

Annual Report and Accounts

2021



*SHE WAS NOT ALONE,
WE WERE WITH HER*

Advance Advocacy and Non Violence Community Education

2021



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Message from the Chair and Chief Executive

For all of our service users and staff, as well as society as a whole, this has been a challenging year. As the COVID pandemic progressed and the first lockdown continued for months, women and children became even more isolated and increasingly unsafe.

Many women were at home with their children and their abuser and had no means to leave and get help. Others were once again confined, this time in their own home or in prison with no contact or support networks. Poverty and inequality made a difficult situation even worse, leaving many homeless and without essentials, and digital exclusion meant that they were unable to get vital help. Women became increasingly anxious and suffered mental ill health; as a result, we saw an increase in self-harm incidents and, sadly, in the number of deaths of women by suicide and overdoses.



Christine Losecaat
Chair MBE



Niki Scordi
Chief Executive Officer

We were determined she would not be alone, we were there with her

Despite the lockdowns and restrictions, our dedicated and passionate team of domestic abuse advocates, community outreach workers, children and young people specialists and peer mentors developed innovative and safe ways of providing access to support and advocacy, offering a lifeline for women and children. Whilst working remotely from home, or in the community when possible, we found solutions to continue our support groups and mentoring online, rather than at our women centres. We adapted our services that were co-located in statutory setting such as the police, hospitals and clinics, children's services and probation offices, to respond to the needs of, and improve the outcomes for, the most vulnerable and marginalised women and children in our community.

We could not have done this without the support from both existing and many new partners; from foundations and trusts to companies and individuals, who were able to provide funds, expertise and their time. Thank you.

Special thanks go to our amazing staff. No one was immune from the effects of the pandemic. Yet despite many personal challenges, our teams worked relentlessly to make sure the needs of the women and children we serve were met.

As a result, we were able to develop new services and extend our support for longer periods of time than ever before. We expanded our domestic abuse services into health settings in the community and more children's services in West London. We extended our London Diversion Service for women at point of arrest across North and South London and our Minerva services across twenty-nine London boroughs.

We reached out to over 8,000 women and children directly during the year with positive impact.

It was vital that women and girls with lived experiences were not silenced during the pandemic and that we continued to raise awareness of the impact of abuse on all aspects of their lives. We launched our new website in May 2020 and the 'I am with her' campaign, sharing the stories of five domestic abuse survivors through new social media platforms. We launched new research reports such as 'A space to talk about relationships' in September 2020 and the ADVANCETALK series of 'Talk about abuse' events.

We worked with Government and others, at local and national level, to share practice-based evidence and to highlight the need for vital specialist community-based services for survivors and for those caught in the criminal justice system, in a whole-systems approach.

Women and children survived and thrived against often impossible odds, inspiring us with their strength and resilience. Our team and Board of Trustees at Advance, supporters and partners are more committed than ever to our vision of a world where women and girls can lead safe, violence-free and equal lives.

Christine Losecaat MBE, Chair
Niki Scordi, Chief Executive Officer



Our year 2021 at a glance

Thousands of women and girls every year transform their lives with our services and this positively impacts directly and indirectly on thousands more children too.

We enable women and children to be safer and lead a better quality of life, by supporting them to end domestic abuse. We also support women and young women aged 15 years old and over in contact with the Criminal Justice System, often victims of abuse and violence themselves, to

We reached out to more women and children than ever before

The number of women and children being referred for support and using our services, both directly and through our partners, continued to increase. Repeated lockdowns and social distancing restrictions through the year led to even more isolation for women putting them at further risk of harm. Our services and support were even more critical and became a life-line for women, letting them know they were not alone.

8,324 Referrals received to our services in total, saving and changing lives, despite repeated lockdowns.

5,251	1,236	1,096	741
women and children referred directly to our domestic abuse services	women and children referred to our VAWG services delivered in partnership	women and young women in contact with the criminal justice system referred for one-to-one support	women and young women were offered groups and activities online and in person

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We Were With Her*

change their lives and break the cycle of offending. Women referred to Advance come from all age groups and communities throughout London. Our support empowers women to be safer, to improve their confidence, self-esteem and life skills, so they are better able to lead the lives they choose in the community.

We continued to receive self-referrals from women and also referrals from diverse pathways

1 in 4 Referrals to our domestic abuse services were directly from women survivors themselves

26%	27%	82%	18%
of our domestic abuse referrals were from MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference)	domestic abuse referrals were received from police and courts, health, children's services	were referred to our Minerva services by probation and prison services	were referred to Minerva services by other statutory and voluntary services including self-referrals

We remained committed to contacting and engaging with women and children safely, and offered support

72% Engaged with the services offered by our Domestic Abuse Advocates, despite many survivors isolating with the abuser

78%	97%	73%
were contacted by our domestic abuse teams and offered support	were contacted by our criminal justice (Minerva) keyworkers in the community and 'through the gate' on release	engaged with the services offered by our Minerva keyworkers across all their needs

Our year 2021 at a glance

We supported women and children with multiple disadvantages and needs

Women affected by domestic abuse told us that they needed support across multiple needs and disadvantages

43% Faced high levels of risk of serious harm or death due to domestic abuse

36%	46%	7%	5%	29%
told us they needed mental health support	had support needs relating to housing and homelessness	had physical disabilities and learning difficulties	had no recourse to public funds	received support from us for more than 6 months, compared to 3 to 4 months on average before the pandemic

“My (Advance domestic abuse) case worker was my strength. When you're feeling your lowest and you're just broken, to have someone come along who you know feels what you're going through and who you can talk to without feeling judged – it's game-changing.”

Women and young women in contact with the criminal justice system faced multiple disadvantages and complex needs, and were offered our holistic WrapAround support

88% Needed mental health and wellbeing support

70%	77%	85%	71%	22%
were affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence	had issues relating to problematic substance use	had support needs relating to housing and homelessness	had financial issues, including debts	of women were supported by our Minerva services for between 6 and 24 months

SHE WAS NOT ALONE,
We Were With Her



Our support positively impacted women's and children's lives

The women we provided domestic abuse services to tell us that our support led to a safer and better quality of life

95% Women said that they felt safer, as a result of the support provided

94%	93%	93%	92%
of women were at reduced risk following the support provided by the service	of women reported a reduction in abuse due to support and advice received	of women said that their quality of life and well-being had improved due to the support	of young people reported increased awareness of various forms of VAWG and where to access help.

“A review with me of the initial goals we set (with the Advance keyworker) helped me to reflect back on how far I had come; how much more positive and optimistic my mindset is from Minerva (Advance's service) helping me out of such a dark place. I wouldn't have got through it without this support.”

The women we provided criminal justice services to say that our support improved their lives

96% Of women reported improved health and well-being, due to the support

85%	82%	72%	91%
women said that they felt safer from abuse, as a result of the support provided	of women using our service reported reduction in drug and alcohol use	of women said that they had enhanced parenting skills	young women (15–24 years old) reported healthier relationships following our support.



SUPPORTING Women and Children in the Community



Our holistic approach to community services is centred on the woman or girl, working with her to develop a safety and support plan that responds to her needs and those of her children, and empowers her on the often long journey to recovery from the trauma of her experience.

Our **whole-system approach is aligned with our values of collaboration and innovation**, partnering with other statutory and non-statutory providers, to deliver a coordinated community and gendered response, improving access to services across the whole system, enabling consistency and continuity of support throughout her journey. Through our advocacy and awareness-raising work, we focus on systemic change and sustainable impact to meet women's needs and improve outcomes for them.

The Covid-19 pandemic, social distancing restrictions and lockdowns made this year a particularly challenging and worrying time for the women and children we support. They were even more isolated and faced additional barriers to accessing the life-saving and life-changing help they needed.

Women and children being abused were locked down at home, often with their abuser, becoming increasingly unsafe and unable to leave or to get help. Many were released from prison with nowhere to go and with no health or financial support. Poverty and digital inequality made a difficult and unsafe situation even more so, with many lacking essentials such as housing, food and clothing, and having no phones nor access to technology to contact us for help throughout the crisis.

The pandemic highlighted how women and children affected by domestic abuse or the criminal justice system **face a devastating and often long-lasting impact on many aspects of their lives**. Children are not only witnesses but also victims of domestic abuse themselves. The lives of children, whose mothers are in custody even for a short time, are disrupted and directly impacted. The crisis exacerbated not only the risk women and children faced of being unsafe, but also their well-being and mental health, requiring significantly more support from Advance.

Through our team's dedication and determination, we were able to adapt our **life-saving and life-changing services in the community** quickly and without disruption. Women and children were able to call our helplines for support throughout the year. Our domestic abuse advocates, outreach community workers and children and young people specialists continued to offer one-to-one holistic and tailored support throughout. We also quickly developed innovative solutions to enable the ongoing delivery of our support groups and mentoring online during lockdowns and then also in our women centres as restrictions eased.

Our Vision is a **world where women and children lead safe, violence-free and equal lives** so that they can flourish and actively contribute to society.

Our Mission is **saving and changing lives**, by working with women who experience domestic abuse to be safe and lead the lives they choose, and those in contact with the criminal justice system to break the cycle of offending.



01 Domestic abuse helpline, support and advocacy

Advance is focused on supporting women and children to end domestic abuse and other forms of gendered violence, enabling them to be safer and lead the lives they choose. This year, as the pandemic exacerbated the impact on women's and children's lives, **there was an unprecedented and increasing high level of need for support for survivors of domestic abuse.** Including self-referrals, from the MARAC, the Police, Social Care, Health, Housing, and other service providers

**Total of
5,251
women and
children were
referred to
us directly,
including self-
referrals.**

As the journey for survivors of domestic abuse can often be long as they rebuild their lives, we remained focused on ensuring the provision of support at each stage of the survivors' needs. **We provided support and safety planning** for women and children who were at risk of harm because of domestic abuse, through our accredited Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor (IDVA) services.

During the year, access to many statutory services was further reduced and it was vital that we continued to support all

survivors through the pandemic despite the challenges of social distancing and lockdowns. Notwithstanding the **disruption to our co-located front-line advocates in statutory settings** such as hospitals and clinics, children's services and housing, we continued to advocate and provide life-changing support. In this year, it became even more critical that we continued to prioritise working in a coordinated community response, to remove barriers to access and improve outcomes.

Hina's Journey in Lockdown

“When I got married, my family were happy I would be going to London, given the poverty in my country. I was excited but the life I imagined did not turn out that way. My husband treated me as a second-class citizen. I was not allowed my own bank account, despite holding down an office job. I could not spend time with friends unless granted by my husband. He would and tell them they were not needed.

I hardly ever went to see my GP as my husband wanted to keep all medical things private, but this year I finally went and she immediately referred me to the domestic abuse charity Advance. I had attempted suicide three times in the last two years because I could not cope with the abuse.

Advance helped me to find the courage and means to leave my husband just before the first lockdown.

They gave me emotional support and guidance with budgeting and food and applying for

benefits and a place to live. When lockdown began, I had only just started living independently. My daughters moved from their boarding school to be with me at the new accommodation I got through the local authority as a homeless woman escaping domestic abuse.

Lockdown presented new challenges because the adult learning classes I had been taking were halted and counselling services closed. I also got into rent arrears because of the time it took to process my application for benefit assistance and my mental health became worse because of financial worries. I had no savings and so lived off universal credit. I had to use a foodbank for the first time in my life. I ate once a day to ensure my daughters had all the food they needed. My children also struggled with their school work because I cannot afford broadband.

**Her name and personal details have been changed to protect her*

“My husband does not know where we live now and I only ever see him when he picks up the children. I am still full of guilt but I feel safe and glad that I finally left him.”

02 Children and young women affected by domestic abuse

Advance provides specialist support to **families and children from 5 years old, and girls and young women from 13 to 24 years old** affected by experiences of domestic abuse, through our co-located Social Care Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates, working together with Children's Services, as well as through our specialist Children & Young Women's advocates.

Children and young women are not only witnesses but also victims of domestic abuse themselves and **face devastating and often-long lasting impact on many aspects of their lives.** The pandemic exacerbated the risk they faced of being unsafe while in lockdown and affected their well-being and mental health; as a result they required significantly more support from Advance.

Our specialist services provided vital support to young women and girls often facing multiple disadvantages in the community.

Sophie, aged 10, and Naomi, aged 17, shared their stories of being affected by domestic abuse as we launched our campaign **I Am With Her.**



I AM WITH HER: SOPHIE'S STORY

03 Accessing support at Health settings

Advance provides life-saving advocacy and support for women and their children accessing **health services**, in partnership with clinicians in General Practice and hospital settings through our Health Domestic Abuse Advocates. Women affected by domestic abuse can be supported earlier in health settings, rather than in the community or through the police. It is also vital to provide support to pregnant women as that is often when domestic abuse starts and to children by supporting NHS staff who have a duty to safeguard children.

The **unprecedented challenges faced by the NHS since the start of the pandemic** meant that working together was even more critical. Despite restrictions which did not allow us to continue to co-locate in hospitals and access GP practices last year, we adapted our services to ensure minimal disruption and continue to enable women and children and health professionals to access our support and information, including training.



Through our values of innovation and collaboration, we adapted our approach and work in partnership with IRISi to extend our programme of working with GP practices across four further boroughs. Our commitment to intersectionality continued as we developed the first ever specialist GP IRIS Advocate/ Educators for black and minoritised women, in partnership with Asian Women's Resource Centre, a women's specialist organisation led by and for the communities they serve.



04 Supporting survivors' journeys for justice

Supporting survivors of domestic abuse must also mean that **the system holds perpetrators of abuse to account and improves justice outcomes for survivors**. Yet the often-complex court process can leave survivors anxious, feeling blamed and even re-traumatised and unsafe, which the pandemic exacerbated with further delays for court proceedings.

Advance's dedicated Criminal Justice Advocates (IDVAs) were with the women every step of the way: before, during and after attending court, whether virtual or physical. As well as giving practical support and information about the court process, the IDVAs provided emotional support to help women through this often-challenging process.

Our Criminal Justice Advocates continued to work closely with the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Courts, as well as Probation, and supported the coordinated response of all agencies involved to ensure that the woman was informed and part of the process. This has resulted in women feeling supported and safer when prosecuting perpetrators and has increased prosecutions and convictions, improving justice outcomes for her.

CHRISTINA'S JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE

“If I called the police and said, ‘I’m on the street and someone is holding a knife to my throat’, they would be there in a heartbeat. But because the violence I experienced was at home, it wasn’t taken as seriously. At home, it’s ‘just a fight’. Well, it’s not a fight, actually – in a fight, both people are hitting each other and then it’s over. With domestic abuse, the victim is constantly attacked – mentally, physically, emotionally. It’s constant, over years and years.”

Christina*, 50, reported her abuser and took him to court four years ago. She and her two children are safe now, but it was a long journey to get where they are today. She says: “One of the hardest parts was trying to explain, to police, an isolated incident that was one part of 23 years of domestic abuse. How can 23 years of being abused, in every way imaginable, be summed up by one incident? It’s impossible to explain.”

*Her name and personal details have been changed to protect her

“My case worker (Criminal Justice IDVA) was my strength,” she says. “When you’re feeling your lowest and you’re just broken, to have someone come along who you know feels what you’re going through and who you can talk to without feeling judged – it’s game-changing. My case worker also provided loads of information that no one else shared with me. When I was pulling everything together, gathering the evidence to make my case, I could just email my Advance case worker a question and she would have the answers.”

“More women need to know about the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court. It’s so different to the other criminal courts: the people there know the signs, understand the situations. The judges are experts in this area. It’s not like other courts, where they’ll be hearing your case in between a parking violation and a petrol station robbery. The specialist courts know what they’re dealing with.”

CHRISTINA'S JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE

“As well as greater expertise within the system, Christina believes a cultural change is essential.

“The onus is always on the woman: Why did you stay? Why did you have a second baby? And then, during the trial, I felt like the onus was on me again, to get all the evidence I needed. But at a time when you’re in a terrible state, and so stressed, you’re having to pull everything together and figure out how the system works. It’s cruel.”

Despite the struggle, Christina says she doesn’t want any woman to hesitate before reporting her perpetrator.

“What I would say to other women in abusive relationships is: Even if the system fails, you have the strength to fight it. You have survived so much and even if you don’t feel it, you are strong. Get in touch with Advance, get your evidence together, and never give up.”



05 Community-based housing support for survivors

Women and children experiencing domestic abuse often feel unsafe at home, even when the abuser no longer lives there. Lockdown left many even more isolated and made it harder to get help, increasing the risk of harm and homelessness for themselves and for their children. Yet most survivors prefer to stay in their own home and within their own community; supporting them to have safe accommodation continued to be a priority this year.

Our Housing and Outreach Advocates were able to provide specialist housing support and solutions, enabling survivors to be safe in their current or new home and access services to enable them to change their lives. Whether remote or in person, our advocates worked closely with the woman and other services, to ensure she was safe and supported across all her needs, such as her mental health, finances and children.

Jessie's LOCKDOWN DIARY:

A day in the life of a Housing Domestic Abuse Advocate

9AM

Since working remotely as a result of Covid restrictions, I start my day with a 'Good Morning Check-In' with my colleagues, manager at Advance and the Housing team in the borough I work in. I then go through my emails and messages from women I support, so I can write up my priority list for the day.

9.30AM

I receive a call from M (woman I support) regarding a housing transfer request from the housing association. M was experiencing ongoing harassment from her ex-partner who was aware where she lived. They had previously been in a relationship for many years and shared a child together; there is a long history of domestic abuse, which included coercive control which he still aimed to maintain. M had permanent accommodation but for her safety, the housing association and I worked together to complete a housing transfer request out of borough which has since been granted.

I then joined a telephone consultation with a Housing Needs Officer regarding a woman who has fled her property out of her borough due to domestic abuse, and we discussed next steps. The Housing officer asked about refuge spaces, however I advised, in this instance, refuge might not be suitable due to her needs and therefore, we worked together to locate temporary accommodation in the surrounding boroughs.

12PM

Shortly after, I received a referral from Housing Officer P, which I read through carefully. It is regarding a woman fleeing domestic abuse, who is currently staying at a friend's house.

I contacted the woman to offer support – I completed an initial risk and needs assessment. We discussed emergency remedies, including civil and criminal remedies and discussed immediate safety planning and measures. I supported her in completing a homeless application to get help to find a property within the borough. I then called Housing officer P back to give feedback regarding risks and support needed around housing and we were able to secure temporary accommodation.

1PM

It is now time for my lunch which was yummy sweet potatoes and tuna salad!!!

2.45PM

I received a call from N (woman I support) to discuss her housing move. N is a single woman, fleeing from two perpetrators, one of which was gang affiliated. We worked together and found temporary accommodation for her in accordance with her needs which include mental health and safety planning. We spoke more recently and she let me know that she is very happy in her new home.

I then completed a counselling referral for Q (woman I support). After fleeing from domestic abuse, I helped find her accommodation which she has now settled into. When I first met Q,

I offered to help her access counselling as she had never received any, however at the time she was not ready at that stage. After settling into her new home, she informed me that she had been experiencing flashbacks and we again discussed counselling which she now felt ready for. She has since started receiving counselling by a partner specialist organisation.

6PM

I called R (woman I support) and we discussed her housing and her wishes around the upcoming MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference). R was referred onto me internally as she had housing needs. She was experiencing ongoing abuse from an ex-partner including stalking and harassment. Alongside our support at Advance, I referred her to a partner specialist stalking and harassment organisation for additional support. R and I discussed her wishes around her MARAC meeting and as she had a pending housing transfer request, she asked for a MARAC supporting letter. She also asked for a panic alarm for her safety, as her ex-partner knew the borough she lived in. Her housing transfer request has since been granted.

5.15PM

It is time for our team update at the end of the day and then I log off. I head out for a walk around the green and prepare myself for another day tomorrow.

*Her name and personal details have been changed to protect her



06 A Whole VAWG Approach to community support

Women and children often face multiple systemic barriers to accessing services based on intersecting aspects of their identity. We continue **to strive towards inclusive and diverse services, prioritising collaboration** with organisations that are led by and for the communities they serve.

Through our **Whole VAWG Approach**, women and children are able to access holistic support, across all forms of abuse including domestic abuse, sexual violence and harmful practices, and specialist services for black and minoritised women, LGBT+ communities and children and young people. This year more than ever we worked closely with our Angelou Partners to ensure that women and children were able to access advocacy and support, both practical and emotional, despite the exacerbated risks and challenges they faced.

As violence against women and girls impacts all aspects of their lives, we provide wraparound and longer-term support to those survivors facing multiple disadvantages and needs, which can include homelessness, mental health and problematic substance use. Our Domestic Abuse Outreach Advocates and Women Centres offer holistic community-based support through one-to-one advocacy and access to activities and workshops in safe women-only spaces. Despite restrictions, we adapted and offered both online and in person groups.

The pandemic affected women’s mental health and our teams, including our Mental Health Advocate who have worked tirelessly to provide up to four times more support to each woman than was previously needed. Despite this, we have seen an increase in self-harm and, sadly, the silent deaths of women by suicide and overdoses during the pandemic.



ON THE FRONT-LINE: MARIE, MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE

“Marie’s* favourite part of the job is being able to work on developing stronger relationships to help battle the double stigma survivors face.

“I’m sort of a unicorn in the UK, as specialised Mental Health IDVAs are very rare,” she says. “The relationship between mental health and domestic abuse isn’t recognised as widely as it should be. The fact that Advance has this specific role is a massive step in the right direction.”

*Her name and personal details have been changed to protect her

“I’m using multiple codewords with women so they can signal if their abuser is in the same room. Because women aren’t going out to work, or attending GP appointments, we’ve lost those confidential spaces.”

“In-person meetings are more beneficial for survivors, because it’s easier to build relationships and trust. It won’t be enough for Advance to go back to normal, unless all services also return to operating face-to-face. We need to have that coordinated community approach, in order to ensure women are getting all the support they need.”

07 Minerva services for women in contact with the Criminal Justice



Advance’s **Minerva Approach Model** offers women and young women in contact with the criminal justice system holistic, consistent support through dedicated keyworkers, groups and activities in women-only safe spaces, meeting their individual needs. As such, women achieve increased safety, improved confidence, self-esteem and life skills, and are better able to rebuild their lives and engage positively in their communities.

The pandemic highlighted how women and children affected by the criminal justice system face a devastating impact on many aspects of their lives. **The lives of children, whose mothers are in custody even for a short time, are disrupted** and directly impacted. The crisis exacerbated their well-being and mental health, requiring significantly more support from Advance, at a time where many other services were unable to do so.

SOREYA’S DIARY IN LOCKDOWN

“The lockdown felt sudden and the change left me very unsettled. I had just moved to a new house and had to wait weeks for certain basic household items.

The isolation made me feel extremely lonely and vulnerable. I was uneasy when I went out for my one-hour daily exercise, some days I couldn’t face going out at all. I felt completely broken at times, in a constant fight or flight mode. I cried every day for weeks. I am not typically a person who would cry every day or feel lonely.

I still feel anxious, but I am glad the lockdown is starting to ease. Heading into the community more often and it is good to see people. I made it and I am proud. I could not have coped without my keyworker being there for me. Still no (Advance) groups though; I miss the support.”

*Her name and personal details have been changed to protect her



Minerva services for women in contact with the Criminal Justice



We continued to develop and expand our services available to women in contact with the criminal justice system from 15 years old at all levels of risk and need across London, and provided:

We reached out to

1,096

women and young women with sentences in custody or in the community.

- **Outreach support in the community** for women subject to probation supervision, through dedicated Minerva keyworkers, focusing on empowerment, providing support to recover from trauma and preventing re-offending.
- **Wraparound dedicated support** specific to each woman that addresses all her needs and impact from trauma for longer periods of time. We offer one-to-one emotional and practical support, counselling, mentoring and group-work programs focusing on mental health and well-being, domestic abuse and other forms of abuse, problematic substance use issues, children and families, employability and finances, building networks, empowering women to access support for their needs.
- **Specialist support for young women aged 15 to 24**, in order to improve engagement and access to support of statutory and other services, for this harder to reach group that have often experienced trauma and abuse themselves.
- **Specialist housing advocacy and support** for women involved in the criminal justice system who often are or become homeless, in order to improve the response and access to support by statutory services.
- Advocacy and support for women accessing local authority services for help, such as children's services, housing, acute or mental health services, **working in a coordinated community response with statutory agencies** to provide an improved response to women involved in the criminal justice system.
- **Women's Centre-based support in safe women-only spaces**, where women can address their needs in the way that they want, at our West and North London centres and our local hubs across 15 boroughs, to enable our advocates to support women in their communities.

08 Diversion service for women

The London Women's Diversion Service aims to offer alternatives to prosecution for women who have committed low-harm offences, by working with the Police and diverting women at the point of arrest into support services.

Advance and its three partner organisations (Hibiscus Initiatives, Pecan and Women in Prison) adapted the service and implemented it across four boroughs in March 2020 despite the start of lockdown. We continued to offer trauma-informed and gender-specific one-to-one and group support to women with often multiple needs, enabling them to break the cycle of offending and reducing the overall demand on the police and the justice system.



ZARAH'S STORY

“Zarah was referred to the Diversion service for possession of cocaine. She told her Diversion keyworker about her experience of severe domestic abuse and the loss of custody of her child. Due to fleeing domestic abuse and losing custody of her child, she was deemed to be 'intentionally homeless' by the local authority.

She was introduced to drugs while living on the streets and she started using to stay awake at night and to reduce the risk of her being attacked. She quickly became addicted to the drug and struggled to get the support she needed.

**Her name and personal details have been changed to protect her*

Zarah completed her conditional caution successfully and continued to be supported for six months by the Diversion Service, before being offered further support by Advance.



Systemic Change

To end violence against women and girls



A core aim of Advance is to effect **systemic change to end violence against women and girls**. Our core belief is that we cannot do this alone and that everyone in the system must work together. Since our foundation over two decades ago, we have pioneered partnership working in the women's and public sectors.


We work in partnership with professionals and organisations, in statutory and non-statutory settings in a **whole-system approach to raise awareness about violence against women and girls and deliver systems changes** needed to improve the response to and outcomes for them.

Aligned with our Strategy 2018 – 2022, we focused on preventative education and early intervention responses, on amplifying the voices of survivors to influence policy and practice that are rooted in their experiences and needs, and on working across the whole community system in partnership to deliver systemic change.



01 Preventative education and awareness of domestic abuse

Preventative education and awareness of domestic abuse was vital as we went into lockdown at the start of the year. We focused on creating digital content and launched new platforms to reach a wider audience.

We [launched our new website](#)  and [newsletter](#) which provided information for women and children on understanding abuse and its impact and how to access help. We also shared toolkits and resources for professionals, and explained referral pathways to our services.

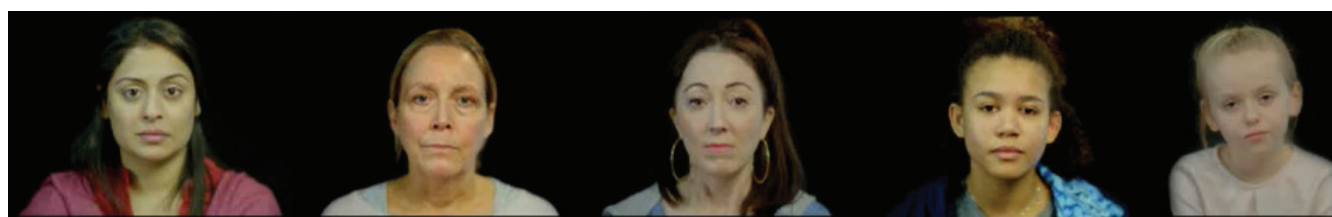
The [I Am With Her video campaign](#) told the stories of five women and girls and their journeys from experiencing domestic abuse, the impact on their lives and how being supported enabled them to lead safer lives. Our campaign was shared extensively on social media channels and our supporters, reaching over 20,000 views in its first month and continues to be shared today.

We provided training in communities, in statutory and non-statutory settings, as well as in partnership with other organisations, in order to improve the response to all forms of violence and abuse against women and girls.

We delivered [Diversion for Women, Whole Housing and Health community response workshops](#) and individual consultation sessions with professionals in statutory and non-statutory settings.




I Am With Her: Naomi's Story



I Am With Her: Video Campaign 

02 Amplifying survivor voices

Women have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, many taking on additional caring responsibilities, affecting their employment and financial stability, and leaving many without essentials such as food and housing, severely impacting their mental health and well-being.



Our report '[A Strange Empty Place](#)'  launched in July 2020 told the stories of women during the first lockdown at the start of the pandemic and the adverse impact on their lives.

I HAVE FELT OVERWHELMED AT TIMES, DUE TO THE LIVING QUARTERS THAT I SHARE WITH MY CHILDREN, A TEN, THREE AND TWO-YEAR-OLD



In September 2020 we launched '[A Space to Talk About Relationships](#)'  based on research co-designed and co-produced with young women, which highlighted the social factors influencing early sexual relationships among young women who have been involved in the criminal justice system and the health impacts.

As part of 16 days of action in November 2020, we hosted the **ADVANCETALK series with four "Talk About Abuse" events**, including

- [Amja Unabashedly](#)  artist, activist and survivor of domestic abuse and
- [Lady Unchained](#)  poet, broadcaster and activist who shared their art and their journey, inspiring many.

03 A Whole Community Response in partnership

We recognise that systemic change is needed to tackle violence against women and girls which is caused by systemic inequalities which are compounded by the intersection of multiple aspects of women's identity. We are committed to **delivering systems change by working in partnership** within statutory and non-statutory settings, as well as with other organisations. We aim to improve responses and outcomes for women affected by domestic abuse and/or those in contact with the criminal justice system, through:

- **Sharing best-practice models to improve responses nationally.** We shared our Whole VAWG Services Approach, coming together with our nine Angelou Partners to deliver events and a toolkit shared at national level with practitioners and commissioners.

- **Developing partnerships and supporting specialist and local services** best placed in meeting the needs of those in their communities. We launched the London Women's Services Alliance as part of our collaboration in delivering holistic women's community services to women in contact with the criminal justice system. We led on the development and launch of the South and East England Services Alliance as part of our commitment to support specialist local services in the community.

- **Influencing policy to promote responses that meet the needs of women.** We worked with ministers and policy-makers to shape the responses and support for women on probation, ensuring that specialist services and women's safe spaces were at the centre of the new services being proposed. We continued to work at national level on the issues of community-based support for survivors of domestic abuse, calling for substantive and sustainable funding for women's specialist services and safe space including a statutory duty of community provision as part of the Domestic Abuse Bill.



Looking Towards The Future



Advance continued to face significant funding pressures and changes, which have been further exacerbated by the current Covid-19 pandemic. There has been both an increase in the number of women and children referred to us for support and in the level of support needed to be provided to women who have been adversely and disproportionately impacted by the crisis.

We have benefited from our work to strengthen our strategic leadership and expertise, as well as from the support of many existing and new partners who joined our fight to save and change lives and to end violence against women and girls. This has placed us in a strong position from which to maximise future opportunities.

We have successfully extended our funding for both our VAWG and Criminal Justice services across London and have secured funding to extend our services into a further eight counties in

the South and East of England in the coming year, thereby becoming a national charity.

Advance delivered on our commitment for earlier intervention and prevention support through the extension of our services for young women across London and for women in health settings, whilst continuing longer-term whole-system support to meet the needs of domestic abuse survivors and women involved in the justice system, alongside our crisis intervention services for women at high risk.

Our Strategy 2018-2022

Our strategic aim to provide women and their families with support to be safe from abuse and at the turning point they need to change their lives is central to our vision of a world where women and girls lead safe, violence-free and equal lives.

During 2020/21, Advance continued to deliver our vision and look towards the future, despite the challenges due to the pandemic, including:

Reach more women and children experiencing domestic abuse and/or in contact with the criminal justice system, by providing independent, non-judgemental support and advocacy through new referral pathways and improved access.

- We extended our support to women through early intervention, meeting their often multiple needs, by expanding access to **health support to domestic abuse survivors in the community** through IRIS advocates/educations and extending the **London Diversion services** for women at the point of arrest.
- We have continued to support those affected by Domestic abuse over the long journey to recovery, informed by women's voices and experiences, launching specialist **workshops in our Women's Centres**.
- We continued to build on long-lasting meaningful partnerships with specialist women's organisations to deliver VAWG services and Criminal Justice services, including the **London Women's Services Alliance** and the **East and South England Women's Services Alliance**.

2
Engage with the community to raise awareness of violence against women and girls, to ensure our services meet their needs and gain support of our activities.

- We **amplified women's voices through research and practice-based evidence** for young women in 'A space to talk about relationships' and women affected by the pandemic in 'A strange empty place'.
- We **launched ADVANCETALK series of events to 'Talk about abuse'** with activities and survivors sharing their journey and inspirational stories of survival and creativity.
- We **Launched new digital platforms** including a new website and social media, reaching more people in the community to raise awareness about abuse, engage supporters and share insights.

3
Maximise our impact and public accountability

- Processes and practice that ensure we are a well-governed charity, which **delivers high-quality services to women and children**, and communities,
- Invested in our people, providing support through these challenging times and working towards an **inclusive and diverse environment**, including the delivery of our Diversity Equity and Inclusion Plan and our staff Engagement Survey, ensuring that our colleagues can thrive and reach their potential,
- We are building on and fostering a **continuous learning** environment and **raising awareness of our work** and impact with policy-makers, donors and the public through events, consultations and briefings.

4
Build strong financial fundamentals in response to challenges in funding environment, and ensure long-term sustainability

- We continued to focus on our business development and fundraising plan to **diversify income streams** and built our capacity in fundraising resources, which included **strengthening our partnerships** with trusts and foundations and corporate supporters.

The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic

It continues to be challenging and worrying times for the women and children we support, as well as our colleagues and partners, since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in Spring 2020.

Our teams remained committed to delivering the support women and children needed throughout and Advance was able to adapt our life-saving and life-changing services quickly and without disruption. Whilst working remotely from home and where possible, in a mix of remote- and community-based work, we ensured women and children were able to call our helplines and receive one-to-one support. We continued to adapt to the changing circumstances throughout the year and developed innovative solutions to continue our support groups and mentoring online, rather than at our women centres where that was not possible.

Our founding principle of partnership working through a coordinated community response enabled us to continue to work closely with our voluntary and statutory partners, to respond to the needs of and improve the outcomes for

women and children. We were supported by many existing and new partners from foundations and trusts, to companies and individuals, enabling us to continue our vital work.

The Trustees have considered the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, that has been spreading throughout the world in 2020 and continues through 2021, on Advance's activities. This outbreak is likely to continue to cause some disruption to our operations, the extent and quantum of which remains uncertain. Our communications with current and potential funders have been and continue to be very positive and flexible through these challenges as the crisis continues.

We are optimistic about the fundraising outlook for the next 12 months and our ability to adapt our responses to the needs of the women and children we support, as well as the health and wellbeing of our staff and partners.



Financial Overview 2021



We have benefited from the work undertaken by the charity to strengthen our financial management systems, policies and procedures, enabling us to maximise opportunities that arose in 2020/21.

Financial Statements

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of the charitable company for the purposes of the Companies Act) present their combined Directors' report and Trustees' annual report, as required by company law, together with the audited financial statements of Advance Advocacy and Non Violence Community Education (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the Charity comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Governing document and Objectives

Advance is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association which was incorporated in August 2000. Advance was registered as a charity in September 2000.

Our vision is a world where women and girls can live safe, violence-free and equal lives, so that they can actively participate and contribute to society.

The objects of the charity for the public benefit in 2020/21 are:

1. The relief and support of persons, including children, who have suffered or are in danger of suffering domestic violence;
2. To advance the education of voluntary and statutory agencies and the public in all aspects of domestic violence, including without limit, its causes and prevention and the relief of its consequences;
3. Divert women from the Criminal Justice System at the earliest opportunity, reduce re-offending amongst women and encourage desistance amongst repeat offenders; and
4. Reduce the number of custodial sentences imposed on women by the Courts and prevent families breaking down as a result of offending.

The Trustees have complied with the duty in section 17(5) of the 2011 Charities Act to have paid due regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit. In particular the Trustees consider how planned activities contribute to the achievement of the Charity's objects.

Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees

The Directors of the company are also the charity Trustees. Trustees are appointed for the skills and experience that they bring and their ability to assist Advance in meeting its charitable objects. In 2020/21, Advance's Trustees brought diverse experience and a wide skill-base to the Board at a time of significant growth.

All new Trustees are provided with Advance's Memorandum and Articles, strategic plan, quarterly management accounts and relevant reports, as well as access to all policies via a secure online shared resource. All new Trustees are also provided with the Charity Commission's 'The Essential Trustee' and invited to discuss any queries with the Chair.

The Articles of Association state that each year one third of the elected Trustees shall retire from office and shall be those who have served longest in office. A retiring Trustee shall be eligible for re-election. The Board is able to decide how many vacancies there are subject to a minimum of three persons. Where a vacancy exists, the vacancy is openly advertised on Advance's website and networks, and applicants are interviewed and appointed by delegated Trustees.

Trustees are responsible for the overall direction and strategic development of the organisation. This involves overseeing the strategic plan, monitoring performance against set objectives, agreeing the annual budget, monitoring reserves, reviewing and developing policies and procedures, the recruitment of staff and managing other personnel issues that may arise.

The Board of Trustees meets quarterly and is supported by two Trustee sub-committees which also meet quarterly in-between full Board meetings, focussing on: Finance, Fundraising & Business Development; and Governance, Risk & Human Resources.



Organisational structure

The Trustees delegate the management and delivery of services to meet the charity's objects to the Chief Executive (CEO), the Business Services team led by the Director of Finance and Business Services, the Director of Organisational Development and Human Resources and the Director of Business Development and Insights and two Service Delivery teams led by the Director of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Services and the Director of Criminal Justice Services respectively.

The senior staff remuneration at the levels below the CEO is set by the CEO in close consultation with the Board, particularly with reference to the Governance, Risk and HR sub-committee which includes the Chair and also in relation to market rates. A salary scale is used to ensure consistency in similar roles. The salary of the CEO is set by the Board and all staff are eligible to receive an annual increment up to the top of the scale.

Employees are responsible for delivering the outputs and outcomes in line with funder requirements and Advance's objectives. This includes service delivery, training, consultancy, and other core areas related to administration, fundraising, finance and human resources.

Advance values diversity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community for its roles. In line with this we have developed policies to ensure that we have fair and transparent recruitment and selection processes in place that meet our equality and diversity policy.

Advance enjoys a strong working relationship with a number of partnerships, organisations and individuals and is represented on a number of working groups in order to further its charitable objectives.

Delivering public benefit

Advance positively impacts the lives of women and their families, by reducing or diverting women from offending, reducing domestic violence incidents and risk of harm, increasing the safety and improving the quality of life of women, young women and children supported by our services.

During the year we were also able to deliver public benefit through further development and innovation, by extending our services across new geographic areas

and offering new services to women and children, as well as sharing best practice with practitioners, policy-makers and organisations working with women and children affected by violence and abuse.

We continue to build our partnership working and deliver a coordinated community response to violence and abuse against women and girls, by participating in strategic and operational networks, locally and nationally, and developing and leading service delivery partnerships in London and nationally.

During the year we were also able to deliver public benefit through further development and innovation, by extending our services across new geographic areas and offering new services to women and children, as well as sharing best practice with practitioners, policy-makers and organisations working with women and children affected by violence and abuse.

We continue to build our partnership working and deliver a coordinated community response to violence and abuse against women and girls, by participating in strategic and operational networks, locally and nationally, and developing and leading service delivery partnerships in London and nationally.

Risk management

The Board of Trustees has conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. A risk register has been established and is updated quarterly, overseen by the Trustee sub-committees with a focus on services and governance, finance, fundraising and people. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. The Governance, Risk & HR Sub-Committee comprising Trustees and the Chief Executive meets quarterly through the year.

Internal control risks are minimised by the review of financial management procedures and implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, clients and visitors. The implementation of National Service Standards for domestic violence services and review and implementation of safeguarding children and adults at risk procedures ensure a consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the charity. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

The Board has agreed and oversees a five-year strategic business plan 2018/19 – 2022/23. This sets out plans to allow for the diversification of funding and activities and an action plan is refreshed annually.



Risk management

The main risks identified and the mitigating responses to manage these risks include:

Risk identified	Response to Risk
Challenging climate due to the Covid-19 pandemic, public sector cuts, leading to increasingly competitive tendering.	Advance continues to build on its high-quality services through continuous innovation; aims to reach more women and girls across new geographic areas and broaden access to its services; engages with local and central government to influence provision of services needed by women; develops new services aligned to its mission and policy frameworks; collaborates with statutory and voluntary service providers to develop best-practice partnerships.
Increasingly competitive funding and commissioning environment.	Advance has built the capacity of its fundraising resources; developed and launched a new fundraising strategy; is diversifying its funding streams; continues to build and strengthen relationships with commissioners; is building on its specialist local experience and understanding of needs; ensuring continued improvement and value for money of tender proposals; monitors key performance indicators and reports regularly to the Board of Trustees.
Recruiting and retaining sufficient and highly-skilled staff to maintain quality of services and capacity for growth.	Advance has built the capacity of its human resources, finance and data insights team; developed its recruitment and people development processes; grown its service delivery management structure and team; continues to invest in training; engages and responds to team feedback through a bi-annual staff survey and frequent team days.
Sufficient unrestricted reserves to enable sustainability and support significant growth.	Advance has implemented its fundraising strategy to diversify its funding streams; continues to ensure full-cost recovery for funded services; is developing proposals to fund capacity building and core costs; is building relationships with individual donors and events with communities to raise awareness and support for its activities; monitors reserves and reports regularly to the Board of Trustees
Information and systems security breach.	Advance uses a cloud-based data environment; has encryption in place for its systems and devices; has expert advice for its data protection processes and systems; has clear policies on confidentiality, privacy and data protection; regularly reviews systems security.

Financial Overview

Following another year of significant funding pressures and changes to the commissioning landscape faced by the women's sector which were exacerbated by Covid-19, we have benefited from the work undertaken by the charity to strengthen our financial management systems, policies and procedures, enabling us to maximise opportunities that arose in 2020/21.

Funding sources

Our success in securing existing contracts and obtaining additional funding to extend service delivery into new areas demonstrates the confidence commissioners and funders have in our delivery and approach. Our fundraising strategy complements our success in achieving restricted funding by targeting designated and unrestricted funding towards our business services and other core costs.

The principal funding sources for the charity in 2020/21 were from the following:

- London Borough of Brent
- London Borough of Ealing
- London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
- Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
- Westminster City Council
- Mayor's Office for Policing & Crime (MOPAC)
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Ministry of Justice
- London Community Rehabilitation Company (MTC Novo)
- BCBN and Islamic Relief
- Howard de Walden Estate
- Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF) UK
- Julia and Hans Rausing Trust
- Lewis Family Charitable Trust
- London Community Response Fund
- T&J Meyer Family Trust
- Treebeard Trust
- United fund
- Women In Prison

Additional financial donations and contributions to help us support families using our services have been received from other donations.



Financial Review

The Trustees consider the financial performance by the charity during the year to have been satisfactory given the initial reserves position of the organisation, the funding environment and the expansion of services undertaken. The financial statements are set out on pages 45 to 59.

The annual income for 2020/21 as shown in the Statement of Financial Activities was £4,380,046 (2019/20: £4,201,472), an increase of 4%, with annual expenditure of £4,372,793 (2019/20: £4,158,579), generating an overall annual surplus of £7,253 (2019/20: surplus of £42,893).

Despite a challenging funding environment, the increase in income has been a result of new grants and contracts from statutory and independent funders, aimed at supporting charities through the difficulties brought about by Covid-19. The increase in annual expenditure was due to the provision of new services and programmes.

The total funds at the year ended 31 March 2021 stands at £774,096 (2019/20: £766,843) of which unrestricted funds are £624,974 (2019/20: £553,862) and restricted are £149,122 (2019/20: £212,981). An increase in unrestricted reserves of £71,112 is in line with the strategic priority to grow unrestricted reserves over the next 3 years as outlined in Advance’s Reserves Policy. Cash balances at the year-end were £744,218 (2019/20: £624,226).

Reserves policy

The Board of Trustees reviewed Advance’s Reserves Policy in response to the charity’s main risks and the current funding environment and agreed that unrestricted funds held should be equivalent to up to two months of staff costs, three months of premises costs and one month of running and activities costs for all projects.

In 2020/21, Advance continued to expand its services and income, and unrestricted reserves are needed to meet the charity’s working capital needs and support further development of its services.

The Board has agreed a plan to increase unrestricted reserves to a target of £900,000 over the next 3 years. This is deemed realistic and will be achieved through effective financial management, focusing on boosting unrestricted income and improving the agreed level of future contributions from restricted projects towards core costs and unrestricted reserves.

Total funds on 31 March 2021 were £774,096 (2019/20: £766,843) of which unrestricted funds are £624,974 (2019/20: £553,862) and restricted are £149,122 (2019/20: £212,981). Free unrestricted reserves on 31 March 2021 amounted to £601,504 (2019/20: £512,463). The Board consider that Advance can continue its current activities with existing reserves.

Structure, Governance and Management

Registered Company number	04064660 (England and Wales)
Registered Charity number	1086873
Registered office	PO BOX 74643, London, W6 6JU
Auditors	Knox Cropper LLP, 65 Leadenhall Street, London EC3A 2AD
Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill, West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ
Trustees	
Christine Losecaat MBE	Chair
Christine Mullin	Treasurer
Emily Midwood	Chair, Governance, Risk and Human Resources Sub-Committee (effective 9th October 2020)
Dr Carole Easton OBE	Chair of Finance, Fundraising and Business Development Sub-Committee (effective 1st June 2021)
Helen Arbon	
Vanessa Challess	
Anita Hamilton	
Kate Parsley	
Tallulah Perez-Sphar	
Hannah Hoare	(appointed 22nd September 2020)
Charmian Sedman	(appointed 22nd September 2020)
Karthik Mahadevan	(appointed 22nd September 2020)
Naomi Simpson	(appointed 22nd September 2020)
Michelle Nightingale	(appointed 11th November 2020)
Pria Rai	(resigned 9th October 2020)
Senior Management	
Niki Scordi	Chief Executive Officer
Melissa Altman	Director of VAWG services
Dr Summer Alston-Smith	Director of Criminal Justice services
Kim Halliday	Director of Finance and Business Services
Meghan Field	Director of Business Development and Insights
Shade Odupelu	Director of Organisational Development and Human Resource

Statement of Trustees Responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of Advance for the purposes of Company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

Company law and Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Knox Cropper LLP, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting. This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:



Christine Losecaat MBE, Chair
22 November 2021

Financial Statements

For the year ended

31 March 2021



Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Advance Advocacy and Non-Violence Community Education

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Advance (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such

material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration

specified by law are not made; or

- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Directors.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted



in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- The Charitable Company is required to comply with both company law and charity law and, based on our knowledge of its activities, we identified that the legal requirement to accurately account for restricted funds was of key significance.
- We gained an understanding of how the charitable company complied with its legal and regulatory framework, including the requirement to properly account for restricted funds, through discussions with management and a review of the documented policies, procedures and controls.
- The audit team, which is experienced in the audit of charities, considered the charitable company's susceptibility to material misstatement and how fraud may occur. Our considerations included the risk of management override.
- Our approach was to check that all restricted income was properly identified and separately accounted for and to ensure that only valid and appropriate expenditure was charged to restricted funds. This included reviewing journal adjustments and unusual transactions.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's member in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's member for our audit work, for this report or for the opinions we have formed.

Richard Billingham FCA Senior Statutory Auditor

for and on behalf of Knox Cropper LLP
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
65 Leadenhall Street
London. EC3A 2AD



26 November 2021

Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2021

Year ended 31 March on given years

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund 2021 (£)	Restricted Fund 2021 (£)	2021 Totals (£)	2020 Totals (£)
Income:					
Charitable activities	2	70,829	4,308,934	4,379,763	4,200,561
Investment income – Interest receivable		283	–	283	911
Total incoming resources		71,112	4,308,934	4,380,046	4,201,472
Expenditure:					
Costs of Raising Funds: Fundraising costs	3	–	104,621	104,621	67,360
Expenditure on Charitable Activities: Total Charitable Activities	3	–	4,268,172	4,268,172	4,091,219
Total expenditure	3	–	4,372,793	4,372,793	4,158,579
Net income / (expenditure) for the year		71,112	(63,859)	7,253	42,893
Transfers between Funds		–	–	–	–
Net Movement in Funds for the year		71,112	(63,859)	7,253	42,893
Reconciliation of Funds Total Funds brought forward		553,862	212,981	766,843	723,950
Total Funds carried forward	9–10	624,974	149,122	774,096	766,843

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.



Balance Sheet

Advance Advocacy and Non Violence Community Education

Charity no. 1086873 Company no. 4064660

	Notes	At 31 March 2021 £	At 31 March 2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	5	42,965	69,896
Current assets			
Debtors	6	515,276	677,873
Cash at bank and in hand		744,218	624,226
		1,259,494	1,302,099
Liabilities:			
Creditors falling due within one year	7	(528,363)	(605,152)
Net current assets		731,131	696,947
Net assets	11	774,096	766,843
Funds:			
Unrestricted income funds	9	624,974	553,862
Restricted funds	10	149,122	212,981
Total Funds		774,096	766,843

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies. The notes on pages 48 to 59 form part of these accounts.



Christine Losecaat MBE, Chair

Approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 22 November 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Christine Mullin, Treasurer

Statement of Cashflows

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Year ended 31 March on given years

	2021 £	2020 £
Net Movement in Funds	7,253	42,893
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of tangible assets	39,458	34,024
Interest received	(283)	(911)
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	162,597	(224,427)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(76,789)	185,531
Net Cash generated from Operating Activities	132,236	37,110
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(12,527)	(17,902)
Interest	283	911
Net cash from investing activities	(12,243)	(16,991)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Interest paid	-	-
Net cash used in financing activities	-	-
Net increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	119,992	20,119
Cash and cash equivalent at beginning of period	624,226	604,106
Cash and cash equivalent carried forward	744,218	624,226
Cash and cash equivalents can be analysed as follows:		
Cash in hand	744,218	624,226



Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a. Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Advance is a charitable company limited by guarantee (company number 04064660 and charity number 1086873). The registered office is PO Box 74643, London, W6 6JU.

The presentation currency of the financial statements in pound sterling (£).

b. Key Judgements and Assumptions in applying Accounting Policies

There are no key judgements or assumptions used in applying the accounting policies.

c. Preparation of the Accounts on a Going Concern basis

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern despite the impact of COVID-19 as disclosed in note 15 to these financial statements. The charity has cash resources and has no requirement for external funding. The directors have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in

operational existence for the foreseeable future. They continue to believe the going concern basis of accounting appropriate in preparing the annual financial statements..

d. Incoming Resources

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis once the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the items of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. For unsolicited donations this is when received.

In particular, revenue grants are recognised as income at the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate to a specified future period or the completion of unmet performance related conditions outside the control of the charity, in which case they are deferred. Deferred income is released to income in the reporting period in which the performance-related or other conditions that limit recognition are met.

e. Resources Expended:

All expenses are accounted for on an accruals basis.

i. Fundraising costs

These costs are incurred in seeking voluntary contributions. Direct fundraising costs consist of external direct costs and a proportion of direct salary costs calculated on the basis of estimation of time spent on fundraising activities.

ii. Allocation of Support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs includes costs and services, such as finance, payroll and governance costs which support the charity's work. Support costs have been allocated directly against charitable activities.

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

f. Staff Pensions

Advance operated a defined contribution pension scheme (DCS) during the year. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. At 31 March 2021, Advance had 78 (2020: 64) active members in the scheme. Total contributions to the DCS for the year were £39,688 (2020: £41,130).

g. Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated in the balance sheet at cost less depreciation. These items are depreciated on a straight line basis so as to write off their cost over their estimated useful lives. The rates used are as follows:

Buildings and Refurbishments 10%

or the length of the lease whichever is shorter

Computers 33%

Fixtures & Fittings 20%

Items costing less than £200 are written off in full in the year of acquisition.

h. Debtors

Debtors are recognised when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received.

i. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in no more than 3 months from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

j. Creditors

Short term creditors are measured at the transaction price. Creditors are recognised when the charity has a present legal or constructive obligation resulting from a past event to make payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

k. Restricted funds

Restricted funds are accounted for in accordance with the particular terms of trust arising from the express or implied wishes of donors in so far as these are intended to be binding on the Trustees. Where any such wishes are not intended to be legally binding, they are taken into account and recognised in appropriately designated funds.

l. Unrestricted funds

Unrestricted funds are those which are not subject to any special restrictions and they are classed within the General fund.

m. Foreign exchange

Transactions denominated in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the rate of exchange ruling at the date of the transaction. Exchange differences arising in the ordinary course of business are included in incoming resources or resources expended. Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the exchange rates ruling at the balance sheet date.

n. Operating Leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.



Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

2. Income from Charitable Activities

Year ended 31 March on given years

	Unrestricted Funds 2021 (£)	Restricted Funds 2020 (£)	2021 Totals (£)	2020 Totals (£)
Grants:				
Community-based Advocacy & Support	40,500	4,308,934	4,349,434	4,191,759
Donations & gifts	28,179	-	28,179	8,802
Other income	2,150	-	2,150	-
	70,829	4,308,934	4,379,763	4,200,561

Year ended 31 March on given years

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:	2021 Totals (£)	2020 Totals (£)
Unrestricted Grants		
T&J Meyer Family Trust	8,000	10,000
Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF) UK	2,500	-
Howard de Walden Estate	10,000	-
United Fund	10,000	-
Treebeard Trust	10,000	20,000
	40,500	30,000

Year ended 31 March on given years

Restricted Grants	2021 Totals (£)	2020 Totals (£)
London Borough of Brent	445,665	418,874
London Borough of Ealing	135,466	89,633
London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham	471,104	445,200
Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea	215,732	557,335
Westminster City Council	288,494	224,000
Health Triage (BCBN and Islamic Relief)	40,750	49,250

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

2. Income from Charitable Activities *continued.*

	2021 Totals (£)	2020 Totals (£)
Restricted Grants <i>contd.</i>		
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	-	25,000
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	252,000	252,000
Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF) UK	12,500	2,500
Mayor's Office for Policing & Crime (MOPAC)	1,299,360	1,286,050
London Community Rehabilitation Company (MTC Novo)	700,000	700,000
SafeLives	-	6,250
Lewis Family Charitable Trust	5,000	-
Greater London Authority	-	12,000
Department for Communities and Local Government	8,833	93,667
London Community Response Fund	71,517	-
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	150,000	-
Ministry of Justice	202,113	-
Women In Prison	10,400	-
	4,308,934	4,161,759
Total Grants Received	4,349,434	4,191,759

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

3. Analysis of total expenditure

Year ended 31 March on given years					
	Direct Costs (£)	Staff Costs (£)	Support Costs (£)	2021 Total Cost (£)	2020 Total Cost (£)
Expenditure on Charitable Activities					
Cost of generating funds:					
Fundraising costs	799	103,822	-	104,621	67,360
Charitable activities:					
Community-based Advocacy & Support	894,466	3,098,231	265,455	4,258,152	4,073,847
Governance Costs	-	-	10,020	10,020	17,372
Total Charitable activities	894,466	3,098,231	275,475	4,268,172	4,091,219
Total Expenditure 2021	895,265	3,202,053	275,475	4,372,793	
Total expenditure 2020	889,757	2,981,255	287,567		4,158,579

	2021 Total Cost (£)	2020 Total Cost (£)
Direct costs include:		
Direct costs related to community-based activities		
Partners' activities costs	574,792	610,528
Service-user activities	70,910	97,520
IT & Telecoms Costs	186,491	159,440
Other Direct Costs	62,273	21,820
	894,466	889,308

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Support Costs includes:

Year ended 31 March on given years		
	2021 Totals (£)	2020 Totals (£)
Support costs related to community-based activities		
HR & payroll	9,017	10,020
Premises & storage	30,523	38,113
Lease costs	149,693	151,041
Staff related support costs	28,506	26,414
Other support costs	8,258	10,583
Depreciation	39,458	34,024
	265,455	270,195

Year ended 31 March on given years		
	2021 Totals (£)	2020 Totals (£)
Governance costs		
Legal & Professional fees	996	3,226
Auditors' fees	3,976	4,600
AGM / Annual Report	3,048	2,171
Trustee and Board meeting expenses	2,000	1,075
Governance review	-	6,300
	10,020	17,372

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

4. Trustees and employees

	Year ended 31 March on given years	
	2021 Totals (£)	2020 Totals (£)
Staff costs:		
Salaries	2,644,429	2,372,496
Social security costs	254,265	212,664
Pension scheme contributions	49,557	41,615
Redundancy	-	-
Consultants & Agency staff	188,478	192,590
Recruitment and training	65,324	161,890
	3,202,053	2,981,255
	Year ended 31 March on given years	
	2021 Average Number	2020 Average Number
The average number of persons employed during the year was:	89	82

The charity considers its key management personnel to comprise the Trustees and the Chief Executive. The total employment benefits including employer pension contributions and national insurance contributions of the key management personnel were £84,115 (2020 Excl. NIC: £79,316).

There were two employees with employee benefits between £60,001 and £70,000 (2020: 0). No employee had employee benefits between £70,001 and £80,000 (2020: 1). One employee had employee benefits between £80,001 and £90,000 (2020: 0).

There were no redundancy payments in 2020/21 (2020: £nil).

The Trustees and persons connected with them have not received or obtained any remuneration or other financial benefits for the period directly or indirectly from Advance's funds. The aggregate amount of expenses reimbursed to Trustees to cover travel expenses during 2020/21 was £nil (2020: £nil).

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

5. Tangible fixed assets

	Year ended 31 March on given years			
	Buildings (£)	Fixtures & Fittings (£)	IT Equipment (£)	Totals (£)
Cost				
Balance at 1 April 2020	57,119	20,322	71,370	148,811
Additions	-	-	12,527	12,527
Balance at 31 March 2021	57,119	20,322	83,897	161,338
Accumulated Depreciation				
Balance at 1 April 2020	27,958	7,500	43,457	78,915
Charge for period	11,424	4,349	23,685	39,458
Balance at 31 March 2021	39,382	11,849	67,142	118,373
Net book value at 31 March 2021	17,737	8,473	16,755	42,965
Net book value at 31 March 2020	29,161	12,822	27,913	69,896

6. Debtors

	At 31 March 2021 (£)	At 31 March 2020 (£)
Accrued income and grants receivable	421,064	614,144
Prepaid expenses	64,471	34,410
Other debtors: due in less than one year	29,741	29,319
	515,276	677,873



Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

7. Creditors amounts falling due within one year

	At 31 March 2021	At 31 March 2020
Trade Creditors	94,501	246,251
Taxation and social security	153,806	77,410
Accruals and Other Creditors	103,400	121,759
Deferred Income	176,656	159,732
	528,363	605,152

Deferred income reflects grants received during the year for which performance conditions have not been met at the year end. Deferred income recognised at 31 March 2020 was recognised in full in the current financial year.

8. Operating Lease Commitments

	Land & Buildings At 31 March 2021 (£)	Land & Buildings At 31 March 2020 (£)
Minimum Lease Payment Falling Due:		
Within 1 year	130,528	130,528
Within 2 to 5 years	59,188	189,717
	189,716	320,245

As of 2nd August 2017, we have signed two 5-year leases for premises for £107,010 per annum.

As of 1st November 2018, we have signed a 53 months lease for premises for £23,518 per annum.

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

9. Unrestricted Income Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2020 (£)	Incoming/ (Outgoing) Resources (£)	Balance at 31 March 2021 (£)
Advance General Fund	553,862	71,112	624,974

The Unrestricted Income Funds are classified as follows

	At 31 March 2021 (£)	At 31 March 2020 (£)
Free Reserves (incorporating General Fund)	601,504	512,463
Tangible Fixed Assets in use	23,470	41,399
Total	624,974	553,862

10. Restricted Funds

Restricted funds are accounted for in accordance with the particular terms of trust arising from the express or implied wishes of donors in so far as these are intended to be binding on the Trustees. Where any such wishes are not intended to be legally binding, they are taken into account and recognised in appropriate alternative funds, as indicated as transfers below.

	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming Resources (£)	Transfers (£)	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2021 (£)
Domestic Abuse services	104,721	2,205,694	-	(2,250,536)	59,879
Criminal Justice services	108,260	2,103,240	-	(2,122,257)	89,243
Total	212,981	4,308,934	-	(4,372,793)	149,122

Domestic abuse services: Services are provided to the boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, through a number of programmes including the Angelou Partnership VAWG Services, Social Care IDVA services, and the Criminal Justice and Police IDVA services.

Criminal Justice services: Services are provided pan-London through our Minerva and Diversion programmes, including our collaboration with London Community Rehabilitation Company (LCRC) and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)..



Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

11. Analysis of the charity's net assets by Fund

	Unrestricted Fund (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	Total Funds (£)
Fund balances at 31 March 2021 are represented by:			
Tangible fixed assets	23,470	19,495	42,965
Debtors	94,212	421,064	515,276
Cash at bank and in hand	515,316	228,902	744,218
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(8,024)	(520,339)	(528,363)
	624,974	149,122	774,096

12. Taxation status

Advance is a registered charity and no taxation is payable on its income arising in the United Kingdom.

13. Related party transactions

There were no connected charity transactions during the year.
There were no related party transactions during the year. None of our Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity.

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2021

14. Comparative 2020 Statement of Financial Activities

	Year ended 31 March 2020		
Statement of Financial Activities	Unrestricted Fund (£)	Restricted Fund (£)	2020 Totals (£)
Income:			
Charitable activities:			
Domestic violence advocacy projects	38,802	4,161,759	4,200,561
Investment income – Interest receivable	911	–	911
Total incoming resources	39,713	4,161,759	4,201,472
Expenditure:			
Costs of Raising Funds:			
Fundraising costs	–	67,360	67,360
Expenditure on Charitable Activities:			
Total Charitable Activities	–	4,091,219	4,091,219
Total expenditure	–	4,158,579	4,158,579
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	39,713	3,180	42,893
Transfers between Funds	–	–	–
Net Movement in Funds for the year	39,713	3,180	42,893
Reconciliation of Funds			
Total Funds brought forward	514,149	209,801	723,950
Total Funds carried forward	553,862	212,981	766,843

All income and expenditure derived from continuing activities.

15. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

The Trustees have considered the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, that has been spreading throughout the world in 2020, on the Charity's activities. This outbreak is likely to cause some disruption to the Charity's business but at the date of approval of these financial statements, the extent and quantum of the disruption remains uncertain.

Our communications with current and potential funders have been very positive, with funders showing an understanding of the challenges and a willingness to be flexible with funding to see organisations like ours through these challenges. We are optimistic about the fundraising outlook for the next 12 months.

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