedicated our social media to services that work with women within Dundee. We highlighted their aims, services provided and their contact details.

# AWARENESS RAISING

January 2021



## WRASAC News

Listen  
Believe  
Support

Continuing to work towards a world free from all forms of sexual violence

Following a review, in December 2020 of our organisation's newsletter, we started 2021 with a new design and format for our monthly newsletter for Survivors.

We wanted to give an overview of services and events in Dundee and Angus and have content that could support, motivate and inspire.

We also realised that there was an opportunity to provide information about Dundee, Angus and the services on offer to people in Tayside.

We have monthly features including:

- What our Survivors want from the new Newsletter - Have Your Say!
- What services we are providing survivors in Dundee and Angus
- Get involved in WRASAC Groups
- WRASAC Recommends
- How you can support WRASAC and the work we do
- Useful Information
- Your voice matters. Find out how you can make a difference and improve our services by giving us feedback.

We are always looking for ways to improve our services and value more than anything the voices of our people who know our services best - our clients.



# AWARENESS RAISING

## February 2021

Sexual Violence Awareness Week is held annually, nationally to raise awareness of sexual violence and the impacts this can have on daily lives of survivors.

This is an annual event spaced out over a week in February where organisations run activities raising awareness and campaigning against sexual violence.

Nationally, we were still in lockdown in February 2021 so we were unable to run the face to face and interactive training sessions for professionals, so adapted our plans to offer these sessions remotely.

## March 2021

### Dundee Women's Festival Wellbeing Event

Our annual Wellbeing Event as part of the Dundee Women's Festival 2021 was held virtually on Tuesday 9th March as restrictions prevented us from booking our usual location of The Steeple.

With this in mind, we wanted to do something really special for the women accessing services in Dundee and Angus. Therefore, we enlisted the help of The Flourishing Well (a group of heart led holistic wellbeing practitioners).

Different sessions were held throughout the day, alongside some other activities that WRASAC staff had planned.

### **SEXUAL ABUSE & SEXUAL VIOLENCE AWARENESS WEEK 2021**



#### **Awareness Raising - February Webinars for Professionals**

- **WRASAC Open Day**, Monday 1st, 10am-11:30am
- **Young People and Pornography**, Monday 1st, 2pm- 4pm
- **What is Sexual Violence?** Tuesday 2nd, 2pm -3pm
- **Trauma**, Wednesday 3rd, 12:30pm - 2pm
- **Intro to Commercial Sexual Exploitation** Weds 3rd, 10am - 11:30am

### Virtual Women's Wellbeing Event

Tuesday 9th March 2021  
10:00am - 3:00pm

Guided Meditation;  
10am - 10:30am with Helen Hampton

Therapeutic Art, Coffee & a Chat  
10:30am - 2:30pm, Drop in event, attendees can stay as long as they like

Self Compassion Workshop  
11:00am - 12:00pm with Karyn McKaig

Self-Care  
11:30am - 12:30pm with Roxana

Book using Eventbrite or full list on our website

Weaving Our Tale  
12:30pm - 1:30pm with Helen Hampton

Sound Healing  
12:00pm -1:30pm with Suzy

Burlexercise  
1:30pm -2:30pm with Ceza

Guided Meditation  
2:30pm - 3:00pm with Gillian Ross



# VIRTUAL WELLBEING EVENT

## Wellbeing Event Workshops

Lorna's session was first and the ladies thoroughly enjoyed making superfood chocolates. Lorna had sent all the materials, moulds and the ingredients out to the ladies and they all loved making and eating the chocolates, whilst learning about the nutritional value of the ingredients, which included many healthier, more nutritious alternatives to processed sugar. The ladies found the session relaxing, informative and said it helped with feelings of isolation. It was also so lovely to do something, creating and connecting with each other. The delicious taste of the chocolates was an added bonus!



Suzy hosted her wonderful sound healing journey. The ladies found it very therapeutic, interesting and calming. The beautiful sound healing journey vibrations help to calm the nervous system down; working deeply on our mind, body and soul, harmonising our physical, physiological and energetic systems. This helps to alleviate symptoms of stress and anxiety.



“I took part in the self compassion, meditation and the sound healing courses and all of them were so calming and soothing to take part in, all speakers had very calm voices and were very inviting.”

“I was made to feel comfortable and like I said it was very well presented.”

# THANK YOU

## Farewell and Thank You

Sadly, this year saw one of our board members, Liz, step down due to family commitments. The board and team at WRASAC would like to thank Liz for her contribution and wish her well.

In January 2021 Rachel sadly left our Women's Support Service. Rachel was a valued member of our team and will be missed.

## With Thanks

Finally, the board would like to express our deepest gratitude to our fantastically skilled and dedicated staff and volunteers who provide an excellent service, and who have remained focused throughout this challenging period.

Also, to our funders, partner agencies and public; whose support enables us to change the lives of survivors of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation.

And most importantly, we thank the survivors, who continue to inspire and motivate us with their courage and strength.

*Angela Wilson*



Angela Wilson, WRASAC Chair

# FINANCES

## WOMEN'S RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE DUNDEE AND ANGUS LTD

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
<b><u>Income and endowments from:</u></b>							
Donations and legacies	3	18,422	719,080	737,502	13,398	540,668	554,066
Investments	4	-	-	-	180	-	180
Other income	5	33,068	-	33,068	14,318	-	14,318
<b>Total income</b>		<b>51,490</b>	<b>719,080</b>	<b>770,570</b>	<b>27,896</b>	<b>540,668</b>	<b>568,564</b>
<b><u>Expenditure on:</u></b>							
Charitable activities	6	21,416	655,040	676,456	23,561	590,112	613,673
<b>Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources before transfers</b>		<b>30,074</b>	<b>64,040</b>	<b>94,114</b>	<b>4,335</b>	<b>(49,444)</b>	<b>(45,109)</b>
Gross transfers between funds		(2,194)	2,194	-	444	(444)	-
<b>Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds</b>		<b>27,880</b>	<b>66,234</b>	<b>94,114</b>	<b>4,779</b>	<b>(49,888)</b>	<b>(45,109)</b>
Fund balances at 1 April 2020		63,888	21,335	85,223	59,109	71,223	130,332
<b>Fund balances at 31 March 2021</b>		<b>91,768</b>	<b>87,569</b>	<b>179,337</b>	<b>63,888</b>	<b>21,335</b>	<b>85,223</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

# The Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre

## Dundee & Angus



Sangobeg House  
4 Francis Street  
Dundee  
DD3 8HH  
01382 205 556  
[www.wrasac.org.uk](http://www.wrasac.org.uk)  
@wrasac

WRASAC Dundee & Angus is a company limited by guarantee, registered with OSCR and registered in Scotland as company number SC241372 and charity number SC009070.