



# Impact Report 2023

[solacewomensaid.org](https://solacewomensaid.org)

Solace Women's Aid is a charity registered in England & Wales.  
Charity Number 1082450. Company Number 3376716.

@SolaceWomensAid   



**“When I think about Solace, I just feel inspired, motivated, independent, strong and confident.”**

## What you can find inside.

A message from our Chair and CEO

Our year at a glance

Survivors we help in London

Solace Futures 2022-27

Putting survivors at the heart of our organisation

Our Volunteers

Our Services

Accommodation

Multiple Disadvantage

Rape Crisis

Advice and Support

A Display Of Artwork Created By Our Service Users

Our Services Continued

Children and Young People

Therapeutic Services

In partnership we can do more

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

Corporate Partnership Highlights

Raising Vital Funds

Expert training for safer lives

Being the voice of survivors

Raising Awareness

Our Thanks

Financial Review

Our Trustees and Directors

Page 2-3

Page 4-5

Page 6-7

Page 8

Page 9

Page 10

Page 11

Page 12-13

Page 14-15

Page 16-17

Page 18-21

Page 22-23

Page 24-25

Page 26-27

Page 28-31

Page 32-33

Page 34-35

Page 36-37

Page 38

Page 39

Page 40-42

Page 43

Page 44

Page 45

**“They helped me see life, basically, they empowered me.”**

A Survivor

# A message from our Chair and CEO.

## Welcome to Solace's Impact Report 2022/23.

It's been another year of challenges, changes and some excellent achievements at Solace as we continue to navigate how to best support our service users within an increasingly underfunded sector and increasingly complex external pressures on both VAWG sector charities, our staff and volunteers and the women, children and non-binary people that we support. Despite these uncertain times, we continue in our mission to support survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse.

As we continue to see the long-term impact of Covid-19 on those experiencing domestic abuse, survivors are facing an increase in the cost of living and strained public services. In 2022/23, we also saw regular stories about the misogyny, racism and homophobia with the police, culminating in the Casey Review. We continue to call on Government and statutory services to ensure that survivors are able to access the services they need to reach safety and recover, including ensuring there is sustainable funding for the male violence against women and girls sector.

Our biggest focus is to ensure that we are continuously improving to meet the needs of our service users. Our amazing 281 strong staff team and incredible volunteers have supported 21,254 women, children and non-binary people in 2022/23. During the year, some of our achievements include:

- Establishing our new Service User Advisory Board to ensure Service Users are practically represented at all levels of the organisation.
- A range of new inclusion initiatives including the launch of Recite Me, an inclusive digital technology for our website.
- Setting up new safe accommodation projects for women and children, following the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act. This includes: a new partnership with London and Quadrant (L&Q) to deliver a move on accommodation project and joining a new VAWG Consortium Project (Ascent Pan London Floating Support Service).
- The launch of two powerful awareness raising campaigns spearheaded by our Young Change Makers focusing on 'Dear Dads' and '#ReframetheBlame'.
- Continued success and evaluation of our innovative projects for women experiencing multiple disadvantage – read more about 5 years of our [Wiser Project](#) and three years of [VAWG Housing First Project](#).
- Opened up a new women's only hub for our North London Rape Crisis service and awarded a second year to pilot of a new casework model for victims of sexual violence not going through the criminal justice system.
- An unprecedented reach and impact of our Christmas fundraising campaign – focusing on how long it takes women to leave abusive relationships with vocals from the internationally acclaimed singer Self Esteem.

As a leadership team, we continue to build on our commitment and perseverance in promoting an inclusive and supportive environment for our staff and to embed a zero tolerance approach to racism and discrimination within the organisation. We are committed to this ongoing journey to improve our organisation - this year the board of trustees commissioned an independent culture review. We will take this work forward through a series of workshops with our staff team that will call for reflection and build strong values and behaviours that guide our work with service users and our effective engagement as a unified workforce.

We have continued to action and build on our Equity Diversity and Inclusion action plan and are actively working towards being an anti-racist organisation. We have set up four new inclusion networks led by and for staff to provide safe spaces for staff as well as to help inform future progress in policies, consultation and communications responses.

As we start our new roles as CEO and Chair of Trustees, we want to thank Interim CEOs Judith Banjoko, and Bernadette Keane and Interim Chair Kirsty Telford for their dedication and support over 2022-23.

Finally, we want to thank our staff, volunteers, trustees and partners for their tireless work to end male violence against women and girls. The external environment remains challenging for the sector, with high staff turnover, recruitment challenges, and a lack of sustainable funding. But we are constantly inspired by the courage of the survivors we support, and will continue to grow and adapt our services so we can reach and support more women and children to safety. Together, we can make changes that saves lives.**W**



**Priyanka Devani**  
Chair of the Trustees



**Nahar Choudhury**  
Chief Executive

**“The biggest, fiercest group of warriors you could ever come across.”**

# Our year at a glance.

**Our services touched the lives of 21,254 people**

**We supported 13,361 adults and children in our frontline services**

**We worked with 7,893 people in our prevention services**

**We provided safe refuge accommodation for 949 women & children across our 22 refuges**

**We raised an income of £15.2 million**

**We worked in partnership with 55 organisations across London**

**Our team of 281 staff make our work possible**

**We trained 2,898 people to recognise and respond to abuse**

**Volunteers gave 5,336 hours that made all the difference**

**93% rated that there was a continued need for Solace services**

**91% found it easy or very easy to make initial contact with our services**

**88% of service users rated Solace services as good, very good or excellent**



# Survivors we help in London.

**87%** of survivors experienced emotional abuse

**62%** of survivors experienced jealous or controlling behaviour

**57%** of survivors experienced physical abuse

**37%** of survivors experienced financial abuse

**35%** of survivors experienced harassment and stalking

**23%** of survivors experienced sexual abuse

**58%** of women we supported have children

**453** women we supported have no recourse to public funds

**2,687** of survivors have mental health support needs

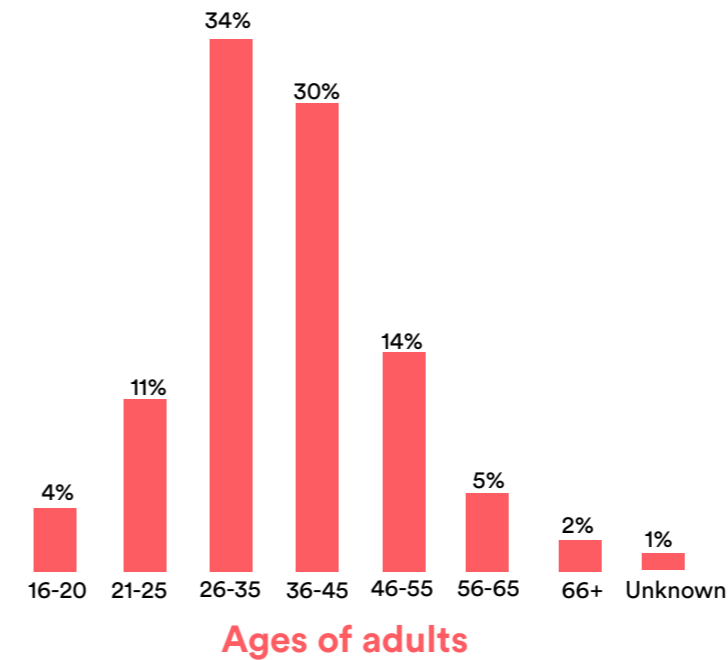
**28%** of people we supported have a disability

**43%** of these were receiving support for their mental health

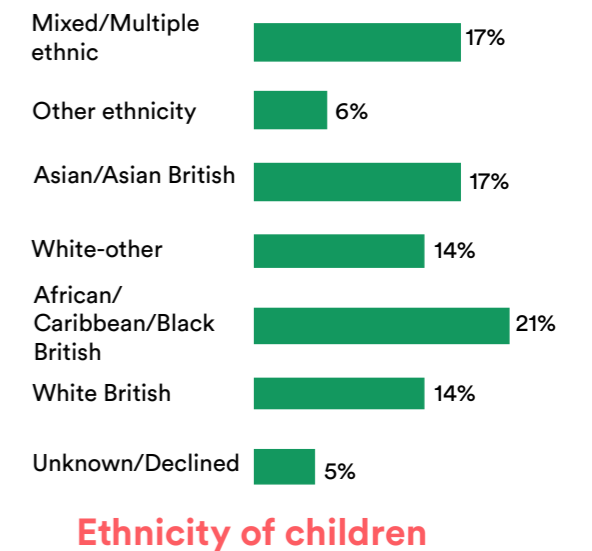
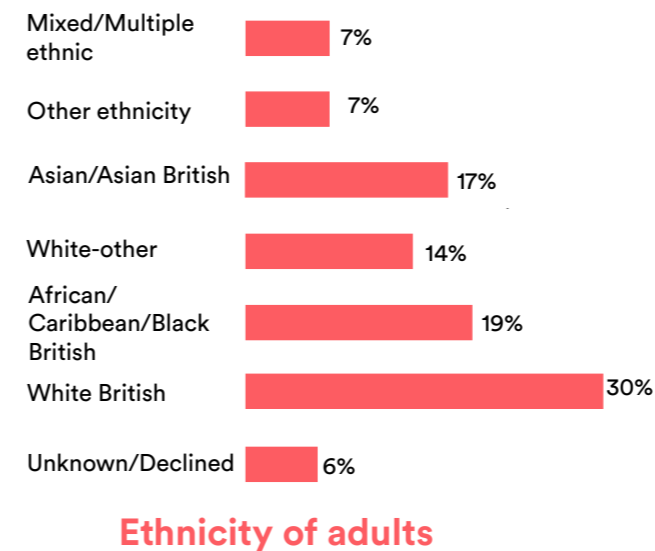
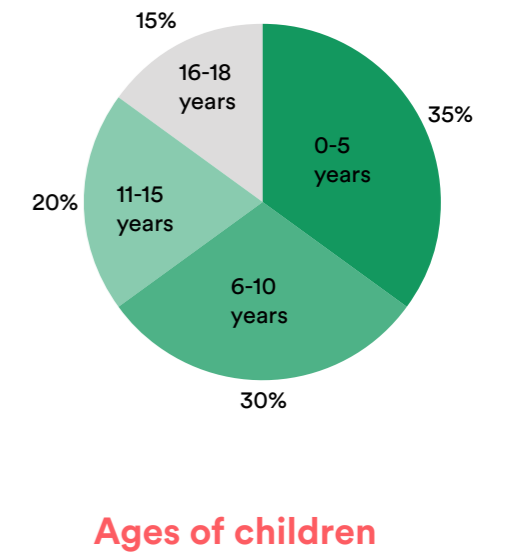
**144** male survivors were supported through our services



## Adults supported in our services



## Children supported in our services



# Solace Futures 2022-27.

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

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

With 2022-23 marking the first year of implementing this strategy, we have:

- Launched our Service User Advisory Board to help shape service delivery, our strategic influencing and approach to fundraising.
- Started to review our development opportunities for staff, launched our people of colour leadership programme including a mentoring scheme and begun embedding a trauma informed approach to relevant policies and procedures.
- Developed a suite of wellbeing resources for staff to have an ongoing legacy.
- Undertook a Culture Review with all staff, led by Trustees.
- Improved our corporate partnerships approach and seen a growth in this income source.
- Grown our move on accommodation offer with the expansion of the Casa Project and launch of the Nest Project.
- Expanded our therapeutic offer to ensure that both women and children in our refuge can receive counselling support.
- Started the development of new children and young people service models including a programme for young boys showing signs of unhealthy behaviours.
- Secured funding for a new project to support visually impaired women into volunteer positions within our advice team, and into future employment in the VAWG sector.



# Putting survivors at the heart of our organisation.

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

**93%**

rated there was continued need for Solace services (2021/22: 97%)

**88%**

rated the service as good, very good or excellent (2021/22: 93%)

**70%**

said that the service helped them feel safer (2021/22: 69%)

## Service User Involvement

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

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

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

**“ Without the support of Solace I don't know how I would have navigated everything I had to deal with leading up to the arrest of my abuser. Both before and after, I felt a huge amount of warmth and support from the organisation. It has helped me feel whole and sane again, and I can't thank you enough. ”**  
**A Survivor**

# Our Volunteers.

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

In 2022-23 we received 5,336 volunteer, service user support and professional hours (2020/21: 4,588) from individuals and students who helped us with our service delivery, alongside pro bono corporate supporters who contributed to various projects and awareness campaigns. Our dedicated volunteers worked across 28 different projects.

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

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

**5,336**  
hours were volunteered

**1,087**  
the number of hours dedicated to the NLRC Helpline



“ I enjoy seeing my client gain confidence in speaking up for herself. She even gave herself an inner goddess name which was beautiful. I loved being able to use my skills and grow as a worker. ”

WiSER Peer Mentor

## Our services are holistic, needs led and trauma informed

**solace** advice & support

Solace offers advice, crisis support and advocacy to survivors, helping them to rebuild their lives.

**solace** accommodation

Safe refuge and move-on accommodation is vital for women and children made homeless through domestic or sexual abuse.

**solace** therapeutic services

Our 1-1 counselling, group work and specialist holistic therapies help women recover after experiencing traumatic abuse.

**solace** rape crisis

Our rape crisis service offers a range of services to women and girls who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives.

**solace** for young people

We deliver a range of services to children and young people, including prevention work, for families and young people living in the community.

**solace** multiple disadvantage

Specialist, tailored services for women with multiple disadvantages and special needs, including mental health needs and problematic substance use.

**solace** partnerships

Partnership working is central to our approach to provide a comprehensive range of specialist support to meet the needs of women and children.

**solace** training

Our expert training service works with organisations to improve their response to domestic and sexual abuse.

# A safe place to start to recover.

Solace runs 22 refuges offering 178 rooms across 7 London boroughs for women and children fleeing abuse who need a safe place to stay in order to recover from their trauma and rebuild independent lives.

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

Supporting women into move on accommodation and helping them to resettle is a key part of our support. This year we were delighted to launch our second move on accommodation project in partnership with L&Q. We have 10 new affordable properties for women leaving refuges across London which are provided with 2 years of support to help with ongoing needs and move towards independent living.

“ You have helped me and my children to get our confidence back, be strong and to prioritise myself. I have been starting a new life for me and my children. ”

A Survivor

## A ‘whole family’ approach

Solace delivers a ‘whole family’ approach in our accommodation services and specialist family support workers and sessional play workers provide vital support to mothers and children during their time in refuge. Family Support Workers work with mothers and children to ensure that they are supported with their physical and mental health, emotional well-being and development and accessing education opportunities and resources.

We have also developed a Specialist Family Support Project in Haringey, Islington, and Enfield to provide holistic support to mothers and children through a psycho-educational group work programme. The programme helps mothers and children understand their personal experiences, abuse and trauma experienced, and provides methods to better manage and cope while strengthening relationships with one another after abuse.

Within our refuges we also support women through the Arise Programme, a 6-week domestic abuse awareness programme to empower and support women to understand what has happened to them and be able to move forward. In 2022/23, we have secured additional funding to make our refuges more psychologically informed environments and for wellbeing activities in Lambeth and Haringey.

**949**

women and children supported in refuge

**73%**

of service users felt an overall improvement to their wellbeing after accessing refuge

## Specialist safe accommodation

We continue to run one of London’s few specialist accommodation services for women experiencing multiple disadvantage. Our refuge in Camden offers 24-hour support to women with mental health needs and problematic substance use.

**24**

women supported in our specialist refuge

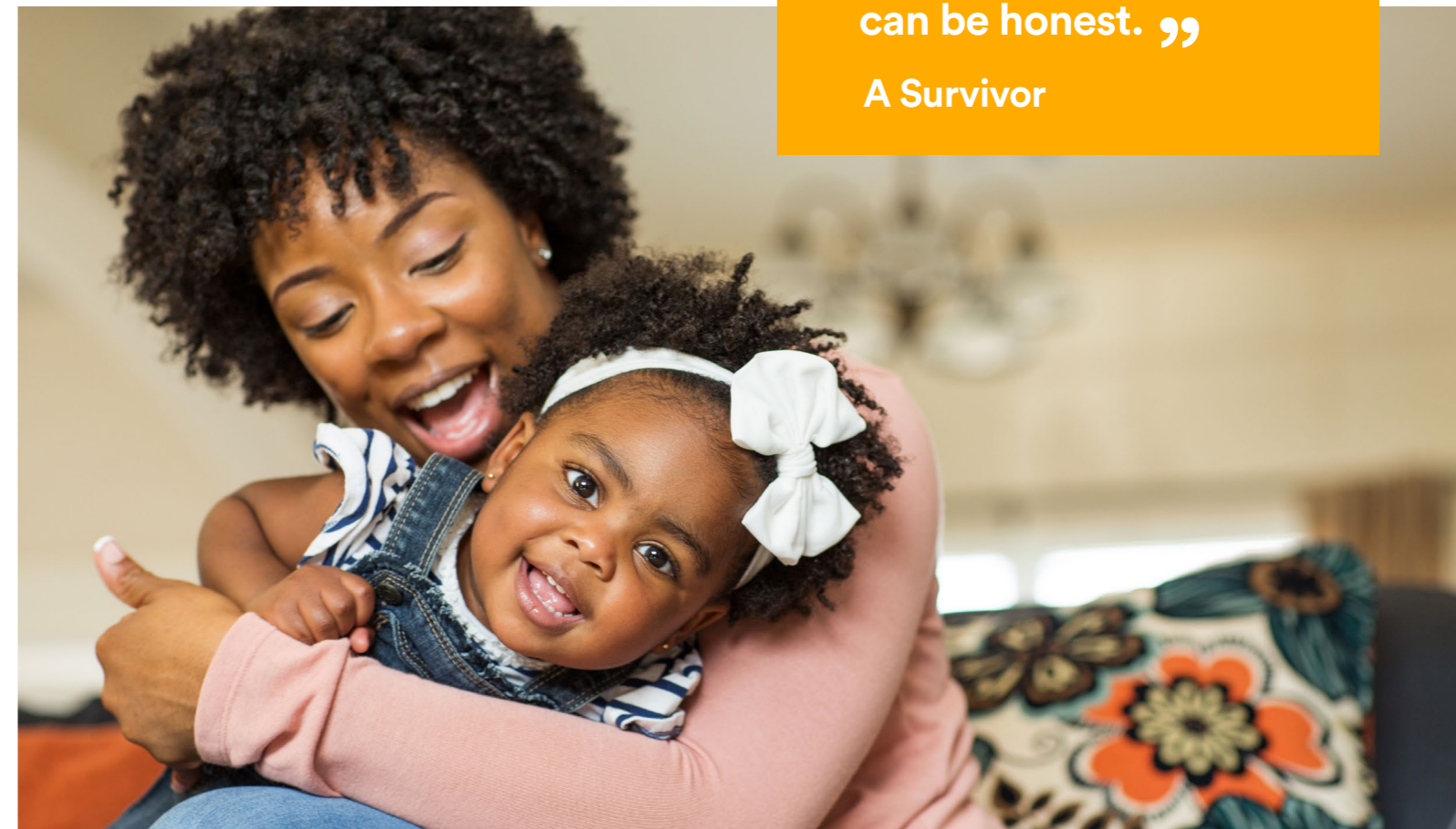
We also run two second stage dispersed accommodation and specialist support services: The Amari Project provides second stage accommodation for women who have been sexually exploited through prostitution or trafficking. The Rhea project provides immediate temporary, crisis emergency accommodation for women and children in Southwark and now this project has come to an end.

“ Any support that you need, Solace will be able to help you. They will make you feel stronger and that you deserve something good. ”

A Survivor

“ Solace provided a place of safety, with staff I feel do not judge me. I can be honest. ”

A Survivor





# Reaching more women in need.



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

## VAWG Housing First

Solace runs specialist Housing First Projects in Islington and Westminster for women experiencing multiple disadvantage. Our VAWG Housing First for Women in Westminster responds to the unique and often unmet needs of women experiencing long-term homelessness, multiple disadvantage and male violence against women and girls (VAWG). It is built on the Housing First fidelity principles, and critically creates a gender informed response that meets the needs of women, working in partnership with Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse. Across our two Housing First services we supported 46 women in 2022-23.

## Southwark Hub

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

## WiSER

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

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

**54%**

accessed various health services and were better able to manage their health

**“ Overall, Solace has been great. They made me feel safe. They are my world. ”**

**A Survivor**

## Survivors story - Sam's journey

Sam is a 45-year-old survivor of domestic abuse and sexual abuse and is originally from Poland. She was referred to the WiSER service in 2021 by a domestic abuse service. Sam has been trapped in a cycle of homelessness, trauma, substance use, sexual violence and domestic violence. She cannot write, text, or use the internet.

Without the WiSER service Sam would experience mental distress, anxiety and trauma. She would miss her appointments and suffer hardship and have no access to services or food or money. She would have been street homeless and continued drinking and drug use. However, through the support of WiSER, Sam now has a council flat, has contact with her family, is going to Narcotics Anonymous women only meetings, and is making new clean and sober friends. Sam

was supported with how to use a phone and computer. Sam now has a hearing aid which means she can communicate more easily, is on the correct medication, and is attending her appointments. She is now volunteering one day a week, and is on a two year course at Luminary Bakery so she doesn't have to be on benefits long term.

Sam commented that “I would have probably died if I had not met WiSER. I am fighting with addiction and WiSER is beside me. The way WiSER worked with me has changed every bit of my life. You will not recognise me. My worker stuck with me, didn't leave me. Usually other agencies leave, WiSER stays as I still needed so much more work for me after I got flat, and when I relapse.”



**“ It's done more for me than two years of therapy in terms of my sense of self. I'm really proud now, talking about what I've been through and what I'm doing with it. It's been the most profoundly healing thing. ”**

**WiSER Peer Mentor**

# For survivors of sexual violence.



Solace runs one of the four rape crisis centres in London supporting survivors of sexual violence. We support women and girls in North London aged over 13 who have experienced any form of sexual violence. We work alongside the three other London rape crisis centres, Galop, SurvivorsUK and the Havens to form the London Survivors Gateway (led by Women and Girls Network).

## Helpline

Our North London Rape Crisis team run a free helpline for women and girls to provide emotional support regarding the sexual violence they have experienced, regardless of when the violence occurred. The Helpline is staffed by our expert team and trained volunteers to give confidential information about the support that is available to women in North London and to refer to our Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) and case workers. The helpline can also provide support and advice for the friends and family of survivors, and other professionals seeking to support those who have experienced sexual violence.

**894**

calls taken by our Rape Crisis helpline

**540**

service users supported across our Rape Crisis service

**272**

women accessed our Therapeutic service

## Advocacy Service

Our team of ISVAs provide one to one advocacy for women living in North London boroughs who are engaged with the criminal justice system (CJS). Each ISVA works with their survivors of sexual violence in a trauma-informed way using a person-centred empowerment model to support them to make informed choices from reporting to the police to court. Within our team of experienced ISVAs, we have specialist young women's ISVAs and multiple disadvantage ISVAs to advocate for the survivor to ensure she is treated with respect and her voice is heard.

Our new pilot casework service sits alongside our ISVA service to provide support for women and girls who are not engaged in the criminal justice system. This service is focused on providing practical support to survivors of sexual violence, including support with housing, benefits, referrals to local services, and support with education and employment, among other survivor-identified needs.

**82%**

of survivors felt an increase in emotional or mental wellbeing

**82%**

of survivors had an increased understanding of their rights and choices

## Counselling Service

Our expert counsellors run a range of specialist counselling services to help women across North London boroughs to understand the impact of abuse and to recover from trauma. We provide rape crisis counselling, pre-trial counselling, friends & family counselling, childhood sexual abuse counselling and counselling for women who have recently had decisions on their criminal cases. We also run a safeguarding hub for women who are at risk of self-harm or are experiencing deteriorating mental health through a series of stabilisation sessions.

Our counselling service also provides group support to survivors of sexual violence. We run a variety of body-based, creative and support groups such as yoga, trauma and tension releasing exercises (TRE), dance, creative weaving, sleep hygiene and a psychoeducational group.

## Training and Development

In addition to providing direct services for survivors, we work to increase understanding of sexual violence by training professionals as well as staff and volunteers at local community groups. Our training focuses on highlighting myths about sexual violence, its impact on survivors, and how to best support them. We have also developed an experts by experience group where we recruit and support women with lived experience of sexual violence to help improve our service and shape reforms to the criminal justice system for survivors.

**“ You have helped me to find my voice, I so believed was forever hidden, you gave me hope... for that I will be forever grateful. ”**

**A Survivor**



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

**A Survivor**

# Rebuilding lives in the community.

## Advocacy and Support

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

Our advocacy services accept referrals from professionals, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and self-referrals through our duty helpline. Solace has IDVAs and specialist caseworkers co-located in services across London including in police stations, sexual health clinics, children's social care, housing departments and job centres. These IDVAs play a vital role in directly supporting survivors as well as working with professionals to improve the wider response to domestic abuse.

## IRIS

Solace runs Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) services across five London boroughs. Our IRIS advocates work in partnership with GP surgeries and offer tailored training on the public health issue of domestic abuse. This service enables support to be offered to domestic abuse victims at an early stage before the abuse becomes a serious risk to mental, emotional and physical health.

## Solace Advice Line

Solace's Advice Line supports those who are women, trans and/or non-binary, aged 14+ who have experienced any form of male violence against women and girls across 16 London boroughs. The line is a first point of contact and empowers service users by exploring their rights and options to make independent decisions about their future. We offer risk assessments, safety planning, legal advice, and welfare and housing benefits advice. Our role is to listen, to offer non-judgemental support, and empower service users to make the right decision for their life.

Our advice service also provides support to service users who have been assessed as being at medium risk but have not been able to receive support from other domestic abuse services, and risk falling through the gaps. Service users in the project are usually those who have moved several times due to being placed in temporary accommodation and are regularly moved between boroughs, starting and stopping their support with domestic abuse agencies.

The advice line and casework are part of two pan-London partnerships, Ascent Advice and Counselling (led by Women and Girls Network) and Ascent Advice Plus (led by Solace).

**10,023**

women supported

## Specialist advice and support projects

### Irish Traveller Project

This project provides long-term, holistic support to Irish & Irish Traveller (including those of Irish descent) survivors of abuse across all London boroughs, and who have experienced domestic/sexual abuse at any point in their lives. We provide intensive domestic abuse casework, often face-to-face, support to engage with other services and resettlement support.

### Immigration Service

Solace supports women with no recourse to public funds across our services. Our immigration project supports women, trans and non-binary service users who have no recourse to public funds. We provide casework, including providing accommodation and subsistence support for up to 16 weeks, whilst the service user is supported to regularise their status in the UK. Our Immigration Caseworker also provide Solace caseworkers and service users with 1:1 immigration advice.

### Silver Project

The Silver Project works across London to provide advocacy support for women over 55 who have experienced domestic abuse. This specialist service offers longer term support as the majority of these survivors have complex needs due to the length of abuse and health conditions. This year the project has also supported over 400 practitioners through training to raise awareness of domestic abuse in older women and the barriers to reporting and support for this group.

**“ I cannot think of a better person than my IDVA! When she calls me, and I see her phone number, it lights me up! She has explained things to me clearly since day 1 and she helps me to understand what the solicitor says. ”**

**A Survivor**



**“ Solace have helped me to believe in myself again. I am now free from the abuse, I am receiving the care I need, and I can finally bond with my children. My husband didn't allow me and my children to have a relationship. We are now free to cuddle up and say “I love you”, I feel so blessed. ”**

**A Survivor**

# Rebuilding lives in the community.

## Survivors story - Lara's journey

Lara resided in the UK with her husband and children on a spousal visa; she did not have any other family in the UK. Lara's husband had sole control over the family's finances, and over the last few years he had been controlling and violent towards her on many occasions. When Lara's husband pushed her down the stairs while she was 8 months pregnant, she called the police. Lara required assessment in hospital and the hospital team made a safeguarding referral and alerted her GP practice.

Lara's GP reviewed Lara and made an immediate referral to Solace Women's Aid.

An IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate) assessed Lara and referred her case to MARAC (the multi-agency conference for high risk domestic violence cases) where a plan was put in place to try to keep her safe. Over the last eight months Solace continues to support Lara.

Lara tells us:

"Solace has helped me massively. They helped me to change the locks so that we feel safe in our home. They helped with vouchers for food and clothing for me and my children."

"They signposted me to every service for help... with legal advice, housing and my IDVA is even accompanying me to court."

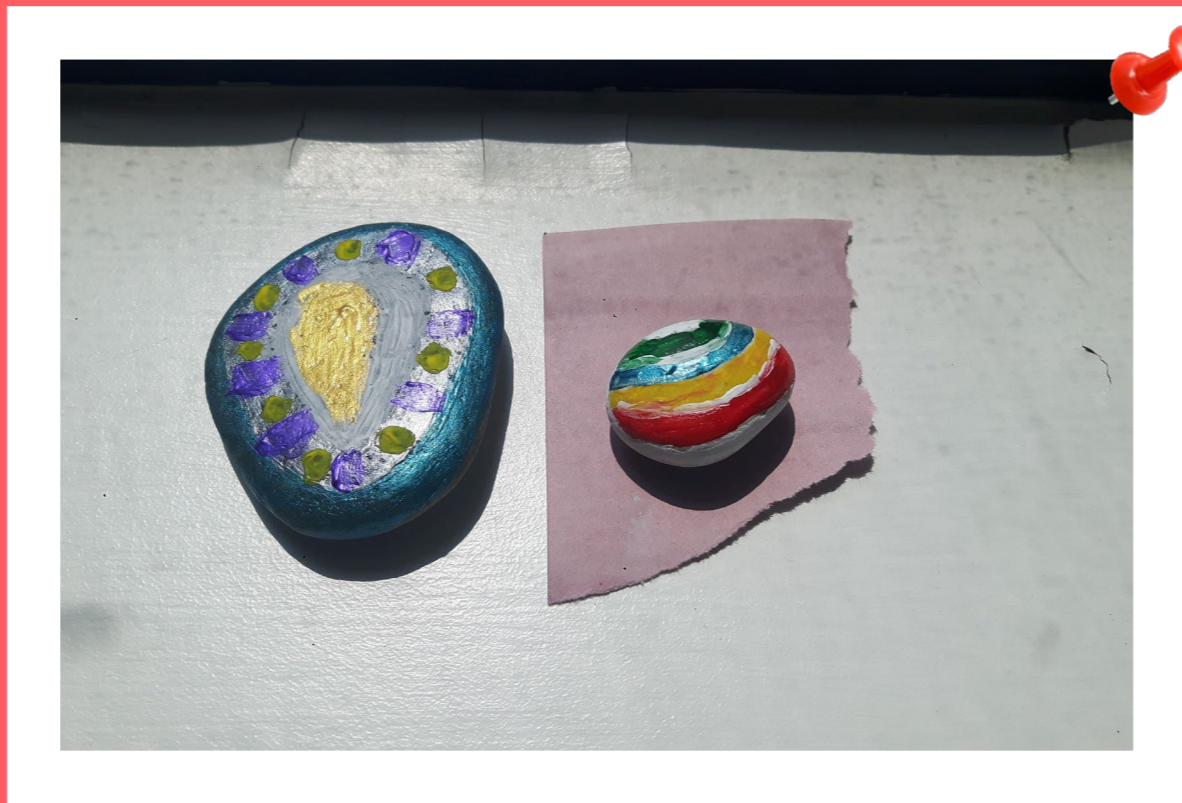
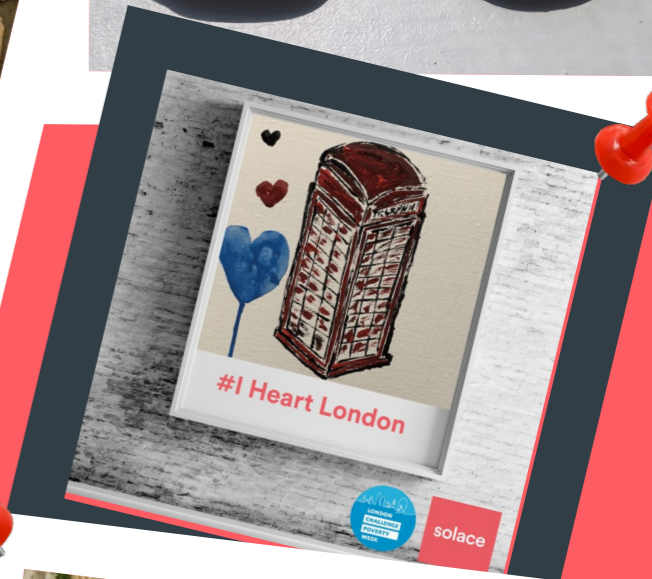
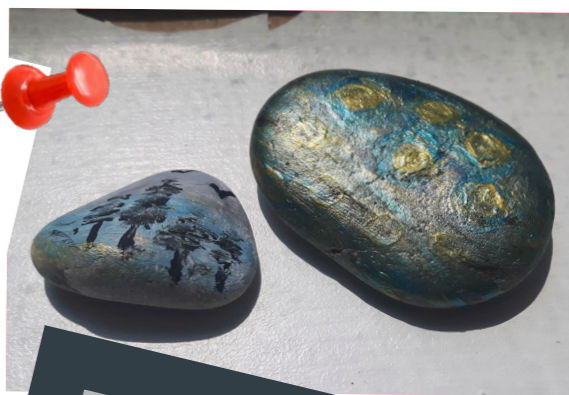
Solace continues to support Lara with her immigration application, liaising with solicitors, social services and other support organisations.

"Today I am settled in my life because of Solace, now my children and I are a strong team and we can cope together with what has happened."

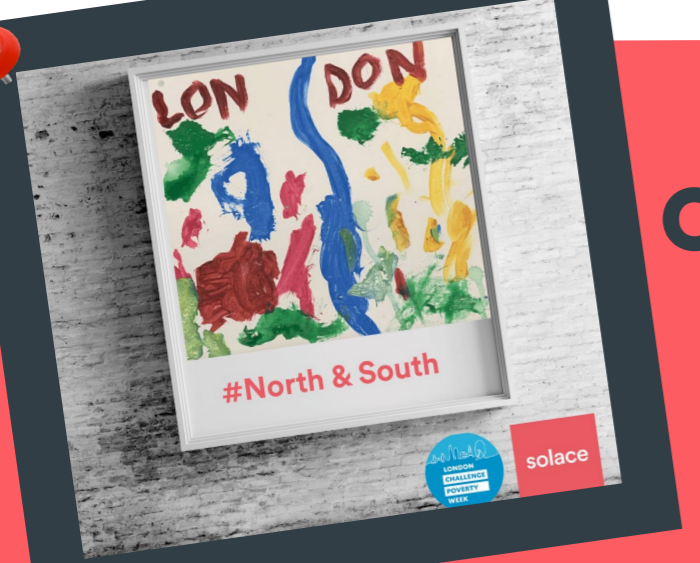


**“ You reassured me, you have guided me throughout this process. You make sure me and my family are safe. You gave continuous support, check in regularly, keep updating us, referred me to the right people, like solicitors. I felt really reassured by Solace. I'm so grateful for your help from the bottom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

**A Survivor**



# A display of artwork created by our service users



# Futures free from abuse.



## Early Intervention and Prevention Services

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

## Young Change Makers

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

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

**191**

children and young people supported

## IDVA support in London's Major Trauma Centres

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

**4,954**

young people attended talks and seminars

**“ I loved learning about bullying as I was bullied in the past and did not have a chance to talk about it or understand why someone would bully others. Now I have better understanding and know what to do in similar situations, and how to keep safe.”**

**An 11 year old participant**

## CouRAGEus

The CouRAGEous Project is a London VAWG Consortium Project led by Women and Girls Network. Along with partners, Solace provides a specialised service for Black and Minoritized young women aged between 14-24 who are worried about or have experienced violence, abuse or exploitation. Through the project we provide 1:1 advocacy, counselling and community engagement work to increase the opportunities for minoritised young women to access services and provide lasting structural transformation and change through trainings/workshops on prevention and resilience programs.

**“ It gave me a safe space to talk to my peers about things we experience. Topics of gender stereotypes made me think how important it is for boys and girls to be free and be who they want to be as well as knowing more about my personal space and how to communicate my feelings well.”**

**An 11 year old participant**



# Space to heal from Trauma.

Solace provides a range of therapeutic services to help survivors of domestic abuse and wider forms of male violence against women and girls to recover from their experiences and make choices for themselves. We provide a person-centred approach which allows survivors to focus on their strengths, whilst helping them to recover from the long-term impact of physical and emotional abuse.

## Counselling

The Solace Counselling team offers one-to-one counselling sessions to women. Our expert counsellors use their experience to create a safe space for survivors to explore the impact of abuse on their lives. We continue to provide counselling services through the pan-London Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership and specific services for Waltham Forest and Islington and up until the financial year ending March 2023, we also provided counselling services in Southwark.

## Ascent Counselling Service

Through the Ascent Advice and Counselling partnership, Solace offers one-to-one counselling to victims/survivors of domestic abuse and all forms of VAWG. The service covers 1 assessment and up to 20 counselling sessions and can include pre-trial therapy. Solace Women's Aid offers this service in 21 London Boroughs.

“ [Counselling] helped me to understand my core issue... I have learnt some methods of how to cope. ”

A Survivor

3,344

hours of counselling support

404

women and children provided with counselling

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

A Survivor

82%

of survivors supported by Ascent Counselling felt an increase in emotional or mental wellbeing

82%

of survivors supported by Ascent Counselling had an increased understanding of their rights and choices

## Therapeutic support in our refuges

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

“ My counsellor has been a huge help and she is amazing, she is above and beyond. I am grateful. I am going to miss her. ”

A Survivor



# In partnership we can do more.



Some of Solace's best work has been achieved by working collaboratively and in partnership with other organisations both big and small. Violence against women is complex and partnerships and collaborative working are crucial to recognise and ensure nuanced approaches are taken to work towards ending it.

In 2022/23, we worked with:

**55**  
partners to support survivors of violence against women and girls

**28**  
other specialist MVAWG organisations as a member of the London VAWG Consortium

**20**  
'by and for' partners who provide much needed specialist support for marginalised groups

**14**  
partners across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland in our first national partnership

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

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

## Ascent Advice Plus



Ascent Advice Plus has secured further funding from MOPAC for continuation into 2024. The project expands support provided by two advice hubs and advice casework within Ascent Advice and Counselling, allowing for longer term support of up to 6 months, recognising the increased complexity of women's lives when they reach us. Support offered through the project is of increasing significance given the ongoing cost of living crisis. The project also includes expansion of Rights of Women's Family Law Line and incorporates the expertise of four additional Equity & Diversity (E&D) partners to provide training and casework support in working with, LGBT+, disabled, Deaf, and hearing-impaired women, and women with learning disabilities and autism.

In 2022/23, the partnership supported:

**1,810**  
women through the East and West London Advice hubs

**612**  
women by the London Family Law Line

**555**  
women with specialist casework support





# In partnership we can do more.



## Labyrinth Project



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

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

Despite being operational for only 18 months and working within the context of Covid-19, the Labyrinth Project successes included:

**33,889**  
women engaging through the project

**463**  
group work sessions delivered

**992**  
women attending training

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

A Survivor

## Housing Partnerships

Increasing private sector rents, a scarcity of social housing and a cost of living crisis, means housing in London continues to be one of the biggest challenges for survivors with 70% of the survivors we support have a housing need. Solace's partnership work has continued to focus on the housing needs of women and children who are facing homelessness due to domestic abuse or multiple disadvantages in London.

## Casa Project



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

**60**  
women supported with tenancy sustainment, emotional and physical needs directly stemming from the abuse, and building independence

**19**  
women were supported into training/education

**13**  
were supported into paid employment

## Women's Development Unit



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

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

The Unit published best practice guidance on Women's Spaces within Homelessness Settings, designed to encourage homelessness services (which are often primarily used by men) to create protected and trauma-informed spaces for women. Such spaces can support women to feel comfortable accessing day centre resources, and build positive relationships with support workers and each other, supporting their exit out of homelessness. The Unit has also developed a best practice toolkit on gender-informed service design.

View our reports [here](#)

**300**  
people attended training

**109**  
people participated in women's homelessness focused workshops

**165**  
people took part in interviews and surveys to support our evidence gathering

# Equity, Diversity, Inclusion.

## Equity, diversity and inclusion

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

We strive to address the multiple and intersecting experiences of discrimination, disadvantage and oppression experienced by the survivors we support, our staff and volunteers.

Over the last year, we have created, initiated and established a range of new ways to ensure that EDI is at the heart of all we do. We are now working hard to embed these initiatives, with the aim of implementing our EDI Strategy in every area of our organisation. This includes offering more therapeutic support to staff with our daily debriefs and clinical supervision including specific sessions for Black and minoritised women with supervisors of colour.

We have also continued EDI drop-in sessions with our Head of EDI and embedded a new Employee Assistance Programme. We additionally now have a confidential reporting system called 'Tell Jane' where staff can safely and confidentially raise any concerns.

We have undertaken a full culture review and sought advice from external consultants on our complaints, grievances and HR policies.

## Inclusion Networks

We have launched and established four inclusion networks to bring together staff who share protected characteristics, building and expanding on the strengths of existing communities at Solace. The networks are run by our staff for our staff, with plenty of opportunity to get involved as hosts, co-hosts and active participants.

The networks are spaces for each group to explore their unique experiences and challenges, as well as to support each other through peer-led meetings and discussions.

The networks are:

- People of Colour
- People with diverse abilities (visible and invisible disabilities)
- LGBTQ+ community
- Allies

Our Inclusion Networks have spearheaded our new Inclusion Awards and our Future Leaders Programme aimed primarily at supporting women from the global majorities to work toward achieving greater parity in the workplace.

## Working in partnership and providing inclusive services

In partnerships, campaigns and collaboration we continue to champion and support 'by and for' organisations. We are committed to not bidding for funding for specific services for Black and minoritised women or for other groups such as Deaf and disabled women and LGBT+ survivors, unless to support a 'by and for' service as part of a partnership or where a 'by and for' service does not yet exist for a community where we have been commissioned to deliver the service.

We have secured funding from the Vision Foundation for a new project to support blind and visually impaired women to volunteer with the advice team. The project will include a comprehensive training programme, mentoring and support into employment.

## VAWG sector anti-racism charter

Solace is a signatory of the and we are seeking to incorporate its recommendations into our work.

## Trans Inclusive services

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

For more information on our EDI strategy and plan click [here](#)



# Corporate Partnership Highlights.

Our Corporate Partnerships are incredibly vital to allow us to continue delivering our services and raising the voices of women and girls.

FLM



Solace have been fortunate enough to partner with Financial Lifestyle Management (FLM) since March 2022. FLM have a proud history of advocating to empower women to take control of their finances and have a wealth of experience providing financial advice specifically for women. By working together and providing financial support resources, we are working to empower women to live free and independent lives.

Firebird Foundation



The ongoing generous support of the Firebird Foundation has been invaluable for our children therapeutic services. With their support Solace has been able to continue offering holistic therapeutic services to children and young people, and expand our ongoing Art-Therapy programme to children and young people.

**£3,000**

donation from FLM to the 'More Than Just a Room Fund' meant that three children moving out of a Camden refuge into safe, independent housing with their mums were able to completely decorate their new rooms - helping them settle into their new home with a bedroom filled with magical decorations, beloved cartoon faces, and favourite toys.



New Look

NEW LOOK

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

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

(WiSER Project Advocate)

Stockwool Architects

stockwool

We were delighted to have been chosen by Stockwool as their charity partner for 2022. Stockwool and their team supported us across the year with a number of volunteering, fundraising, and awareness raising projects and activities. Highlights include their incredible team effort for the Solace 40 challenge, a design challenge for 16 days of activism, and a transformational volunteering day in a refuge.

Tudor Capital



Tudor Capital and the Tudor Capital Foundation have very generously supported Solace since 2019. Their donations have been unrestricted meaning they have enabled us to use funding flexibly, allocating to the most immediate and greatest needs for women and children, including mother-child support and the cost of living crisis. By providing core funding, Tudor has supported many services across Solace and allowed us to meet the rising demand for our work.

**100**

Corporate Volunteers helped transform our refuges

**100**

An estimated 100 women received new outfits thanks to clothes donations from New Look and URBN

**£111,000**

The value that we received in corporate in kind and pro bono support

# Raising Vital Funds.

Solace wouldn't be Solace without all the incredible fundraisers who support our work. From marathon runners and cake bakers to jewellery sellers and gig organisers, every £1 raised has made a huge difference to the lives of survivors recovering from abuse.

## eCubed

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

## School fundraisers

Fundraising is a great way to challenge students in ways that can progress their employment skills while also starting conversations on important topics in early years. The complexities of relationships are often overlooked in basic curriculum but the need for their understanding is so vital to help people develop healthy relationships and understand what to do in an unhealthy one. This is why we encourage fundraising and First Give challenges in schools and universities. By fundraising and awareness raising, these conversations are happening in classrooms and on campus's, helping us make long lasting change.

First Give invites multiple classes in schools to get involved in a funded project, where they choose to represent charitable causes. The class who is judged to have the best action and presentation will win £1000 to go towards charity. This has been a fantastic way to engage students and raise funds for our vital services.

This year, we have worked with 15 schools and university groups to help them with fundraising and awareness raising activities.

**Over 1,000**

miles ran for Team Solace

**£18,000**

worth of Christmas gifts donated

## 16 Days of Stories

During 16 Days of Activism we launched our first ever 16 Days of Stories reading challenge! Part of the celebration included an online panel discussion featuring best-selling authors, Harriet Tyce, Winnie M Li, Louise Hare and Rose Wilding speaking about how they use their writing to empower themselves and others and understand what we can all do to ensure all voices are heard.

“ A family member has had to escape an abusive relationship and while she had good support from her church and family, it made me realise how hard it could have been without a strong support network because the government's help was lacking. I think Solace does amazing work in filling that vital gap. ”

A Supporter

## Case Study - Teacher Joe

I am a school teacher working in High Barnet. Through the discussion of high-profile cases such as those of Sarah Everard and Child Q in form time, a small but articulate and determined group of students in my class have become very passionate about issues surrounding male violence against women. They were inspired to discover Solace Women's Aid were operating in the local area and made a powerful presentation to their peers outlining the charity's mission statement. Their words convinced the whole class to come together in support of Solace Women's Aid and we are now planning a series of social actions designed to raise awareness and funds for the cause through First Give.

“ They have a truly remarkable team of people working across support lines, therapeutic services, as well as an impressive set of community-based outreach campaigns aimed at training and offering preventative services for young people. Something really important to me is that Solace's services extend to trans women and non-binary people. And they offer the same support to these people who are affected by the same misogyny and the patriarchal frameworks that cause harm to cis women and girls. ”

A Supporter



# Expert training for safer lives.



We deliver both in person and remote training to professionals across the statutory sector and to corporate partners. Solace has 32 unique training packages available and this year our new training packages include 'Recognising and responding to sexual abuse for secondary schools' and 'understanding coercive control'. We have worked with organisations to develop bespoke training packages. The training team implemented new measures to ensure that training sessions are more trauma-informed, both for learners and for our associate trainers.

Alongside these we delivered training to smaller grassroots organisations through our Labyrinth Project and specialist training on women's homelessness through our Women's Development Unit.

## Corporate training

Understanding of domestic abuse and how to support someone experiencing it is vital across all parts of our society. We are delighted that our corporate training program has expanded this year and we have worked with various new corporate partners to train their teams on recognising and responding to domestic abuse within their teams.

We've delivered 3 new champions training, cohorts trainings and expanded our DA champions network, where champions can access ongoing professional development opportunities.

**“ I really enjoyed this training. I learnt things that will make me a lot more aware and thoughtful when working with survivors. ”**  
Training Participant

## Feedback from our training

Our feedback indicates that 93% of learners strongly felt that the training was engaging, inclusive and helpful. 95% said that they will be able to apply what they've learned in their work.

**21**  
new workplace champions in completing our 3 day training programme

**2,898**  
learners trained during the year

**14**  
new corporate partners teams trained

**“ It was such a sensitively led session and you can tell the trainer has had a lot of experience and made everyone feel part of a safe learning space. Just wanted to pass on my thanks and gratitude, looking forward to putting some of this learning into practice with work. ”**  
Training Participant

# Being the voice of survivors.

We have continued to develop our public affairs function which seeks to ensure that key decisions in Westminster and London are shaped by the powerful voices and experiences of the survivors of male violence against women and girls that we support.

In 2022-23 there was an increased focus on the urgent reform needed in the police response to VAWG and to police perpetrated abuse, following the case of David Carrick and the publication of the Casey Review.

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

## Victim's Bill

The landmark Domestic Abuse Act in May 2021 brought in much needed changes including a new definition of domestic abuse but lacked protections for migrant victims and didn't address the need for all survivors to be able to access support in the community. We have therefore made these areas a priority in our contribution to the Government consultation on the new Victims Bill. We have submitted evidence to the Ministry of Justice and Justice Select Committee to help shape the Bill and as it goes through Parliament, we will continue to work alongside our sister organisations and Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office to make this Bill a step change for victims and the services that support them.

**23**  
key stakeholders across the UK and London Government

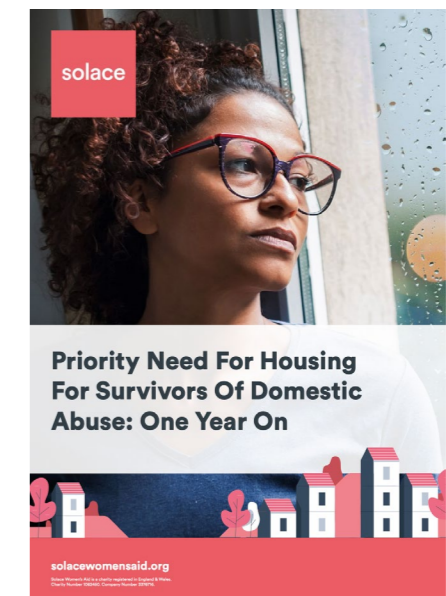
**39**  
mentions in the UK Parliament and London Assembly reports

## Covid-19 inquiry

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

## Domestic abuse and housing

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 sought to improve access to housing for survivors of domestic abuse however it continues to be one of the biggest challenges for the survivors we support. In November 2022, Solace launched a new report looking at the impact of the Act on the experience of survivors accessing housing and made recommendations on necessary further improvements. We launched the report with a roundtable of London councillors and continue to engage with stakeholders on our key recommendations.



# Raising Awareness.

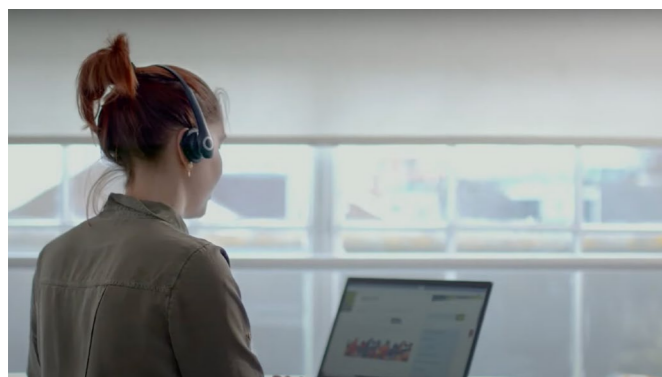
It has been another busy year for our award-winning media and communications, campaigns and community teams. As always, we continue to look for creative and innovative ways to reach women and girls and to support and promote our services both externally and internally.

We want to support more women and children in London to live free from violence and that means raising awareness of what abuse and violence is, what help is out there and how people can support those around them. It is also crucial that we challenge misogynistic, racist, ableist and homophobic attitudes in our society and institutions, and our communications are a key tool to doing this.

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

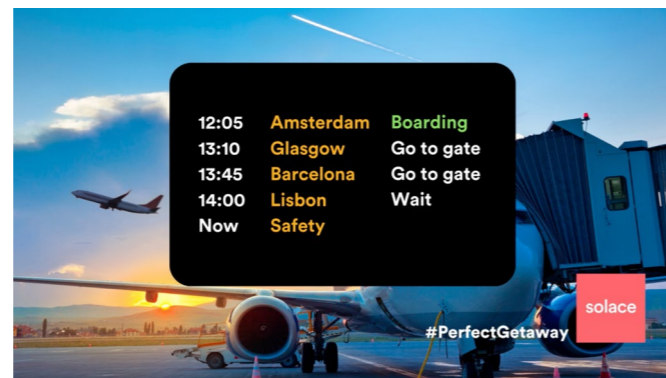
## Charity Film

Solace continued to promote our new charity film which has won awards. We were delighted to win silver in the Outreach Campaign of the Year at the UK Content Awards and be nominated for a Smiley Award. We're very proud of the film, not least because it features service users and our staff, and it was great to see it being shown at Genesis Cinema and at conferences to promote our work.



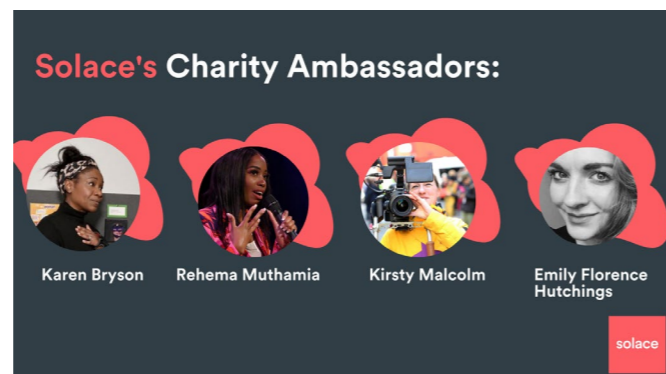
## Summer Getaway Campaign

We launched our "Perfect Getaway" campaign which focused on supporting the 7,000 survivors we expected to arrive at Solace's doors over the summer holidays. The campaign highlighted that domestic abuse doesn't take a holiday and neither do our services. The campaign featured in Stylist and raised over £20,000 for vital services.



## Our Charity Ambassadors

This year we were delighted to launch our new Charity Ambassadors programme. Our Charity Ambassadors are all successful, powerful women in their own right who want to use their knowledge, talents and influence to help amplify the voice of Solace and to reach more women and girls. We were delighted that trustee Emily Florence Hutchings, former Miss England Rehema Muthamia, actor Karen Bryson, and film director and Roll Nine founder, Kirsty Malcolm were launched as our charity ambassadors to speak up for women as experts by experience. Read more about our Charity Ambassadors here [bit.ly/solacecharityambassadors](https://bit.ly/solacecharityambassadors)



## Recite Me

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

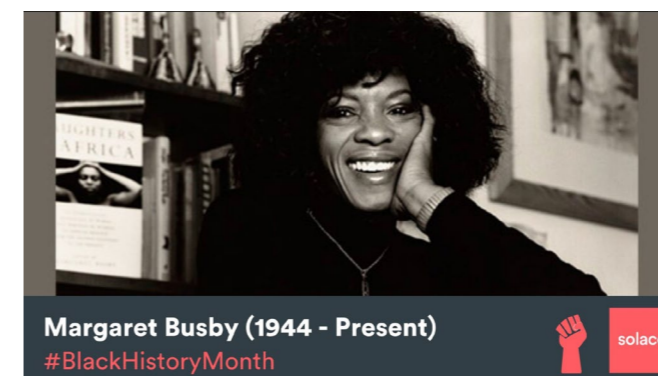


# 560

people used our Recite Me tool to access our website

## Black Herstory Month

Our services hosted events across the organisation to celebrate Black women and their stories. We also shared stories of Black women who have been overlooked and hidden from British history through our social media channels.



## 16 Days of Activism

To honour 16 Days of Activism we launched a Solace reading challenge where we asked people to join us in exploring and being inspired by feminist literature. As part of this we held a webinar discussing how women authors use their voices in writing to empower themselves and others and what we can all do to ensure diverse voices are heard. We were delighted to be joined by writers:

- Harriet Tyce
- Winnie Li
- Rose Wilding
- Louise Hare



# 213,000

unique visits to our website

# 35,000

followers across our social media platforms

# 180

media requests

# Raising Awareness.

## Seven Years of Christmas

In November 2022, we launched our #7YearsofChristmas appeal which included a short animation following the life of 'Maya' over seven years of Christmas, based on the Twelve Years of Christmas theme. The song that accompanied the video was brilliantly brought to life by the award-winning Rebecca Lucy Taylor, aka Self Esteem, one of the UK's most exceptional and in demand singer songwriters – herself a vocal campaigner against sexual violence and for the right for women and girls to live safe lives.

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



“ We found the combination of the stunning animation, remarkable speed of execution, and effective amplification and PR efforts made this campaign truly exceptional. ”

Judges Comments, Content Awards 2023

## Not Here For Your Entertainment and the Solace Test



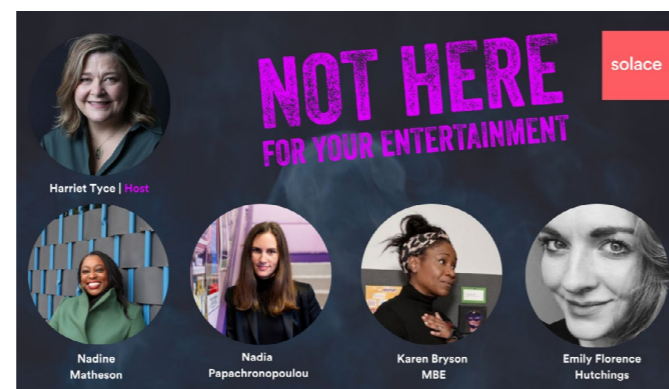
For International Women's Day, we focused on the sexism and stereotypes that heavily features within our entertainment, particularly through TV and film. Our campaign highlighted the way in which these stories of violence against women and girls in the media are often victim-blaming and a part of why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

To try to challenge this we have developed the Solace Test for those writing about VAWG:

1. Is it needed? (does it drive the story?)
2. Is it truthful? (are you adding to a cultural lie about VAWG)
3. Is it victim blaming? (don't do that)

We launched the test as part of our “Not Here for Your Entertainment” event hosted at Rich Mix Cinema with a panel discussion featuring:

- Nadine Matheson (crime writer and defence lawyer)
- Nadia Papachronopoulou (theatre director)
- Harriet Hall (journalist)
- Karen Bryson (actor and director)
- Emily Florence Hutchings (theatre, trustee, ambassador)



# Our thanks.

We continue to be grateful to the generous individuals and organisations that support our work to end the harm done through gender-based violence. We would like to thank all our supporters during 2022/23, including those that have chosen to remain anonymous.

Andrew Morgan  
Anglo American Charity  
Banham Security  
BBC CIN  
Bruno Schroder Trust  
Castelli Sound  
City Bridge Trust  
City Of London  
Cloudesley  
Commonwealth  
Copperstone Solicitors  
Cripplegate Foundation  
David Family Foundation  
De Beauvoir WI  
Duncan Lewis Solicitors  
ECubed  
Emily Florence Hutchings  
Fabrix  
Finance Lifestyle Management  
Financial Times  
Firebird Foundation  
Genesis Cinema  
Goldman Sachs  
Gothic Valley WI  
Greenwich University  
Hodge Jones and Allen  
Hollick Family Foundation  
Iceland Foods Charitable Foundation  
Iguano Trust  
Irish Government  
Irish Youth Foundation  
James Douglas  
Karen Bryson  
Kirsty Malcolm / Roll Nine Productions  
London Community Foundation  
London Metropolitan University

L&Q Foundation  
Mayor of Waltham Forest  
MBA Stack  
Nationwide Building Society  
New Look  
Olwyn Foundation  
Orla Kiely  
Patron Capital  
Public Interest Law Centre  
Queen Mary University  
Rehema Muthamia  
Rich Mix Cinema  
Samuel Ross Solicitors  
Self Esteem (Rebecca Lucy Taylor)  
Stockwool Architects  
Stone Rangers WI  
Tayyibah Girls School  
The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust  
The Big Give  
The Childhood Trust  
The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Field  
The Glen Beg Foundation  
The Golden Bottle Trust  
The Jealous Gallery  
The Vision Foundation  
The Wogen Anniversary Trust  
The Worshipful Company of FanMakers  
The Youth Endowment Fund  
Trust for London  
Tudor Capital  
UCL  
Urchin Studios  
Vitol Foundation  
Walcot Foundation  
Wella  
3i Foundation

We would also like to thank our statutory partners: the London Boroughs of Barnet, Bexley, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, Islington, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Waltham Forest and Westminster; the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime; Greater London Authority; London Councils; and the Tampon Tax Fund (via the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport).

# Financial Review.

## Income

For the financial year 2022/23, total incoming resources was £15,156,000 (2021/22 £16,361,422) with funding from statutory partners, trusts and foundations, corporates and the public which have helped Solace maintain essential services during the year. The total reduction in income is primarily due to the planned closure of three large partnership projects but we did see an expansion in our refuge services from Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) Tier 1 Accommodation funding, increased rental income due to inflation and the Greater London Authority and L&Q Foundation provided funding for our new move on accommodation 'NEST' project.

The continued incredible support from our statutory partners, trusts and foundations, corporates and the public have allowed us to continue to deliver life-saving services for survivors of MVAWG across London.

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

**£15,156,000**

total income for the financial year 2022/23

**£15,257,000**

total expenditure for the financial year 2022/23

## Expenditure

Our charitable spending on activities has correspondingly decreased by 9.8% from £16,927,412 to £15,257,322 which was mainly due to a reduction in payments to partners. The number of staff to deliver our charitable services have reduced by an average of 18 over the year, however salary increases and initiatives for stronger employee engagement and staff wellbeing recorded an overall increase in staff expenditure of £52,773. The closure of COVID 19 projects resulted in less expenditure and grants towards our beneficiaries amounting to £312,193.

**£10,417,000**

total staffing costs to deliver specialist support with partners

**17**

decrease in staff for the financial year 2022/23

## Our Trustees.

**Kirsty Telford**  
Interim Chair (Retired 22nd June 2023)

**Madeline Church**  
Interim Vice Chair

**Kerri Hartwell**  
Interim Treasurer

**Jasbir Sandhu**  
Treasurer (Up to 29th June 2022)

**Yasmin Becker**  
Trustee (Resigned 15th September 2022)

**Maureen Hopcroft**  
Trustee (Resigned 15th September 2022)

**Emily Florence Hutchings**  
Trustee

**Vivien Ma**  
Trustee

**Natalie Lopez**  
Trustee

**Meghan Roach**  
Trustee

**Amy Pritchard**  
Trustee

**Hannah Cane**  
Trustee

## Our Directors.

**Judith Banjoko\***  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
(Resigned December 2022)

**Bernadette Keane\***  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
(January - June 2023)

**Nahar Choudhury**  
Chief Executive Officer  
(Appointed June 2023)

**Retna Thevarajah**  
Chief Operating Officer

**Jane Jutsum\***  
Director of Business Development  
(Left April 2023)

**Jennifer Cirone**  
Director of Services

\*Directors during 2022-23.

**solace**



**“I didn’t know  
support like this  
existed and if  
I had known, I  
probably would  
have left years  
ago.”**

Solace Women’s Aid  
Registered Address  
Moore Kingston Smith LLP,  
9 Appold Street  
London, EC2A 2AP

Advice line freephone | 0808 802 5565

Administrative phone | 020 7619 1350

For press and media email | [media@solacewomensaid.org](mailto:media@solacewomensaid.org)

Website | [solacewomensaid.org](http://solacewomensaid.org)

Social media | @SolaceWomensAid



Professional Advisors Auditors | Moore Kingston Smith  
LLP Solicitors | Anthony Collins LLP

To protect our service users, names & photos  
of service users have been changed.

Solace Women’s Aid is a charity registered in  
England and Wales. Charity number 1082450.  
Company number 03376716

**solace**