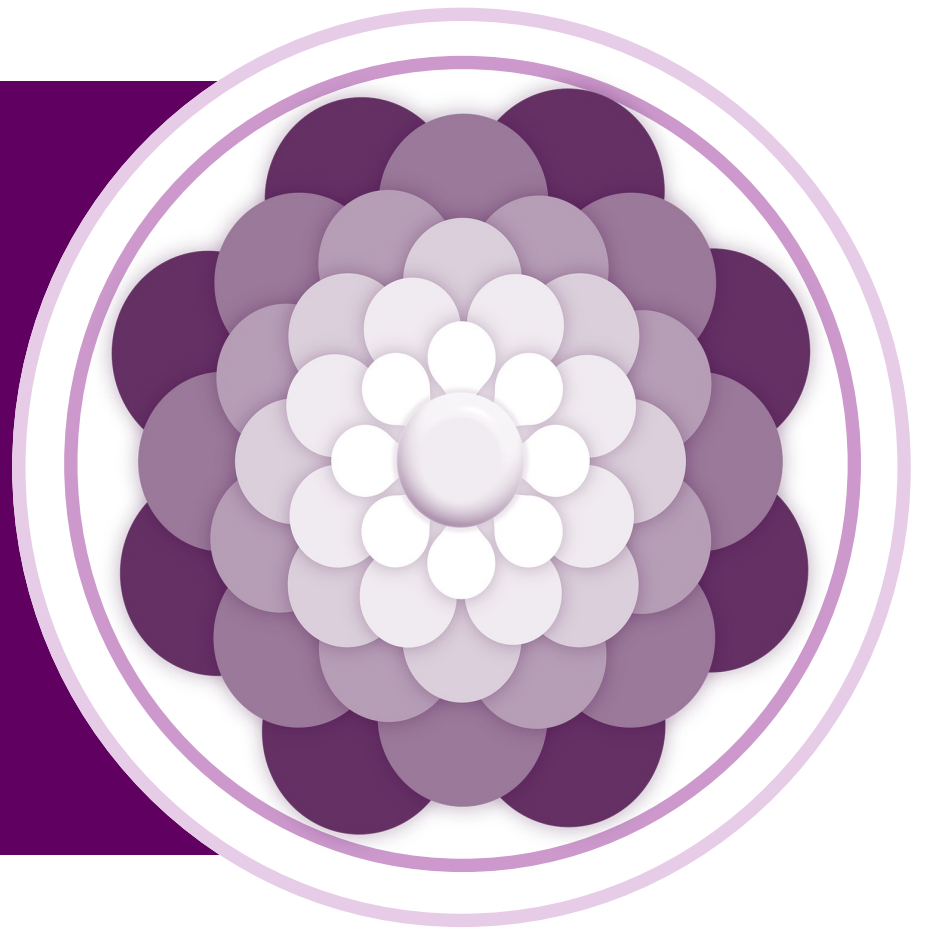


Lighthouse

For a brighter future, free from domestic abuse



Annual Report

2022 - 2023

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Mission Statement: *'Our mission is to support and empower women and children affected by domestic abuse or violence'*

Our aim: *'We aim to do this by raising awareness, providing a safe, supportive environment and by developing and implementing preventative and therapeutic services'*

Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees Report

This has been yet another challenging year for Lighthouse, but, as ever, the organisation has approached it all with professionalism, innovation and a huge passion for the work we do. The first thing I need to do is to thank all the staff throughout the organisation for their hard work and dedication all through this year. They faced the challenges head on and continued not just to provide excellent and much needed services for women and children experiencing domestic abuse, but to innovate and continually improve in every area of our work. There have been staff changes and movements around the organisation, meaning extra work for some and pressure to provide what was needed. But, as ever, all our staff went the extra mile and I am proud of, and humbled by, the professionalism, commitment and dedication they always show.



This was a year where we finally returned to “normal” after Covid and for the Trustees this meant a return to face to face meetings, which was very welcome. For the organisation it meant a return to offering all our services face to face again. But although Covid was a challenging time it also taught us so much and brought new ways of working for us all, which are now embraced alongside our previous working practices, using technology to reach more people and extend our working practices.

One of the highlights and biggest challenges of this year was the move of our offices and Women’s Centre to our refurbished building in Felixstowe Road. To make this move while still continuing to provide all the services we normally do was an amazing achievement and I think both staff and the women and children who use the new Centre are enjoying the beautiful, light and bright new premises. A big thank you to everyone involved in this big project!

Another huge and worrying challenge was having to tender for the Refuge Service, which we had been providing in Ipswich since 1976. Being successful in that bid was due in no small part to the work that went into that process, enabling Lighthouse to continue to use the expertise gained over so many years to provide our wonderful refuge service. A big thank you to all involved in preparing that successful bid.

Funding, in all areas, continues to be a big issue for us, as is the situation for many charities, and competition for the funding streams available is strong, and Lighthouse continues to work hard to find sources of funding to continue our work. This is an ongoing concern and a lot of work goes into finding the grants that we need. We also rely on community fundraising and, as the cost of living rises and people face financial challenges, it becomes harder to raise funds in this way, but we have been very lucky with the generosity and support of our community and we remain ever grateful for this. The need for our services has never been greater and therefore the need for funding and support for those services grows continually and will remain an ongoing challenge.

At the end of last year our Board welcomed two new Trustees, Zoe and Nina, and this year has seen them getting very involved and bringing their skills and expertise to the Board and the organisation. They joined an established Board and together we all work well to fulfil our role in the work of Lighthouse. That role is made so much easier by the way in which our Chief Executive Officer, Sally, and all her management team keep us fully informed and abreast of the issues, challenges and successes of Lighthouse. We receive comprehensive reports, particularly

around our finances and this enables full discussion and any necessary decision making and we are always grateful for this good working relationship.

In November our current chair, Margaret, gave the Board a year's notice that she would be leaving the board in November 2023. This gives us lots of time to find another Chair, but Margaret will be a hard act to follow and all the Board will want to thank her for the work she has done and the leadership she has given and continues to give us. So thank you to Margaret and all of our Trustees, who I know are proud to be a part of Lighthouse and the amazing work everyone involved is doing.

Sarah Harvey - Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees

This is what some of our clients said regarding what they would have done if Lighthouse hadn't been there to support them.

"This makes me quite emotional to consider"!

"Would likely have gone back as I had nowhere to go".

"Ending my life as couldn't bare the pain and hurt any more".

"spiralled into depression".

"I think I would have been a statistic. I can't believe that I was housed, I was given food, I had everything I needed and nothing I didn't."

"They have saved my life".

Chief Executive's Report

Lighthouse has experienced some considerable changes and challenges this year. One of the key changes and challenges was moving out of both our Head Office in Museum Street Ipswich and Women's Centre in Berners Street amalgamating both in to our lovely refurbished property in Felixstowe Road. Co-ordinating the move was quite a challenge ensuring services continued to run smoothly whilst organising removals, redecoration, IT systems, phone lines, furnishings etc. We met the challenge head on and are now fully established at the Centre with plenty of space and room for development.

Another key challenge was having to bid in a tender for our refuge service. This was the first time refuge services had been put out to tender in the county and it was crucial we were able to retain the specialist accommodation that we have been providing for 45 years. We were extremely relieved to hear we were successful in our bid and our refuge is preserved for another 3-5 years before re-tendering will apply. The success of the tender is testament to the excellent work of the refuge team.

Demand for support from our Centre continues to grow and the Centre team work tirelessly to meet that demand. Referrals in to our Crisis and Advice support have increased and we now have a full range of programmes for women, young people and children. Yet as always we look to identify gaps in service provision and as such have been able to recruit to the posts of Children and Families Worker and Community Worker. The Children's Worker provides support to mums and their children offering therapeutic programmes and one to one support for children. There is a great demand for this service and we incurred a waiting list early on in the implementation of the service. We identified the need for a Community Worker to raise awareness of our service amongst communities who may not readily access our Centre such as older women and women from certain ethnic groups.

Inclusion is key to the work we do and therefore we are keen to offer support to any woman even if she is unable to access the Centre directly. We do this through a range of ways such as offering on line courses as an alternative to face to face, evening programmes and phone support.

There is always plenty of opportunity to increase services as demand continues to grow, however one of our biggest challenges is funding.

As a commissioned service our refuge has committed government funding, however we rely on grants to retain our refuge children's team. We were fortunate to receive further 3 year funding from Children in Need to continue this essential service, despite huge competition for this funding.

We also rely heavily on grants to fund our Centre and over the last year we have found accessing grant funding more problematic due to the volume of applications from across charities with the cost of living crisis undoubtedly having an impact.

Having said that we are really grateful for the grants we have received from various sources throughout the year, enabling us to sustain many of our vital services.

With the challenge of funding we are always so very grateful to individuals, groups and organisations across the community who support and donate to us whether it be through fundraising events or individual donations. Such support from the community is vital for the ongoing sustainability of the Organisation.

So please do keep giving!

Sally Winston, Chief Executive



Refuge Report

We have had a busy year in the Refuge. One of our key achievements this year was ensuring that we won the tender to continue with delivering work within the refuge for the next 3-5 years. Securing the contract was testament to the really strong work delivered by the team. We have also secured funding through the Children in Need funding stream for the Children's Team, we strongly believe that children should be supported in their own right at refuge and this funding ensures that we can deliver a quality service.

Kim, who has worked at the Refuge for 37 years is about to retire, she has so many memories of refuge life through the years and a whole wealth of experience. We wish her all the best in her retirement ahead and will miss her experience. We have also had a number of staff progressing through the organisation, The Resettlement Worker has moved to be our Community Worker at the Centre and one of our Welfare Workers has moved over to be Crisis Worker at the Centre. It is really good for the organisation to develop staff and keep their expertise in the organisation, as well as keeping an experienced core at the Refuge and adding new staff to the team.

We are always open about the work that we complete and love speaking to different people about it, even if we try and restrict visitors to the refuge due to it being a secure location. During the last year we have hosted The High Sheriff, as well as Tom Hunt (MP), both of whom were very interested in the work we do.

We are always keen to ensure that we can support any woman who is fleeing domestic abuse whatever their background. With this in mind funding has been attained to help women who have No Recourse to Public Funds. Women without recourse are exceptionally vulnerable and the fact that they have no recourse can be used against them through abuse. We have so far supported 2 women to gain full access to public funds. Both are really looking forward to working again and being part of the communities that they move to.

We welcome women of all ages with the most common age bracket being 26-35. However, we were pleased to have supported residents of all ages and want to ensure that we offer an appropriate service to all. Most of the children coming in to Refuge are under 12, although we have had a number of children 12-16 in the previous year. Developing a good relationship with the Welfare Workers is key so residents feel able to tell their story. Wherever possible we ensure that the worker taking the referral will then go on and be the Welfare Worker. For the women it means that they don't have to tell their story twice and that they can build a relationship from the first phone call. For the Welfare Worker it means that they can have an idea of needs right from the beginning. Support plans are made bearing in mind the needs of the women and the steps needed for them to move on and start in their new life. Obviously we utilise translation services if there is a need.

Part of the service we offer is ensuring that therapeutic services are available with options to access them in the refuge as finding services through the GP can be a barrier. We applied for funding and offer counselling at the refuge through a qualified counsellor. This has been really appreciated by residents and the funding has been well utilised. For children we have offered play therapy where needed. The "Wellbeing Garden" which was designed last year has been a huge boost and with the summer of 2022 it gave a lovely relaxing space for residents to enjoy.



Likewise with the children the Children's Workers ensure that they have good relationships with the children and have fun activities which help their needs. Activities, particularly the summer programme are really important. As well as an opportunity to have fun, build relationships and make memories, it also means that the children can go back to school with something that they have done in the holidays, and so not feeling left out from the start. We are keen to get feedback about what we deliver and have regular Children's Meetings to help with feedback as well as a "You Said, We Did " board. We like to think how we best utilise the space we have and are currently working on a wildlife project.

Across the Refuge multi agency working is key, we have strong links with Social Care, Schools, Nurseries and Children's Centres to ensure that children have their needs met and that the women are supported in parenting. We also link in with wider services, a health visitor visits regularly and we have Triple P delivered in the refuge. We have strong links with a solicitor who has continued to support women in the Refuge with legal advice. The Job Centre is also very supportive in ensuring that Women are accessing the correct benefits.

The refuge is home for residents and so it is important that it looks well maintained and as homely as possible. The Housekeeper is key to this, part of her role is to ensure that the rooms look as welcoming. Keeping the refuge maintained is a big task and we have ensured that decorating/maintenance have been a key part of our work.

As well as the support from the Refuge; women are also able to access support around Domestic Abuse from Lighthouse Women's Centre. This gives women the opportunity to complete the Freedom Programme/ Power to Change. These courses have continued online, as well as face to face. This gives the women a chance to meet with others who have experienced domestic abuse and this opportunity is certainly a valuable part of the offer we make.

When women are ready to move on we offer resettlement. For some that will be supporting their move into Ipswich with ongoing support or further afield linking them into their chosen area. As well as utilising our excellent donations, again we link in with local agencies to ensure that women have what they need to restart their lives. This year we have had a real increase in the amount of women deciding to stay in Ipswich. Many thanks go to Suffolk Community Foundation for their ongoing support in helping provide funds, the hardship funds that we applied for have been vital in helping women and children setting up their new home, especially during this time of financial uncertainty.

I would like to finish with the words of a previous resident :

"Thank you for offering me a safe place to escape the relationship I was in. Thank you for all the support you have all given me for the time I stayed with you. Thank you for absolutely everything. You have all been amazing" -

Jo Bigger, Service Manager



Community Services Report

We have certainly had a busy year at the Centre, with an increase from last year in women coming forward for help and support. As well as the work involved in this, we also had another big change, a move from our Berners Street office to Felixstowe Road. With the premises being newly decorated it has really been a chance to design the space to make it as welcoming as possible for clients, as well as an effective working space for us. Due to the flexibility of the space we have been able to have a separate training room for our courses and a dedicated children's room, which has been very well received. We are lucky enough to have a large garden, we are keen to ensure that there are areas for wildlife, as well as the women and children having their own areas.

After Covid we have kept a lot of our services online, this has proven popular with our clients who often find the online offer easier to access. We obviously talk to the women about safety and confidentiality with this and only offer it when we are satisfied someone is safe. The updating of the website has also increased our online referrals, it is now easy to go into the website and make an online referral. It has an Easy Read page and all the information that you need to know about the services we offer.

Assessing risk is a vital part of the Centre's work. We use the domestic abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) tool to ascertain the level of risk and ensure that women get the help that they need to keep them safe, as well as exploring where Faith Based Violence may be an issue. Having a Crisis Worker who specialises in high risk work and an Advice Worker specialising in those out of relationships and lower level abuse has meant that women across the spectrum of domestic abuse have had access to the support they need. The Crisis Worker attends MARAC regularly and increasingly we have attended MARACs across the county. As part of the Advice role we are continuing to look at gaps in our offer, for example child contact is a key issue in abusive relationships and so we have developed specific sessions in which this can be discussed. Going forward we are looking at how we could support friends and families of victims. We, of course, ensure that translation services are available for those that need them, and this has included British Sign Language (BSL) services.

Our skilled Centre Triage team ensure that women are seen as quickly as possible dependent on their need and that clients are welcomed into the service from the start.

Our programmes, particularly Freedom Programme and Power to Change, are the core of what we do. We want clients to have the shortest wait possible for a course. To enable this to happen we have a good number of staff who are trained to deliver the programmes. We have also been lucky to recruit a couple of excellent sessional workers who really help ensure that women are able to access courses with a minimum wait time. We have a "Keep in Touch" process in place for those waiting for a course, through this we also offer some information sessions, for example, personal safety or health information. We appreciate different learning styles and have been adapting our courses to reflect this. Likewise the range of online and face to face courses really helps us meet the needs of our clients.



Women's Centre



Entrance Hall

Empower Me has been established to replace the Open Café. This has been more focused and the women have really enjoyed the wellbeing sessions and crafts, some excellent art work has been completed and now adorns the Centre walls.

Our Community Worker has been busy establishing links in the community. We have been really keen to ensure that different communities know that they can access our service. We have been looking at different groups where we would like to increase the awareness of domestic abuse and therefore an upturn in numbers of women coming forward. We recently held an event for Middle Eastern Women which was attended by women as well as some agencies that work with them. The aim of this was to discuss what we do and from this we are going to deliver some information sessions on what abuse is and raise awareness this way. We have also been delivering some advice sessions within the university, this has worked well in supporting students that may be experiencing abuse.

One of our exciting developments is our direct work with children. Our Families and Children's Worker is in post and we offer a range of direct work for children. The children's room has been specifically designed to support children with a range of needs, including sensory play equipment. She has trained as an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant, this helps children work through what they are feeling by engaging in fun activities. We have had very positive feedback regarding this work and we look to develop it further. We continue to deliver ReConnect Together and ReConnect and Play, and Escape the Trap continues to be popular to meet the needs of teenagers.



Multi agency working is key to the work we do, both in making onward referrals for support, and agencies that directly provide information sessions for our clients. I would like to thank Birketts Solicitors, Suffolk Law Centre and Flagship Housing for the sessions they have delivered for our clients, as well as Suffolk Community Foundation for their financial support. It is important that we have hardship funds available, to help clients in need and that we have items to support them with, for example we have packs for women needing to flee which includes a phone.

It has certainly been a busy year, but we have supported a substantial number of women and children to feel safer and help rebuild their lives.

Jo Bigger, Service Manager

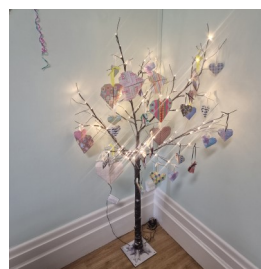
Empower Me Sessions



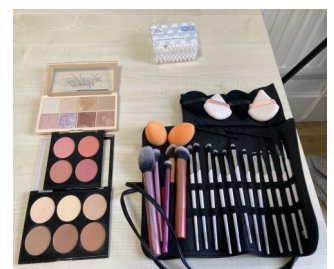
Affirmation Boxes



Felting



Origami Hearts



Make Up Tuition

Training Report

We continue to see organisations and businesses as pivotal in bringing about positive change. Lighthouse are in the unique position to provide tangible support to local employers in order to ensure employees experiencing domestic abuse are supported in the workplace.

In September 2022, after 8 years, Katherine Ahluwalia moved on from Lighthouse and Debra Gingell took over the role of Trainer to focus on developing our training offer for the commercial sector. Debra has had an interesting and varied career working across the charity, commercial and public sector. She has worked for some great organisations including the NSPCC, Times Education Supplement and Pearsons Education.

Debra has spent the last six months embedding herself at Lighthouse and developing the external training offer. She has worked with the Wellcome Sanger Institute to provide support with their DA policy and staff training and delivered several training sessions at AXA. Both organisations provided Lighthouse with impact statements which have definitely helped us promote our training to other organisations in the region.



“The Wellcome Sanger Institute has valued working with Lighthouse to develop internal guidance and support for employees who may be affected by domestic abuse. Lighthouse has delivered some thoughtful and expert training to our community including a bespoke approach for our leaders and managers who now feel confident to spot signs, and signpost people to dedicated support channels. We believe that the guidance and training will go a long way to support and encourage any staff member who needs support to step forward. The feedback from staff has been excellent and as an organisation, we endorse the work Lighthouse is doing to raise awareness of domestic abuse and workplace responsibilities to provide visible and dedicated support to their employees. SA, 2023.



“Thank you so much to Debra & the Lighthouse Organisation, you kindly delivered two sessions on Domestic Abuse in the workplace to our staff and our managers. The sessions were handled with care both before & after, I really appreciated that we had met and gone through what would be covered before as this was just as informative to the potential impact that the sessions could have. As a people manager myself, I felt it was really beneficial and gave me the confidence in what we are doing but also what else we can do as individuals and as a business in the future to continuously remain doing the best that we can. We all really learnt a lot and I have never had such positive feedback straight after a session that’s been hosted” VB, 2023.



To improve our training offer for employers, we have commissioned two of our senior practitioners, Katy Smith and Rachel Luetchford to develop and deliver training specifically for front line staff/keyworkers. Katy and Rachel recently delivered a great session to the Suffolk Law Society and we are excited to see how this offer is taken up by local organisations. They are also developing a session on Trauma Informed Practice that will be rolled out in the Autumn.

Community Fundraising Report

Community fundraising had an unusually slow start at the beginning of the financial year, however as the year progressed it became more steady and as always finished with a busy period on the run up to Christmas. We are forever grateful for the continued support we receive from our local community be that from community groups, individuals, churches, business or the wider community. We have also received some much needed donations from some parish councils across Suffolk. As Lighthouse support women, young people and children across the county it is wonderful to see donations coming in from further afield, as domestic abuse is not just an issue local to Ipswich.

Over the year we have had some wonderful events put on by our supporters; these have included a clothes sale, raffles, coffee mornings, a bake off, summer fairs, a fashion show, a charity fish & chip supper, and an auction to name a few. Lighthouse Ambassadors also held a quiz and one ambassador also held a gig in aid of Lighthouse.

As well as these events, individuals have also taken on their own personal challenges; Wild swimming in the sea and the Deben river, biking from Sienna to Rome and of course our first year as part of the Larking Gowen Ipswich Half Marathon. We had 13 runners signed up for the half marathon, although with the sad passing of Queen Elizabeth II the event was postponed until October, meaning some participants were unable to take part. However about half were available and it was wonderful to meet them all on the day. It was a very rainy day, but spirits were high and all the runners set off with in the pack to start their 13.1 mile challenge. It was wonderful to cheer them all off and also be there to welcome them back. Their amazing efforts raised just under £3,000, which was a fantastic achievement.

In Memory giving is something that we have seen an increase of in the last year, it is very humbling that at such a difficult time family and friends are wishing to support Lighthouse with an In Memory donation.

Community fundraising is not all about monetary donations, even though these are extremely important to the continued success of Lighthouse. We receive many physical donations from the local community; including toiletries, non perishable food, and kitchen goods for our families who are ready to move out of refuge and into a new home, with toys for the children, as well as gift cards. Gift cards have become an important part of the extra support we can offer to women, young people and children. These cards allow women to buy clothes when they have arrived at refuge with very little or no extra clothing at all, it helps empower the women, and gives them back a little bit of control over their lives. The cards are also used for school uniform, school stationery and perishable food for when the women and their children arrive in refuge.

Our membership is growing slowly and this is an area that we wish to focus on and help develop over the next year. Membership provides a steady income and goes some way in helping Lighthouse to develop our services to cope with the increase in demand. If you are interested in becoming a member please visit our website www.lighthousewa.org.uk or email Deb.



Partnership with local businesses is key to developing our fundraising for the future; we are gaining more awareness within the business community and we are keen to work with businesses to raise awareness of domestic abuse. It is extremely beneficial when a business chooses Lighthouse as their charity of the year as this helps engage employees with the work we carry out and the impact of domestic abuse, as well as the close link we develop with the organisation and their fundraising activities to help support the services we provide.

The tremendous support that Lighthouse has been shown over the past year has been amazing and we are incredibly thankful to everyone that has so kindly supported us over this time.

If you would like to find out more about how you can support Lighthouse please email Deb via deb@lighthousewa.org.uk

Deborah Johnson, Business Coordinator

Help Raise Funds by:

- Becoming a member
- Run a non-perishable food collection
- Donate Gift Cards from local stores
- Donate or set up a Fundraising Page via Enthuse
- Shop online via 'the Giving Machine'
- Fundraise
- Choose Lighthouse as your employer's charity of the year
- Set up Payroll Giving
- Legacy Giving



FINANCIAL REPORT – Year ended 31 March 2023

a. Key financial performance indicators

In the year under review Lighthouse key financial objectives and achievements were as follows:

- Secure sustainable funding to continue the provision of safe and supportive refuge accommodation for women and children. Lighthouse successfully secured the tender to continue with delivering work within the refuge for the next 3-5 years. Securing the contract was testament to the really strong work delivered by the Team. We have also secured funding through the Children in Need funding stream for the Children's Team, we strongly believe that children should be supported in their own right at refuge and this funding ensures that we can deliver a quality service.
- Secure ongoing funding for the Women's Centre beyond 2023. Lottery direct support, ended in March 2022 and alternative funding had not yet been found. However the PCC had increased their commitment and direct community support rose by some 30% to reduce significantly our funding shortfall. Demand for services at The Women's Centre continues to rise, however, and there remains a shortfall that, currently, is being met by a specific designated fund set up for this purpose. To sustain these Community Services in the longer term and efforts to secure the funding to close the shortfall continues. In the meantime the Designated Fund at the Women's Centre at £60,000 will remain in place for at least another year.
- Develop and deliver Domestic Abuse awareness courses in schools; work places; and to professional organisations likely to come into contact with Domestic Abuse. Demand for training and awareness of Domestic Abuse continued to see strong demand from both schools and businesses. Demand for on line Domestic Abuse training continued at the levels seen during COVID restrictions and was considered very encouraging. LWA sees educating people and especially young people about the effect of Domestic Abuse as central to the Charity's objectives. As such LWA will continue to commit resources in developing this important service and believe that as efficacy of courses grows the service so will it become more self-sustainable.
- Diversify fund raising options and develop community fund raising activities. After a very successful 2021-22 LWA's Community Fund Raising Team in 2022-23 was given the challenge of both raising in excess of £100,000 from the community and other funding institutions. The team were successful on both counts raising more than £98,000 from our local community and some £50,000 from funder organisations. The contacts, friendships and support networks with members of the public and business communities during our 47th year continued to strengthen. We need to be realistic however and faced with large cost of living price increases we expect a temporary drop in community giving over the next two years before returning to current levels in 2025. Our challenge is to limit this expected loss in support.

Review of Activities

In the year to 31 March 2023 we continued to roll out our strategy to develop financial sustainability and grow community based services. Since the COVID pandemic reported domestic abuse has increased significantly in our community and demand for victim support services shows no sign of abating. To remain viable and sustainable during a period of unprecedented demand and in an economic environment where funding continues to be precarious and competition is fierce, LWA has had to reinforce strict financial disciplines and remain adaptable with an operating structure able to respond quickly to changing circumstances.

Refuge & Resettlement

We have had a busy year in the Refuge. One of our key achievements this year was ensuring that we won the tender to continue with delivering work within the refuge for the next 3-5 years. Securing the contract was testament to the really strong work delivered by the Team. We have also secured funding through the Children in Need funding stream for the Children's Team, we strongly believe that children should be supported in their own right at refuge and this funding

ensures that we can deliver a quality service.

At Lighthouse we are always keen to ensure that we can support any woman who is fleeing domestic abuse whatever their background. With this in mind funding has been attained to help women who have No Recourse to Public Funds. Women without no recourse are exceptionally vulnerable and the fact that they have no recourse can be used against them through abuse. The women LWA have supported so far to gain full access to public funds are all really looking forward to working again and being part of the communities that they move to.

Developing a good relationship with the Welfare Workers is key so residents feeling able to tell their story. From these discussions and assessments support plans are made bearing in mind the needs of the women and the steps needed for them to move on and start in their new life.

Part of the service we offer is ensuring that therapeutic services are available with options to access them in the refuge as finding services through the GP can be a barrier. We applied for funding and offer counselling at the refuge through a qualified counsellor. This has been really appreciated by residents and the funding has been well utilised. Across the Refuge multi agency working is key, we have strong links with Social Care, Schools, Nurseries and Children's Centres to ensure that children have their needs met and that the women are supported in parenting. We also link in with wider services, a health visitor visits regularly and we have Triple P delivered in the refuge. We have strong links with a solicitor who has continued to support women in the Refuge with legal advice. The Job Centre is also very supportive in ensuring that residents are accessing the correct benefits.

As well as the support from the Refuge; residents are also able to access support around Domestic Abuse from Lighthouse Community Centre. This gives women the opportunity to complete the Freedom Programme/ Power to Change. These courses have continued online, as well as face to face. This gives the women the opportunity to meet with others who have experienced domestic abuse and this opportunity is certainly a valuable part of the offer we make.

When women are ready to move on we offer resettlement, for some that will be supporting their move into Suffolk with ongoing support or further afield linking them into their chosen area.

The Women's Centre and Community Services

Growth in demand for Women's Community Services continued to grow and expand in 2022-23. To meet the identified increased need LWA had to improve its efficiencies and effectiveness of the support being implemented. The Centre was reorganised and moved to a new, purposely designed facility with the Charity's HQ function at Felixstowe Road. The flexibility of the space has enabled teams to better coordinate training; children activities and improve victim/ survivor focused programmes. Despite the efficiencies that also came with the move the cost of meeting the increased demands meant that we continue to see a funding shortfall that is currently met from donations and from reserves. The funding gap was expected and contingencies were put in place by LWA with £60,000 put aside into a designated fund for the purpose of meeting the anticipated shortfall. In the end the shortfall was met from general reserves. The challenges we face in 2023-24 with the cost of living crisis and high inflation will exacerbate the financial pressures on the Centre and it was agreed that the designated fund at £60,000 be retain for 2023-24.

Domestic Abuse Awareness courses and training services now in the sixth year showed good improvement following the near collapse caused by COVID two years ago. These are high quality courses very relevant for today and are beneficial to both individuals and organisation alike. We expect the growing acceptance of the benefits of these courses to pick up when economic confidence returns and that the training service achieves self-sustainability within the next four years.

Many of the initiatives planned will take time and securing overall funding for the Women's Centre is proving challenging in the face of rising demand for, and growth in, services. Despite an improvement in managing costs on a like for like basis this year the Women's Centre will continue to run at a deficit for 2023 - 24 at around £50,000. The shortfall will be met partly from community fund raising and partly from reserves where LWA have designated £60,000 to meet requirements over the next year. Efforts to secure external funding are ongoing with a number of applications under consideration. Reserve designation notwithstanding the financial strength and

integrity of Lighthouse Women's Aid will remain robust and we are confident in our support for the future of the Women's Centre

c. Investment policy and performance

Recent interest rate rises although welcome start from a very low base and remain low at around 2.5%. The Trustees, therefore because of the economic uncertainty and high inflation continue to adopt a low risk investment policy with the aim of securing capital without jeopardising the value of the charity's resources. As such funds have been kept in interest bearing deposit accounts and seek to achieve a rate on deposit which matches or exceeds inflation as measured by the retail prices index. Due to the wider economic circumstances deposit rates remained depressed and so this aim was not achieved in the year.

The investment funds held on deposit achieved an average rate of 2.5% against the retail price index of 13.4% in March 2023.

Financial Review

a. Review of performance during the year

War, rapidly rising inflation and continued political uncertainty had a profound effect on funding decisions by both donor organisations, businesses and the general public. Donor organisations in particular have withdrawn many, hitherto, available funding sources and restricted further eligibility of organisation able to apply for the remaining available funding. Despite this difficult economic environment Lighthouse, in 2022-23, continued to develop its profile and work to increase income from our local community as a proportion of total funds needed to meet service demands. The exercise was a resounding success in the circumstances and donations from the local community rose by 24% to £148,260 from £119,370. Contribution from funding organisations remained largely flat, that in itself was considered a successful outcome in difficult circumstances. It was notable, however that the early part of 2023 showed signs of economic difficulties growing across the country and securing funds in 2023-24 is expected to be even more of a challenge than this year. Efforts to maintain and grow receipts from community fundraising will remain a key financial strategy to broaden and diversify funding sources and the team are continually looking for and pursuing a wide range of fund raising initiatives. It is likely to take some time, however, and the financing of demand growth for services in the short term will require continuing the designation of some funds from our reserves. This position was recognised early on and from the surplus raised in 2018 £60,000 was put into a designated fund to support Community Services. To continue the necessary support for the Women's Centre and associated community projects the Trustees have agreed that the designated fund remain in place for 2023 -24.

In addition to pressures on income, rapid inflation fuelled by War in the Ukraine had a significant impact on cost. Making the control of cost even more challenging LWA continued to experience growing demand for its services since COVID and with no sign that this was likely to slow. Significant measures had to be taken to both reduce and bring under control our running costs. To reduce overall running costs in the medium to long term, LWA took the decision to close both its inefficient and impractical Women Centre and Admin premises in the Centre of Ipswich and consolidate both in its own property at 238 Felixstowe Road Ipswich. The cost of the reorganisation would be met from the sale of the Women's Centre's Berners Street property. The sale would also provide funds for much needed Refuge improvements and vital technology to support front line services. These changes are necessary to improve efficiencies and effectiveness of LWA in the long term. Although some short term pain is expected LWA is financially robust and will successfully see through the current external and internal challenges. As a result of rapid inflation, economic uncertainties, the cost of reorganising operations, and expanding victim services the total costs for the year rose by £70,128 and a net expenditure deficit for the year at £46,487. In light of the significant economic upheaval we saw last year across the globe we expected a far greater collapse in public support and are very much heartened by the resilience of our supporters. Given the continued short term funding gap expected in Community Services in 2023-24 and the time it's taking to develop other opportunities the Trustees have agreed that the designated fund at £60,000 created in 2020 to support the Women's Centre and associated community projects be retained for 2023-24.

Our assessment is that, designated fund notwithstanding, LWA's balance sheet remains strong and within Charity Commission Guidance. We are confident that LWA will remain financially able to meet all our liabilities and commitments to victims, staff, suppliers and supporters alike.

Lighthouse Women's Aid cost base in 2022/23 remained in line with the Charity's strategy to grow and develop a countywide sustainable organisation capable of meeting the growing demands for Domestic Abuse services.

At the end of the year the total funds of the charity were £1,199,371, of which £444,191 relates to restricted funds. Of the £757,180 unrestricted general fund £237,628 relates to the value of buildings on which we have a mortgage of £173,827. In compliance with Charity Commission recommendations Lighthouse Women's Aid have a policy to maintain unrestricted reserves equating to 3 months expenditure that in 2023 is £198,466.

Principal Funding

The principal funding sources for the year were as follows:

- Suffolk County Council – provides funding for support services to Women in Refuge and those moving to independent living.
- Children In Need – part finance children services both within Refuge and Community Support.
- Ipswich Borough Council – provides funding for premises and premises maintenance.
- The Big Lottery Fund – provides funding for sustainability project
- The Police and Crime Commissioner provide funding Community Service and Crisis Support.
- The Rope Trust – provides funding in support for the Crisis Support.
- VAWG – supports the Family Liaison Worker
- The Hopkin's Trust provides support for victims in hardship
- Suffolk Community Foundation – provided smaller funding grants in support of specific victim support projects and programmes.

Other services are funding through smaller funding grants from a variety of sources and community funding initiatives.

Plans for future periods

- Continue to develop the Women's Centre services, roll out programmes countywide and seek continuation funding beyond 2023
- Secure sustainable funding to continue safe and supportive refuge accommodation for women and children.
- Continue to develop Domestic Abuse training programmes delivered to Schools, Young People, Professionals and Businesses.
- Raise the profile of Lighthouse Women's Aid by raising the awareness, through public presentations, group talks and educational sessions, on the effects of domestic violence and abuse.
- Develop a fund raising strategy to diversify and improve our ability to secure funding for the long term sustainability of the Charity.

To achieve these goals the Charity has set up a number of Working Groups to review and develop recommendations for consideration by senior management and the directors during the year.

As always we are ever grateful for the generosity of those who donate to the organisation either through volunteering, gifts or money. Every donation received or time given really does make a difference to the women and children we support.

	TOTAL FUNDS 2023	TOTAL FUNDS 2022
	£	£
Incoming Resources		
Voluntary income	148,260	119,370
Income form charitable trading activities	600,642	597,546
Investment income	76,094	25,990
Total Income Resources	824,996	742,906
Outgoing Resources		
Costs of activities in furtherance of charity's objectives	818,027	744,258
Fundraising costs	4,235	1,283
Governance costs	8,724	12,365
Delapidaton costs (Westgate House)	40,497	
Total Resources Expended	871,483	757,906
Net Income / (Outgoings) for year	(46,487)	(15,000)
Balance Sheet		
Fixed Assets	891,172	1,078,944
Net Current assets	482,026	351,421
Mortgage due after more than one year	(173,827)	(184,507)
	1,199,371	1,245,858
Funds		
General funds	755,180	738,503
Designated Fund	60,000	60,000
Restricted funds	384,191	447,355
Total funds	1,199,371	1,245,858

Syd Brown, Head of Finance

Members of the Board

The Board of Trustees

Margaret Parry (Chair)

Sarah Harvey (Vice Chair)

Catherine Bright

Sandra Gage

Rebecca Martin (Treasurer)

Judith Rose

Cynthia Glinos

Zoe Woods

Nina Livermore

Registered Office

Fitzroy House

Crown Street

Ipswich

IP1 3LG

Auditor

Scrutton Bland

Chartered Accountants

& Statutory Auditors

Fitzroy House

Crown Street

Solicitors

Gotelee

31-41 Elm Street

Ipswich

IP1 2AY

Head Office

238 Felixstowe Road

Ipswich

IP3 9AD

Bankers

Natwest Bank PLC

2 Tavern Street

Ipswich

IP1 3BD

Scottish Widows

PO Box 12757 67

Morrison Street

Edinburgh

Company Secretary &

Chief Executive

Sally Winston



Margaret Parry

**Chair of Board of
Trustees**



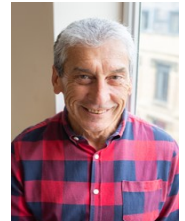
Sally Winston

Chief Executive



Molly Kirk

**Deputy Chief
Executive**



Syd Brown

Head of Finance



Jo Bigger

Services Manager



Deborah Johnson

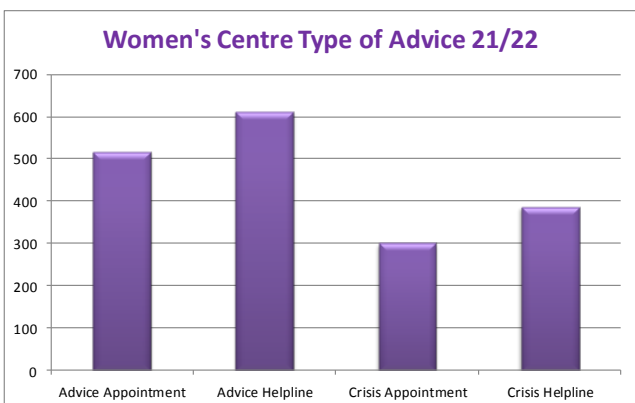
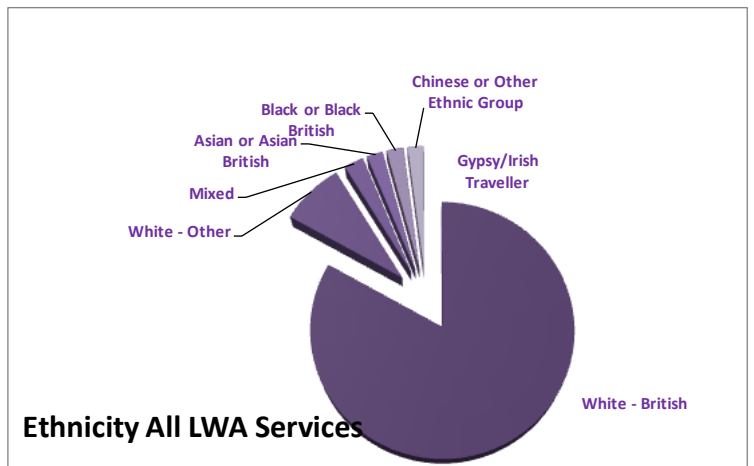
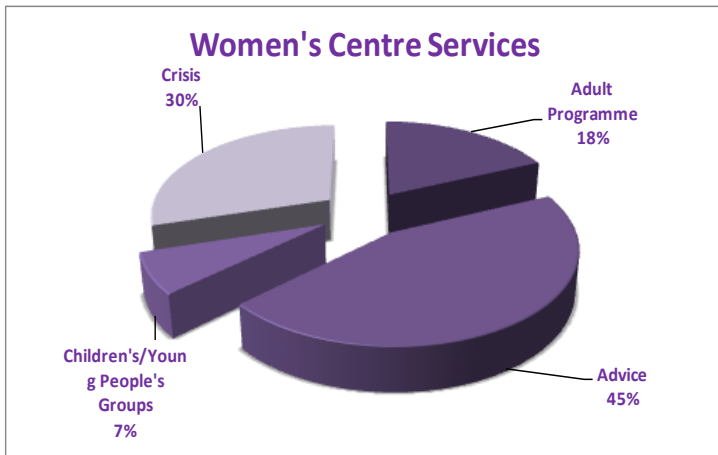
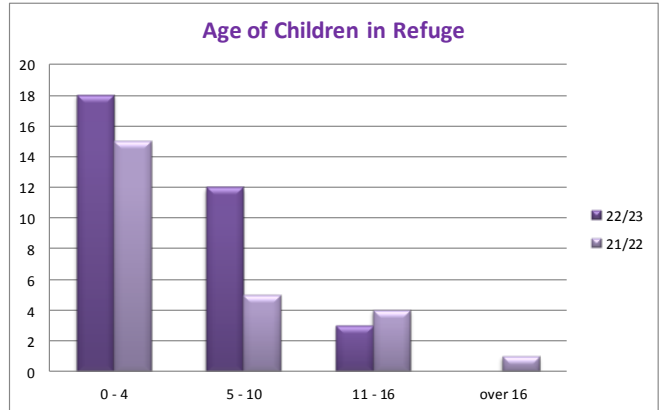
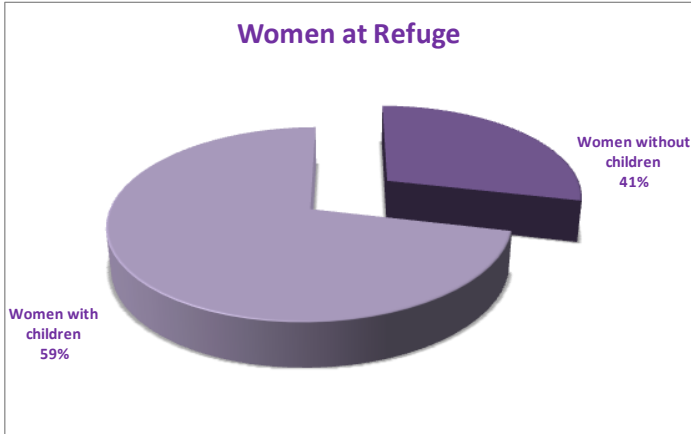
Business Coordinator



Debra Gingell

**Training & Development
Coordinator**

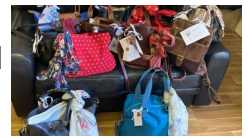
Statistics Report



Highlights from 2022—2023



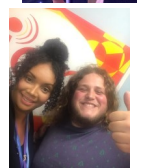
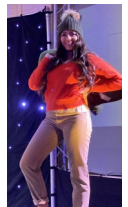
It has been an extremely busy year with such a lot happening at Lighthouse around fundraising, additional support we can now provide for children, a whole new website and moving our Women's Centre and back office all into one building.



Throughout the year we are indebted to our local community for the support they provide, we receive the most wonderful array of physical donations, such as food, beautiful bags filled with goodies from Love Grace, essential items such as towels, toiletries and kitchen items to support our resettlement work. At Easter we received some fabulous Easter eggs and crafts and Christmas never disappoints with so many generous and kind people and businesses donating Christmas gifts, food and gift cards. Also Farlingaye High School delighted again with their magical display of hamper filled with lots of Christmas food.



Events are a great way of raising much needed funds for Lighthouse, raising awareness of the support we provide, as well as raising awareness of domestic abuse. This last year we have had some wonderful and varied events including Coffee Mornings, Bake Sales, Theatre Productions holding a collection, an Organ Recital, a Charity Auction, Rock Night, WAMfest, a Quiz Night held by our Ambassadors, and Suffolk Fashion Show, Charity Swim or Raffle. We are so grateful to all of those involved in organising these events and we are privileged to be invited to attend some of them.

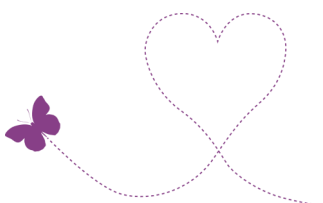
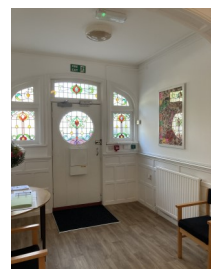


One supporter raised money by hosting a 24hr DJ set with Ipswich Community Radio, and one of our Trustees cycled from Sienna to Rome. 2022 was Lighthouse's first year taking part in the Ipswich Half Marathon, organised by Jane Tomlinson's Run For All and sponsored by Larking Gowen. We had a great take up for our first year and are working on 2023.

We also attended some amazing cheque presentations, where businesses and community groups had either nominated Lighthouse as their charity of the year, or we had been nominated for a one off donation.



We were thrilled to have been able to completely revamp our website this year to ensure that it is easy for anyone looking for advice, support, wishing to fundraise or donate to use. Another major achievement was to move to our new premises in Felixstowe Road, it is a beautiful and welcoming building with great access for all and lovely spaces to support those who need it.



Our heartfelt thanks goes to everyone who has supported Lighthouse over this year, as we really could not do it without you.

Lighthouse

For a brighter future, free from domestic abuse

Funded by:

Suffolk County Council
Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner
Big Lottery Fund
Children in Need
Ipswich Borough Council
Suffolk Community Foundation
Babergh District Council
Mid Suffolk District Council

Registered Company No. 3532428

Registered Company Address: Fitzroy House, Crown Street, Ipswich, IP1 3LG

Registered Charity No. 1069296

Affiliated to the Women's Aid Federation England

www.lighthousewa.org.uk



Lighthouse Women's Aid is affiliated to Women's Aid Federation England
Registered Charity No: 1069296

Our registered company name is Lighthouse Women's Aid.
Registered Company No: 3532428.

Registered in England.



Lighthouse