

ANNUAL REPORT



Prepared by

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Presented by

Cathryn Cardoza



2025

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**“We support more than
1,000 survivors each
year, helping them
recognise the impact
of rape and sexual
abuse and regain
control of their lives”**

Table of Contents

1. About Us

2. Vision, Mission & Values

3. A Word From The Chair

4. One Year Review

5. Service Delivery

6. Trustee Report

7. Financial Statement

8. Contact Us

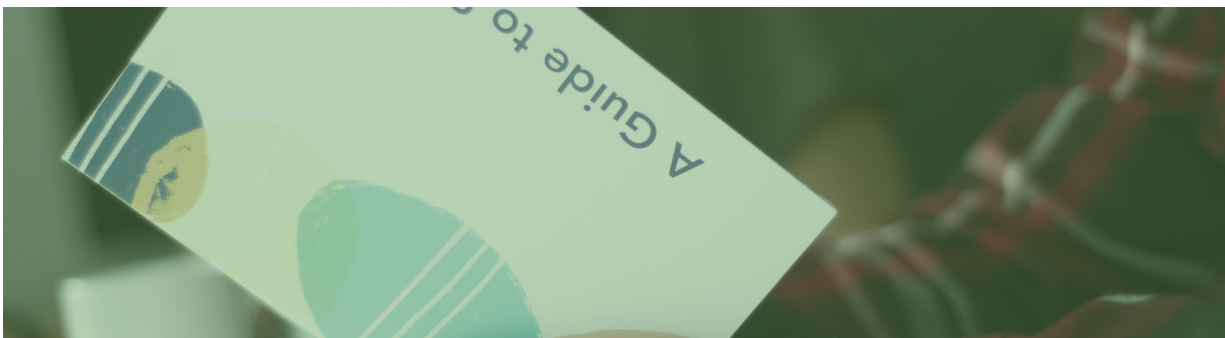
About Us

SOSRC (Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis) has been supporting survivors of sexual violence since 2011. We provide free, specialist support to individuals who have experienced any form of sexual violence, sexual abuse or sexual assault, at any point in their lives. We support survivors, along with their relatives and supporters, across **Southend-on-Sea, Castle Point and Rochford**.

Our dedicated team comprises highly skilled, **trauma-informed professionals**, including specialist counsellors, Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs), and our valued trustees. These core staff members play a vital role in the organisation, helping to ensure the consistent delivery of high-quality, **survivor-centred support**. Their professionalism, care, and dedication are key to the work we do.

We are a key partner in the **Synergy East Partnership**, working collaboratively with, **SERICC** (Rape and Sexual Abuse Specialist Service), **CARA** (Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse), **CRCC** (Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre), and **PRCCG** (Peterborough Rape Crisis Care Group).

SOSRC is also a proud accredited member of **Rape Crisis England & Wales** (www.rapecrisis.org.uk), which means our services meet a nationally recognised and independently **quality-assured standard**.





Vision, Mission & Values

Our vision and mission, and core values inform the way we work and behave. They encapsulate our aspirations, delineate our purpose, and uphold the principles that govern our work. These foundational elements not only shape our collective direction but also intricately inform the ethos of our organisation, anchoring us to a shared identity and purposeful journey.

Vision

- A society where women and girls are equal and free from all forms of rape and sexual abuse.

Mission

- To alleviate the trauma and distress of women and girls who have suffered any form of sexual violence.
- To promote education and research in the subject of rape and its effects on the survivor.

Core Values

- **Women only spaces** - these spaces are essential to provide a safe and supportive environment where women can feel understood and heal.
 - **Non-judgemental** - we do not judge survivors on their decisions.
 - **Committed to good practice** - we ensure a quality service working in line with the Rape Crisis England and Wales National Service Standards.
 - **Women-led** - rape and sexual abuse are both a cause and consequence of women's inequality and discrimination.
 - **Free** - we provide free services to enable all survivors the support that they have a right to access.
 - **Believe** - we believe what survivors tell us and will encourage them to use their voice.
 - **Non-directive** - we refrain from exerting influence on survivors' choices or imposing our perspectives on their decisions.
 - **Challenging discrimination** - we will challenge discrimination in any form.
 - **Empowerment** - we aim to empower survivors to make their own decisions and to support them in whatever way they need and want.
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A Word From The Chair

On behalf of the Trustees, I am pleased to present the Chair's Report alongside the Annual Accounts for Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis (SOSRC) for the year April 2024 to March 2025. This has been a year of significant achievement and growth, matched by the challenges of increasing demand and the need to secure sustainable resources to meet the needs of survivors.

SOSRC continues to work as part of **Synergy Essex**, a collaborative partnership with **CARA** (Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse) in North Essex and **SERICC** (South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre).

Together, we ensure that survivors across the whole of Essex receive the same consistent, high-quality specialist support, no matter where they live in the county. This partnership approach enables us to share expertise, pool resources, and provide a seamless offer of advocacy, counselling, and outreach for survivors of sexual violence.

This year, SOSRC also successfully completed the **National Service Standards** process from Rape Crisis England & Wales (RCEW). These standards are a rigorous quality assurance framework that ensures the services we deliver are safe, ethical, accessible, and survivor-centred. Achieving this accreditation confirms that our work meets the highest professional standards, and it reflects the dedication and expertise of our team in delivering trauma-informed, empowering support.

We remain unwavering in our mission to offer a wide spectrum of interventions and therapeutic support to children, young people, and adults affected by sexual violence—regardless of when the incident occurred. Our services are available not only to survivors but also to their families, supporters, and others impacted by sexual violence. Every individual who turns to us is offered compassionate, confidential, and specialist help to heal and rebuild their lives.

SOSRC is the only specialist sexual violence service provider for South East Essex, covering Southend-on-Sea, Castle Point, and Rochford.

Our portfolio of services includes:

- **Therapeutic Support** – One-to-one counselling for adults, young people, and children; pre-trial therapy; play therapy for under-11s; and creative or empowerment groups for young people.
- **Advocacy Services** – Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) for adults and Children's ISVAs (CHISVAs), offering tailored support through the criminal justice process and advocating for survivors' rights.
- **Well-being & Group Work** – Women-only and men-only well-being groups; art, walking, and mindfulness sessions; and creative art journaling workshops.
- **Family Support** – Therapy for parents and carers and specialist workshops to help them support their loved ones.
- **Prevention & Community Outreach** – Education programmes in schools, training for professionals, and targeted outreach delivered by our dedicated team.

Throughout the year, demand for our services has continued to grow. Many survivors presenting to SOSRC have complex needs, including mental health challenges, economic hardship, and family pressures. The increasing severity and diversity of these needs have required our team to adapt and strengthen our offer, ensuring that we continue to respond effectively and holistically. We have expanded provision for young people, increasing the frequency of groups and workshops, and creating safe, peer-led environments where resilience, self-confidence, and a sense of empowerment can flourish.

A Word From The Chair

Thanks to the vital financial support from our funders, we have been able to go beyond therapeutic work to address practical needs that are often essential to recovery. For example, funding from the **National Lottery Community Fund** has enabled us to provide hygiene products, clothing, and food to those facing economic hardship. This whole-person approach recognises that recovery from sexual violence is not only emotional but can be deeply affected by practical and material stability.

We are proud of our achievements against our strategic aims this year:

- **Strengthening partnerships and communication** – Building stronger relationships with local schools, professionals, and community partners, which has improved awareness of our services and streamlined referral pathways.
- **Expanding access and reach** – Using Big Lottery Awards for All funding and the Navigator Project to extend our outreach, particularly to underserved communities and individuals in crisis.
- **Building resilience and visibility** – Amplifying survivor voices through community engagement and online resources, helping to promote public understanding and ensure clear routes to support.

We remain deeply grateful to our funders and commissioners whose generosity underpins our work:

- **The National Lottery Community Fund**
- **ROSCA**
- **Violence and Vulnerability Grant – (PFCC)**
- **The Brook Trust**
- **The Big Lottery – Awards for All –**
- **Children in Need**
- **The National Lottery - Cost of living**
- **Essex Community Foundation**
- **PFCC Community Fund**
- **Ministry of Justice**
- **Essex Police Fire Crime Commissioner**

Looking forward, from April 2025, SOSRC will begin a significant new chapter. We have been commissioned by the PFCC for Essex to deliver specialist sexual violence support services for an initial five-year period, with the option of two further one-year extensions (5 + 1 + 1). Under this contract, we will work in partnership with Synergy Essex to deliver a consistent, countywide package of counselling and ISVA/CHISVA services. This long-term investment secures our ability to meet current needs while enabling us to plan for the future—expanding our reach, deepening community engagement, and continuing to innovate in service delivery.

None of this would be possible without the dedication and passion of our people and partners. I extend heartfelt thanks to our staff, volunteers, and Trustees for their expertise and commitment; to our funders for their trust and invaluable financial support; and to our community partners in schools, local agencies, and the voluntary sector for their collaboration in creating a safer and more supportive environment for survivors. Trustees would like to express their sadness at the loss of Sue Trinder, trustee Sept 2024 - March 2025. Sue was a passionate advocate for women's rights. She will be missed.

As we move into the next stage of our journey, our vision remains clear: to ensure that every survivor—regardless of age, background, or circumstance—has access to the specialist, high-quality support they deserve, today and for years to come.

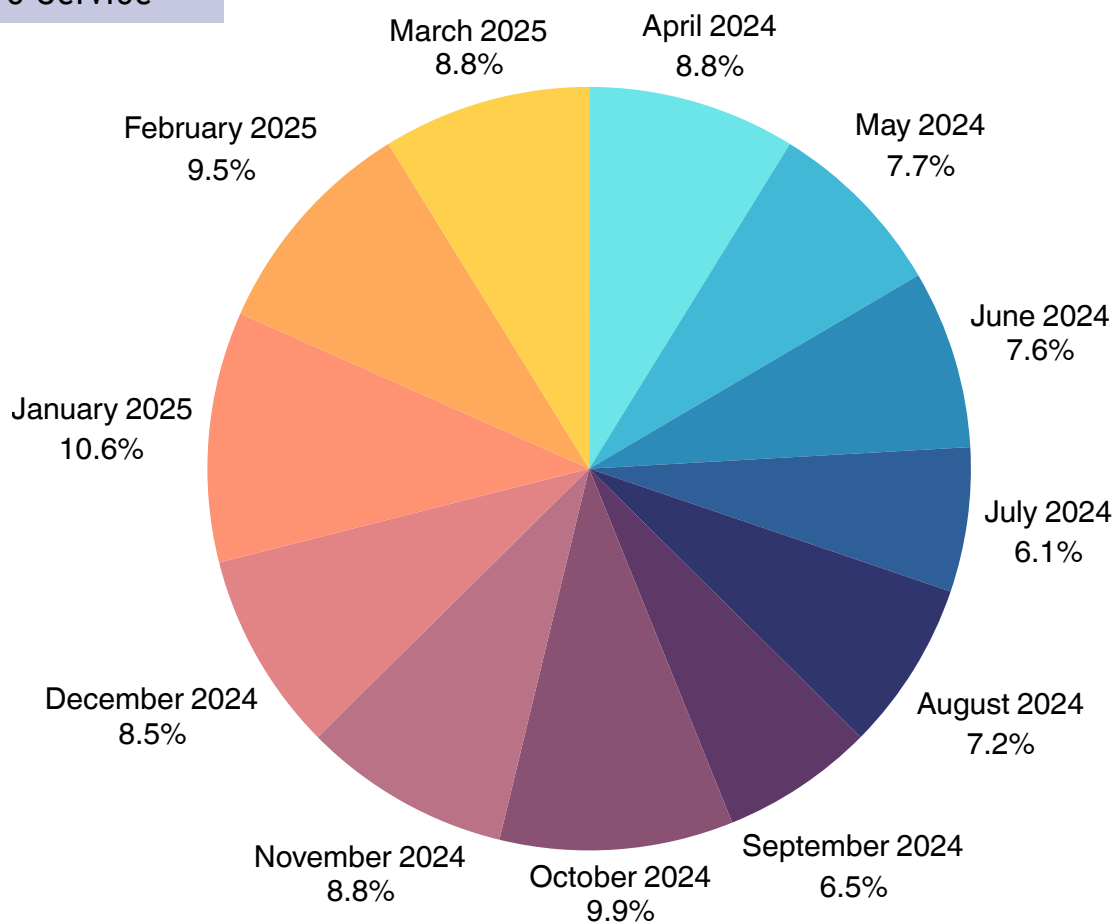


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CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

One Year Review

Referrals To Service

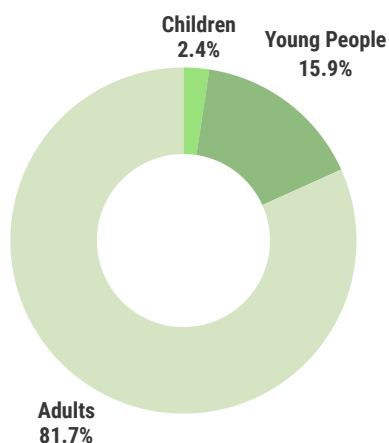


In 2024/25, we reached a total of **914** individuals, this includes **824** women and girls, **87** men and boys, and **3** individuals identifying as other. Breaking down the data further, 'children' refers to those 12 years old and under, 'young people' encompass those aged 13-17 years old, while 'adults' are individuals aged 18 years and above. This information provides valuable insight into our reach and impact over the past year.

One Year Review

Sessions & Contact

We provided 2884 Counselling/Play Therapy sessions over 2024/25



1,298 Survivors accessed Therapeutic services this year

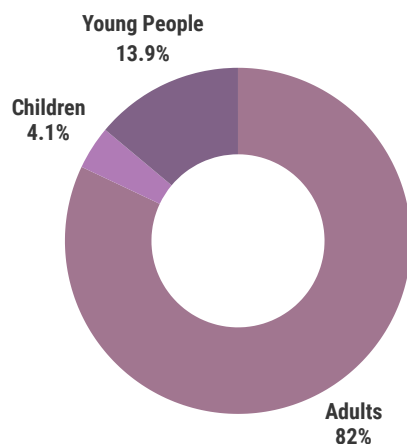


5,820 outgoing contacts including text messages, phone calls, emails and signposting.



1,958 incoming contacts including text messages, phone calls, emails and signposting.

We provided 1380 ISVA/Advocacy sessions over 2024/25



749 Survivors accessed ISVA services this year



6,894 outgoing contacts including text messages, phone calls, emails and signposting.



3,617 incoming contacts including text messages, phone calls, emails and signposting.

Service Delivery Operations

This year has been shaped by service development, improved operational systems, and stronger community engagement.

ISVA Service

- A structured process for allocating Informed Choice sessions was introduced, ensuring clients receive timely information and support.
- A new team member joined, taking on a dual role supporting both ISVA and young people's work.
- Support continues for those on the waiting list, ensuring clients remain informed and connected while investigations progress.

Counselling Service

- Management of the counselling team transitioned to a new lead, with clear communication around changes.
- A move to a sessional counsellor model has increased flexibility and client choice; four counsellors are now working with us.
- Clinical supervision options expanded, with internal supervision now available.
- Counselling provision increased from 12 to up to 20 sessions, offering deeper support, with impact monitored over time.

Engagement and Community Partnerships

- Relationships with local services have grown, including regular outreach at YMCA Southend and Trustlinks.
- This engagement is improving access to our services and broadening awareness of specialist support available.

Groups for Young People

- Girls to the Front (ages 12–18) continued with creative and wellbeing activities, special workshops and trips.
- A new group for young women aged 18–23 launched: RISE (Resilient, Independent, Strong, Empowered), offering a safe space to build skills and confidence.

Schools and Education Work

- Educational sessions were refreshed with updated content reflecting current issues faced by young people.
- Delivered full consent programmes at Shoebury High School for the first time, reaching entire year groups.
- Continued delivery at Southend High School for Boys, covering topics such as consent, pornography, and healthy relationships.

Service Delivery Operations

BOLD Research Project

- Contributed to national research led by the Ministry of Justice, mapping survivor pathways through our services.
- Facilitated survivor involvement by supporting participants throughout the research process in a trauma-informed way.

Feedback

- Young people reported improved confidence, connection, and wellbeing from attending the girls' groups.
- Parents shared that the groups have been life-changing for their children.
- Schools valued the external expertise and the positive engagement with students

Case Studies

Schools Work – Consent Education Case Study

During a school session on consent and healthy relationships, a facilitator delivered a workshop focused on the legal definition of consent, mutual agreement, coercion, and the right to withdraw consent. The session used scenario-based learning and myth-busting activities to encourage open discussion in a safe environment. After the workshop, a student approached the facilitator to disclose an experience of sexual harm, explaining that the session helped them realise what had happened was not okay and gave them the confidence to speak up. Safeguarding actions were implemented. The facilitator reflected that the impact of these sessions comes not only from the information shared, but from creating a safe, empathetic space where young people feel able to seek support.

Girls Group / Wrap-Around Support Case Study

E, who experienced sexual violence in childhood, has accessed multiple SOSRC services over several years, including the Girls to the Front group, ISVA support, and counselling. She has been an active and valued member of the group, contributing to its development and supporting newer members. Alongside group involvement, E received ISVA support throughout a lengthy and difficult criminal justice process and later submitted a formal complaint to the CPS, reflecting her increased confidence and agency. Her contribution to advocacy, fundraising, and local activism highlights her personal growth. E is now preparing to study politics at Cambridge University. Her journey demonstrates the importance of holistic, continuous support in helping survivors build resilience, confidence, and a sense of empowerment.

Service Delivery ISVA Advocacy

During 2024, the ISVA service focused on strengthening community engagement, improving multi-agency working, and introducing a range of operational improvements to ensure survivors of sexual violence could access clear, timely and specialist support while navigating the criminal justice system.

A key area of activity this year was public engagement. The ISVA team worked closely with the Southend Community Safety Partnership during the international 16 Days of Action campaign (25 November–10 December), raising awareness of sexual violence and signposting members of the public to available support. ISVAs attended community-facing events at high-footfall locations including Tesco, The Forum and Asda. These events enabled the team to speak directly with local residents, share resources, and increase visibility of SOSRC's specialist services.

Throughout the year, the team also maintained a strong collaborative relationship with Essex Police. ISVAs took part in outreach activity at Southend Victoria Train Station and Victoria Shopping Centre, enabling members of the public to ask questions informally and access support information without needing to make a referral. These engagement opportunities contributed to greater awareness of survivors' rights and the emotional and practical advocacy that ISVAs provide.

One of the most significant developments in 2024 was the launch of the ISVA co-location pilot with Essex Police. This arrangement enabled an ISVA to be based at the police station once a month, creating a direct link between the specialist support service and investigating officers. Co-location has helped improve communication, reduce delays in information sharing and create a more supportive experience for survivors as they progress through the criminal justice system. Feedback from police officers and senior leadership has been highly positive, and the pilot is now an ongoing, established process.

Alongside partnership development, the service introduced several operational improvements to respond to increasing demand and significant national court delays. These included:

- Faster allocation of Informed Choice cases within 2–4 weeks, ensuring individuals seeking legal or reporting advice receive support quickly.
- Timely case closure within two weeks of criminal justice or safeguarding processes ending, improving case flow and enabling quicker allocation for new referrals.
- Ad-hoc support for clients on the waiting list, allowing survivors awaiting allocation to speak directly with an ISVA for advice relating to the criminal justice system.
- Deferred support for long-term court cases, where support is temporarily reduced and then re-established closer to trial dates, with clients able to contact their ISVA at any point if their needs change.

These improvements have enabled the ISVA team to balance increasing caseloads while maintaining consistent, trauma-informed support.

Service Delivery ISVA Advocacy

The ISVA service also delivered presentations to a range of organisations, including Southend Against Modern Day Slavery and other support agencies. These sessions increased professional understanding of the ISVA role and strengthened referral pathways. By developing these relationships, SOSRC is helping ensure that survivors are identified early and connected to specialist support as quickly as possible.

Client feedback

“Having an ISVA changed my experience of legal proceedings from hopelessness and confusion to rightful anger and a feeling of empowerment. When information was unclear or constantly changing, my ISVA explained what was happening and stood by me. I wouldn’t have been able to go through with it without SOSRC.”

“Having someone in the room who was on my side and could explain the process – especially during cross-examination – made all the difference.”

Case Studies

Case Study 1 – Adult ISVA Support

A 34-year-old woman was referred to SOSRC during a police investigation after disclosing rape by a friend in 2021. She presented with significant trauma symptoms, including anxiety, PTSD-related flashbacks, panic attacks, and feelings of shame, isolation and low confidence. Throughout the criminal justice process, her ISVA provided consistent emotional and practical support, acting as her single point of contact and guiding her through complex and confusing procedures. When the Crown Prosecution Service initially decided not to proceed, the ISVA supported her to challenge the decision through the Victim’s Right to Review process, drafting the submission on her behalf and managing all communication. The review was successful and charges were authorised, which the client described as validating and empowering. Her case has now been deferred until closer to trial, allowing her to focus on recovery before ISVA support resumes three months before court to prepare her fully. She reports feeling heard, supported and in control, with the ISVA’s involvement reducing stress and helping her navigate an emotionally overwhelming process.

Case Study 2 – Child ISVA Support

An 11-year-old girl was referred to the ISVA service after a police investigation involving a former neighbour and godfather, who was later charged with offences relating to indecent images. Initially, the client’s mother felt anxious and unsure about engaging with support; however, once reassured that sessions could be parent-led, engagement improved. While the client has not wished to access direct emotional support, she remains socially active and settled in school. The ISVA has provided consistent guidance to both mother and child, including a face-to-face session to build trust, arranging a pre-trial visit to familiarise the child with the court environment, and supporting them through Section 28 evidence recording. Both the client and her mother have shown increased confidence and understanding of the legal process, valuing the flexible, sensitive support offered.

Service Delivery Counselling

Service Delivery

- Networking - The counselling team have been involved in a wellbeing fair hosted by Salvation Army, meeting other charities including: Trust Links, Mind, HAARP, Open Road, Brooke and many more, linking in and sharing what we do here at SOSRC.
- Collaborative working - Within the last year, the counselling team have worked more effectively with mental health services with the aim in helping our clients get the correct support in place. The counselling team are working from a frame of support, a wraparound service, helping and assisting clients in accessing ongoing mental health services during and after support from SOSRC.
- Conference – part of the counselling team attended the conference with work colleagues, this was based in Leeds, in October 2024. This was a great opportunity to learn and hear what other partnerships do within their counselling service. This gave us some a great insight into the high level of support and work that we do, whilst also keeping our minds busy with new thoughts and ideas.

Service Improvements Implemented and Key Developments

- Sessional/ Student Counsellors – we have increased our intake of sessional counsellors and currently have 4 working within the SOSRC team. We have implemented a clear structure on our recruitment and induction process, looking at the services within SOSRC and an overview of different partnerships. Increasing our sessional counsellors helps with keeping up, and hopefully eventually reducing, the client's waiting list and enabling our clients to access counselling sooner. We are in the process of looking to recruit a student counsellor with the aim to help support them in their training and progress within the work we do. The student will work to a clear structure and will have daily one to one support from our supervisor.
- Waiting / Priority List – As the year has progressed we have noticed an increase in the level of high risk, or potential high risk clients. The counselling team are working alongside the managers and assessment team to help implement changes to support these clients, as well as exploring ways to manage the issues moving forward.
- Data – within the last 12 months, the collection of counselling data was introduced weekly, to support monitoring of sessions and ensuring allocation were up to date. This supports the therapists and helps to gain a clear and accurate view of the work the counsellors do on a day to day basis, which is a valuable reflection for the counsellors as it helps them to see the number of sessions attended, cancelled or missed. This valuable reflection enables counsellors to review their cases and helps to keep in line with our boundaries.
- Art Group - Art group was introduced, enabling clients on the waiting list, currently accessing service, or those who had recently left service, to meet on a weekly basis, on a Wednesday morning, to join a group in a safe and confidential environment. The aim of the 90 minute sessions were to offer a creative relaxed pace, where clients could come together and socialise whilst engaging in various art/craft projects. The sessions were led by 2 members the counselling team and clients were free to attend as often as they wanted to.

Service Delivery Counselling

Summary of Counselling Client Feedback

Clients reported feeling safe, understood and supported throughout their counselling sessions. They described the space as non-judgemental, compassionate and somewhere they could explore difficult emotions honestly. Several noted that counselling helped them process trauma, reduce stress and gain clarity and perspective. One client shared that, for the first time, they actually enjoyed a counselling session and left feeling lighter. Others expressed that encouragement to open up without pressure or judgement helped them feel stronger and more able to support those around them.

Parents also valued the support offered to their children, expressing gratitude for the counsellor's care, consistency and communication. One parent reflected that the counsellor had become an important part of their child's support network. Another client described the counselling as life-changing, saying they would not have coped without the therapist's guidance and kindness.

Case Studies

Case Study 1 – Adult Counselling Client

A 28-year-old woman accessed counselling after experiencing rape and coercive control from her ex-partner, who was also a work colleague. She presented with panic attacks, flashbacks, nightmares, difficulties in relationships and social situations, and intense anger linked to how her workplace handled her disclosure.

During counselling, she explored her emotional responses and the triggers linked to panic attacks. Sessions focused on grounding techniques, psychoeducation, understanding the physical responses to trauma, and building coping strategies. Over time, she became more confident in identifying her needs and making decisions that prioritised her wellbeing. By week 13, she had secured a relocation through work, found new accommodation, and reported feeling empowered, in control and proud of the progress she'd made. She closed counselling feeling hopeful and ready to move forward.

Case Study 2 – Adult Counselling Client (Complex Trauma)

A 63-year-old woman was referred after disclosing childhood sexual abuse by her father, domestic abuse in adulthood, recent family conflict, and suicidal thoughts. She arrived feeling hopeless, isolated, traumatised and with no sense of safety. In early sessions, she simply needed to speak freely and be believed—something she stated had never happened in her life.

Through trauma-informed counselling, she explored her history at her own pace, began processing grief for her daughter, and reconnected with suppressed emotions. Over time, she experienced noticeable emotional and physical transformation—taking pride in her appearance, re-engaging with hobbies such as crafting and gardening, attending an art group, and rebuilding relationships with family members. She gradually reframed her trauma, placing responsibility on the perpetrator rather than on herself.

By the end of therapy, she felt connected, hopeful and able to imagine her future. She established a social network, rediscovered joy, and described feeling safe, believed and heard for the first time in 62 years.

Trustee Report

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the ended **31 March 2025**. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK And Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

- *Policies and objectives*

The charity's principle objectives are:

1. To relieve the sickness and distress of women and girls who have suffered any form of sexual violence.
2. To promote education and research in the subject of rape and its affects on the victim, whether physical, medical, psychological or social and to train women as counsellors to be able to cope with the problems of rape victims by provision of medical, legal and emotional counselling.

There has been no change to these during the year.

Public Benefit: In accordance with Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006, the trustees confirm that they have met their obligation to consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. All activities undertaken by SOSRC directly further our charitable purposes and aim to serve the broader public. This is further elaborated upon in our Annual Report, which provides a comprehensive overview of the charity's achievements.

- *Activities undertaken to achieve objectives*

Introduction to Services and Philosophy: At SOS Rape Crisis (SOSRC), we are deeply committed to offering a holistic, feminist-centred approach to supporting survivors of sexual violence. Our services are inclusive, ensuring that individuals of all genders and ages receive the support they need. We take pride in delivering a wide range of wraparound services that cater not only to survivors but also to their families, friends, and professionals in the field.

Comprehensive ISVA and Advocacy Services: Our Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) and Advocacy services provide vital, hands-on support to survivors. These services are tailored to offer both practical and emotional assistance, with a particular focus on helping survivors navigate the complexities of the Criminal Justice System (CJS). We understand that the legal processes surrounding sexual violence cases can be daunting and overwhelming. Therefore, our ISVAs guide survivors through each step of their journey, ensuring they are well-informed, supported, and empowered. This not only includes accompaniment to court hearings but also practical advice on legal rights, reporting to the police, accessing compensation, and safeguarding.

Trustee Report

Dedicated Support for Children and Young People: Our commitment to supporting children and young people is exemplified by our specialised Young Persons Service, which has been made possible through grants from BBC Children in Need (Ended in November 2023) and The National Lottery Community Fund. Designed for individuals aged 4-17, this service offers a variety of therapeutic and educational interventions aimed at empowering younger survivors. Key features of this service include workshops, creative activities, play therapy, and talking therapy, all of which are designed to address the unique needs of younger clients in a safe and supportive environment. Our objective is not only to help these young people heal but also to provide them with tools and strategies to thrive beyond their traumatic experiences.

Educational Initiatives for Preventing Sexual Violence: In alignment with our goal to combat and reduce the prevalence of sexual violence, SOSRC places a strong emphasis on education. Our outreach work in secondary schools includes delivering lessons on vital topics such as consent, toxic masculinity, the harms of pornography, and the importance of active bystander intervention. These educational initiatives are designed not only to inform but to spark critical conversations about sexual violence, encouraging young people to challenge harmful behaviours and cultural norms. By providing this education, we aim to empower young people to seek help when needed and foster a future generation that is less tolerant of behaviours contributing to sexual violence against women and girls.

Therapeutic Services for All Ages: SOSRC continues to offer specialist therapy services for adult survivors and their families. We continue to be flexible by providing face to face, online and telephone support options for those who need them. Our therapeutic offerings include one-on-one counselling, group work, wellbeing groups and specialist therapeutic interventions. These services are designed to help individuals process their trauma, regain a sense of control, and ultimately, heal. For many of our clients, therapy has been a lifeline that allows them to reconnect with their sense of self, build healthier relationships, and overcome the long-term effects of sexual violence.

Achievements and performance

- *Main achievements of the Charity*

2024-2025 Charitable Impact and Reach: Over the last financial year, SOSRC provided critical services to a total of 952 individuals. This includes 43 children under the age of 12, 142 young people between the ages of 13 and 17, and 768 adults. The demographic breakdown of our client base reflects 860 women, 89 men, and 3 individuals who identify as transgender/other. The volume of new referrals has been on par for the year before, with 556 new cases recorded during the year. These figures underscore the growing demand for our services and our continued commitment to meeting the needs of a diverse population of survivors.

Trustee Report

- *Review of activities*

Total income for the year was **£722,567 (2024: £697,760)** and the total expenditure was **£645,714 (2024: £608,375)** resulting in a surplus of **£76,853 (2024: £89,385)**. At the period end the charity held cash at the bank of **£819,352 (2024: £750,223)** and has reserves of **£851,992 (2024: £775,139)**. **£64,513 (2024: £41,179)** of which are restricted creating **£787,479 (2024: £733,960)** of unrestricted reserves.

- *Investment policy and performance*

Investment Policy and Objectives: Our trustees have the authority to manage and invest the charity's funds prudently, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to sustain our mission. At present, the general reserve funds are held in a dedicated savings account, separate from our operational accounts with CAF Bank, ensuring that these reserves are available when needed while still providing a modest return.

Financial review

- *Going concern*

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

- *Reserves policy*

Financial Overview and Reserves Policy: SOSRC adheres to the guidelines set by the Charity Commission for England and Wales by maintaining unrestricted reserves equivalent to approximately 9 months of budgeted expenditure. This reserve policy serves as a safety net, enabling the charity to cover unforeseen costs such as redundancy, maternity leave, long-term sickness, and essential building maintenance. The reserve also guarantees that, in the event of operational cessation, we can continue providing services for up to six months.

- *Principal risks and uncertainties*

Risk Management: Risk management is a priority at SOSRC, and the trustees are proactive in identifying and mitigating potential threats to the charity. This includes conducting an annual risk assessment and establishing procedures to manage and reduce identified risks. The systems in place aim to safeguard the charity from fraud, financial mismanagement, and operational disruptions, ensuring that any risks that do materialise have minimal impact on our services.

Trustee Report

- *Principal funding - Grants, Funds and Income (2024/25)*

Brook Trust:

Brook Trust awarded SOSRC £32,000 to fund specialist counselling for children and young people, providing interventions to support recovery from all forms of sexual violence.

Synergy Partnership Funding:

Through funding from the Fire, Police and Crime Commissioner (FPCC) and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), we have been able to sustain our ISVA service alongside other core functions of the charity. Our core funding amounted to £200,700.00, excluding additional MOJ allocations. We also received a further £235,304.00 through several funding streams, including the Rape Support Fund, Domestic ISVA Fund, Male Support Fund, and Engagement ISVA Fund.

The Lottery – Navigator Project:

With support from The National Lottery Community Fund, the Synergy Essex partnership delivers the Navigator Project. This service provides survivors and professionals with a single point of contact through a dedicated helpline. Our trained Navigators listen, outline the local support available, and guide people to the right service quickly and effectively. This funding has enabled more people across Essex to access timely support and clear information when they need it most. We received £42,374.00 from the Lottery to support this project.

Essex County Council – Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse Fund:

We received £89,040.00 in commissioned funding through this programme. The funding was used to increase staff capacity, enabling us to support survivors living in secure accommodation who have experienced both domestic abuse and sexual violence. It also allowed us to extend our reach by providing additional support within our own service areas, as well as delivering services on behalf of SERICC in their designated areas. This collaborative approach has ensured that survivors across multiple regions receive both the emotional and practical support they need. The fund began in August 2023 and will run until March 2025.

The National Lottery – Awards for All Grant:

Our Girls to the Front (GTTF) group received £20,000 through this grant, supporting essential living costs, activity resources, and food. The funding is split across two years, with £10,000 allocated for 2024–25 and the remaining £10,000 for 2025–26.

Trustee Report

The National Lottery – Reaching Communities Grant:

From July 2024, SOSRC was awarded a three-year grant from The National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund, totalling £307,758.00 (£102,586 per year). This funding has enabled us to employ three full-time equivalent counsellors, providing specialist sexual violence counselling for women and girls. In addition, 0.5 FTE of this grant supports a dedicated counsellor focused on specialist engagement work within our local communities across Southend, Castle Point, and Rochford.

ROSCA

We received £1,100 from ROSCA, which was used to purchase much-needed new desks for our office. These desks are ergonomically designed to better support staff, particularly those with additional physical needs, ensuring a safer and more comfortable working environment.

Violence and Vulnerability Fund

SOSRC received £26,589.00 from the Violence and Vulnerability Fund. This funding was dedicated to providing specialist counselling for children and young people, helping them to process their experiences, build resilience, and make positive life choices for the future.

Structure, governance and management

- *Constitution*

SOS Rape Crisis is a registered charity, number 1194207, and is constituted under a CIO Association.

The governance of SOSRC is overseen by a dedicated Board of Trustees, whose role is to ensure the charity's operations align with best practices and high standards, particularly those set by Rape Crisis England and Wales (RCEW) National Service Standards. Throughout the year, the Board undertakes regular reviews of existing policies and adopts new ones as necessary to maintain the charity's compliance and effectiveness.

SOSRC is a member of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), which allows our trustees access to ongoing training and professional development. This ensures that our leadership is well-equipped to tackle contemporary challenges facing the charity sector.

- *Methods of appointment or election of Trustees*

As set out in the constitution the Chair of Trustees is nominated by her fellow trustees. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity. The trustees have the power to appoint additional trustees by majority vote and the training of new trustees becomes the responsibility of existing trustees upon appointment. In compliance with Rape Crisis England and Wales Membership criteria all honorary roles within the Trustees Board and Senior Management position within the charity are held by women.

Trustee Report

Structure, governance and management (continued)

- **Organisational structure and decision-making policies**

Board of Trustees and Key Staff: The following individuals served as trustees during the financial year:

- Chair: Ms. Ros Dunhill
- Vice Chair: Ms. Alison Smith MBE
- Secretary: Ms. Rachelle Stone
- Treasurer: Ms. Laura Martin
- Trustee: Ms. Maggi Howell MBE
- Trustee: Ms. Lesley Richardson
- Trustee: Ms. Mali Dunkley
- Trustee: Ms. Caroline Jennings
- Trustee: Ms. Emma King
- Trustee: Ms. Sue Trinder (Deceased)

The Chair is nominated by her fellow trustees, and all trustees serve without a beneficial interest in the charity. All honorary roles within the Board, as well as senior management positions within the charity, are held by women, in compliance with Rape Crisis England and Wales membership criteria.

Key Staff (2024/25)

- CEO: Ms. Cathryn Cardoza
- Operations Manager: Ms. Ellie McGregor
- ISVA and Advocacy Manager: Ms. Anne-Marie Betts
- Clinical Supervisor: Ms. Liz Lockwood
- Counselling Manager: Ms. Caroline Kosta (Previous surname Parry)
- Information Lead: Ms. Becki Scott
- CH/ISVA: Ms. Sam Anderson
- CH/ISVA: Ms. Cat Bentley
- CH/ISVA & YP Worker: Ms. Louise Murphy
- Sexual Violence Counsellor: Ms. Sarah Lowndes-King (sessional)
- Sexual Violence Counsellor: Ms. Ariana Pedzikowska
- Sexual Violence Counsellor: Ms. Sarah Goodwin (sessional)
- Sexual Violence Counsellor: Ms. Laura Otrofanowei (sessional)
- Sexual Violence Counsellor: Ms. Jane Jolly (sessional)
- Sexual Violence Counsellor: Ms. Denise Gleed (sessional)
- Sexual Violence Counsellor: Ms. Claire Anderson (sessional - departure Dec 2024)
- Sexual Violence Counsellor: Ms. Jo Sargent (sessional - departure July 2024)
- First Contact Navigator: Ms. Lauren Ashton (departure Jan 2025)
- Young Person Engagement Worker: Ms. Kelly Farrell

Trustee Report

Plans for future periods

Future Developments: Looking ahead, the Board of Trustees remains committed to seeking sustainable income streams that will enable the charity to continue delivering essential services. While we have secured several key grants, we recognise the importance of diversifying our funding sources to ensure long-term stability and resilience.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the CIO Association. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:



LAURA MARTIN

TRUSTEE TREASURER

Financial Statement

SOS RAPE CRISIS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	161,288	560,071	721,359	693,480
Charitable activities	4	-	-	-	2,520
Investments	5	-	2,021	2,021	1,760
Total income		161,288	562,092	723,380	697,760
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	136,854	510,007	646,861	608,375
Total expenditure		136,854	510,007	646,861	608,375
Net income		24,434	52,085	76,519	89,385
Transfers between funds	15	(1,100)	1,100	-	-
Net movement in funds		23,334	53,185	76,519	89,385
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		41,179	733,960	775,139	685,754
Net movement in funds		23,334	53,185	76,519	89,385
Total funds carried forward		64,513	787,145	851,658	775,139

Contact Us



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Clarence House, Southend on Sea

SOS Rape Crisis extends its heartfelt gratitude to our funders, stakeholders, and partners. Your unwavering support and collaboration have been instrumental in shaping SOS Rape Crisis into an organisation dedicated to empowering survivors and driving meaningful change.

The generosity and belief in our mission shown by our funders have enabled us to deliver vital programmes and services, ensuring that survivors receive the care and support they need. Your investment has directly contributed to the strength, resilience, and sustainability of our organisation.

To our stakeholders, your guidance, partnership, and shared commitment to our vision have been invaluable. Your insight and collaboration continue to shape our strategies, ensuring that our work remains responsive to the needs of survivors and the wider community.

Finally, to the survivors who have placed their trust in us, your courage and resilience inspire every aspect of our work. It is your voices and experiences that drive us forward, reminding us of the importance of compassion, dedication, and excellence in everything we do at Southend on Sea Rape Crisis.

THANK YOU