



# Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid

## Annual Report

APRIL 2021 - MARCH 2022



## Chair's Report

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2021-2022. It was a year of change at Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid.

The provision of direct support to women, children and young people was resurrected during the year whilst ensuring the safety of staff and service users to mitigate contraction of the coronavirus. Service provision returned to face-to-face support and staff returned to working in the refuge, drop-in centre, and outreach services.

The internal staff structure changed from a collective style of management to a hierarchal structure. The board members and staff team are pleased with the smooth implementation of the new management structure which is working well. Longstanding board members left, and we welcomed new board members.

The head of women's services at Glasgow City Council retired. Grateful thanks are extended to Pat Coltart and Jacqueline Norval, Principal Officer, Commissioning at Glasgow City Council who provided unstinting support to the board during the change management process. We wish Pat happiness in her retirement from Glasgow City Council. Pat, without a doubt will be missed by all the women's groups operating within the Glasgow violence against women sector, she provided formidable support and guidance.

Mark Ewing of T C Young also retired. Mark provided the organisation with legal advice since 2012 when we changed our legal status from an unincorporated association to a company limited by guarantee. He too will be missed by us.

## Statistics

In total there were 231 new referrals for women seeking our help, support, and protection. These referrals involved women who had not previously received a service.

There were 49 refuge requests: 17 women were admitted.

A substantial part of our workload involves supporting women who have no recourse to public funds 43 women in total were referred to us who had no recourse to public funds

- 24 women were spousal visa holders
- 7 women were seeking asylum
- 6 women had a visitor visa
- 5 women were dependent of a student visa holder
- 1 woman had a work permit visa

I would like to acknowledge the resilience of the staff team. In the face of numerous challenges brought by the coronavirus pandemic as well as external factors, they positively responded to ensure robust service provision for the vulnerable women, children and young people requiring support.

I hope that you enjoy reading the annual report,

*Brij Gandhi*

## Refuge

17 women admitted to refuge during the year.

11 Women admitted to the refuge had entered the UK on a Spouse Visa who had no recourse to public funds. We supported the women to apply for leave outside the rules via the Destitution Domestic Violence Concession to allow them to access public funds: housing and welfare benefits. These women were referred to an immigration solicitor to allow them to apply for indefinite leave to remain as a victim of domestic abuse.

All the women received intensive person-centred support from their key worker who advocates on their behalf.

All support workers are bilingual and assist the women with legal matters and when having to attend court for civil or criminal matters as well as the children's reporter if required.

We assist women to apply for welfare benefits and access Scottish social security benefits such as the Scottish Child Payment, Best Foods, Best Start Grants if eligible. Recently women and families have been awarded Winter heating payments and have access to debt advice to assist them with financial management and money worries.

All the flats in refuge are painted frequently and have had new sofas and blinds purchased.

A handrail was installed in the stairwell to improve and enhance safety for the residents and staff.

To ensure women's safety the landing and entrance CCTV cameras are monitored regularly.

Fire safety procedures are important for the health and safety of the staff and service users. The fire doors were modernised and replaced.

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*Journey is a keyword for me. When I felt trapped in a cycle with nowhere and no one to turn to Hemat Gryffe offered me that lifeline. That opportunity to begin my journey.”*

*“Throughout my time at the refuge the ladies worked hard to support and empower me. To pick me back up and help me to improve my inner strength”*

*“I am forever grateful for the work they do and without the Hemat Gryffe refuge I would still be stuck in the same cycle - if not dead by now.”*

Quotes from Various Service Users

## Follow On

During the year 9 women admitted to the refuge moved to permanent accommodation and received follow on support.

During lockdown women received practical support to address various issues including support with their mental health and wellbeing. Risk Assessments were conducted to enable the follow-on worker to assist the women and attend with her when viewing a permanent tenancy. All government guidelines were followed when the women viewed the property, signed the lease agreement, and moved into the tenancy to ensure the safety of women and the follow-on worker. As well as this, we ensured the women had information from the Scottish Government and updated this as and when it changed.

Telephone support continued and women were communicating with the follow on worker using text and WhatsApp messages.

There was a delay delivering goods provided by the Scottish Welfare Fund. With the assistance of emergency grant funding, we were able to provide women with white goods.

### Family Support Fund

Women with children who moved into permanent accommodation were given One 4 All vouchers in addition to items issued via the Scottish Welfare fund.

### Making a House a Home Project funded by Glasgow City Council

Women with children moving into temporary or permanent accommodation accessed this fund to provide goods and furniture not available from the Scottish Welfare Fund. The purpose of the fund is to help women settle into their homes comfortably and to alleviate any immediate hardship.



## The Women's Group

A variety of workshops took place online using Zoom with the women. In the last financial year between 8 and 14 women attend the group.

When deciding on activities priority was given to workshops dealing with mental and physical health as a significant number of women were struggling due to being isolated during COVID-19 and because of restrictions.

The women are comfortable using Zoom for the online classes and workshops. Since sessions started using zoom the number of women participating has gradually increased.

## Types of Activities

### **Sewing Classes**

The sewing class ran for 8 weeks which the women thoroughly enjoyed. In these sessions the learned how to cut material and to make Tote bags, toiletry bags, face masks, hair scrunchies and cushion covers.

Emergency funding allowed us to provide women with a sewing machine, materials, and a sewing kit. The women learned a new skill in the comfort of their own home. They have fed back to us that the sewing machine has allowed them to make alterations to their own clothes and their children's.

### **WSREC**

A 6-week upcycling sewing project took place in partnership with WSREC. The women were taught how to cut, measure, reuse and recycle fabric. The benefits of these sessions were to show the women how to save money, how to be creative, save money and learn a new skill.

### **Career Development**

A session was arranged with Volunteer Glasgow and Skills Development Scotland. The women learned how to become a volunteer. The adviser for Volunteer Glasgow explained how volunteering can help in future job applications and curriculum vitae (CV).

The adviser for Skills Development Scotland explained what employers look for in a CV and covering letter and gave tips and suggestions for interviews. The women found both these sessions useful and informative. Education and finding a job is what the women aim for to allow them to become independent financially and free from control.

### **Self-Development**

A 5-week session centred around self-development. Topics covered were goal setting, self-care, skill sharing, public speaking, and entrepreneurship.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

The weekly sessions varied.

Three sessions were held within six months focusing on women's health and wellbeing. These sessions were provided by the NHS and included breast cancer awareness, cancer screening awareness and Hepatitis awareness. The women obtained a vast amount of information and knowledge which could be passed onto their friends and relatives.

#### **Voiceover**

One of the services users volunteered to do a voiceover in Punjabi for The Northeast Health Improvement Team/Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership.

Videos are on YouTube and have covered the following topics Bowel Cancer Screening, Breast Cancer Screening, Cervical Cancer Screening and HPV Screening in Punjabi. Link is below  
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmuRxztsSONxRcv3Kr3NjQ6YBYBxX17oS>

#### **Focus Group on Gaslighting**

The topic of Gas Lighting was covered over a couple of weeks. Discussion took place around the definition of Gas Lighting, what are the signs of someone experiencing gas lighting and what support was out there for victims.

The second week was based on women's experiences with several women identifying they had been a victim of gas lighting. The women learned that there was a name for such behaviour and had not realised this until participating in the session.

#### **Yoga**

The women participated in a session of yoga leaving them feeling relaxed mentally and physically. Information was provided outlining different yoga positions enabling the women to practice in their own time at home.

#### **Audio**

Over 10 weeks, the women with staff worked to create an audio about domestic abuse and honour-based violence. The women considered stories used in the media which provided a context for the women to speak about their own lived experiences, their message to society and a positive message that they wanted to share with individuals in Scottish society.

The woman planned the audio layout, chose the background music and their own words. Ultimately, they wanted to send a message they felt was powerful to victim-survivors. The audio will be used on HGWA website and included in future training materials.

“

*“It's amazing how you organise a variety of workshops for the women's group. We cover a wide range of activities. Each activity brings its own unique benefits and each week I feel I always leave with learning a new skill or learning something new from the women who take part. I find it easier to participate over zoom in the comfort of my own home”*

Feedback from Women's Group Member

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*“I’m very grateful to you for providing me fridge freezer and washing machine. Both of them are of great quality and durability. You helping me in this vulnerable time means a lot. I appreciate the support of the whole team of Hemat Gryffe for being there once again when I needed them”*

Feedback from Women’s Group Member



## Crisis Outreach Service

Staff have returned to work at the drop-in centre from February 2022. As the COVID restrictions have eased, staff are meeting women at the drop-in centre on appointment basis in line with the current Government guidance.

- 60 women accessed the outreach service the service between April 2021 – March 2022.
- 16 women who entered the UK on a spouse visa having No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) were supported by us to access the Destitute Domestic Violence concession.
- 6 women had EU pre settled status or EU Settlement Scheme Family Permit.
- 25 women in crisis and needing access to safe accommodation were supported to access temporary accommodation.
- All referrals are being uploaded onto the Oasis Cloud Based Management system.

Women receive support for safety planning, benefits, housing issues, legal issues, immigration issues and child contact and custody issues.

We work with women to promote financial inclusion by applying for benefits, accessing crisis grants, providing crisis vouchers, and providing workshops on online banking/budgeting.

We provide intense bilingual, culturally sensitive support and counselling to women enabling them to identify and recognise the trauma they have experienced because of domestic abuse.

We meet with women face to face to provide support or at place of safety. The women also receive telephone support and mobile telephone support using text messaging and WhatsApp. We also use virtual platforms such as zoom or video calling and face to face appointments at the drop-in centre.

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*“Words can never express my thanks for your support,  
patience, encouragement, care and kindness.  
Thank you so much.”*

Feedback from Service User



## Aisha's Story

Aisha was referred to the outreach service by social work services as she disclosed domestic abuse from her first husband and years of extended family abuse at the hands of her in laws. She experienced physical, emotional, and verbal abuse. She felt that she was never good enough for her mother-in-law and was constantly berated and looked down upon by her.

She left for the safety of her child. Her husband told her that he planned to kidnap and sell their child. She received no support from her own family, her parents demanded that she return to her husband's family home, conform to cultural expectations and she was regarded as having brought shame to the family name for leaving. Her family did not support her, they told her that they would rather see her dead and would disown her if she did not return to her husband.

She remarried hoping to make a new life for herself and her child and was subsequently abused by her second husband from the beginning of married life. He was physically, emotionally, and verbally abusive and would sexually assault her in the presence of her child. She had no one to turn to and no longer could expose her child to this traumatic environment she contacted the police.

She received bilingual culturally sensitive emotional support, to recognise and address the abuse and trauma she had experienced over the years. With support from Hemat Gryffe, she was able to access temporary accommodation. Staff liaised with social work to ensure she received subsistence and support until she was in receipt of benefits. She received legal advice in relation to her immigration status. With intense support from her key worker, she was able to apply for benefits, manage her bills and learned about the Glasgow transport system to enable her to get out and about using public transport. This allowed her to integrate into the community and gave her a sense of empowerment and independence.

She has been participating in our women's group and research workshops where she was given a platform to share her story. Since joining the women's group, it has reduced her isolation significantly as she has developed friendships. She has improved her English skills, and this has also increased her self-confidence.

She has joined a volunteering programme is looking forward to joining college soon. She wants to use her voice and story to inspire and help other women. She is slowly moving towards becoming independent.

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*“From day one Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid have supported me. I was unable to make informed decisions. I felt much more positive after receiving support from Women's Aid and it felt as if I was part of a family. They have helped me gain strength. I have always felt it was so easy to speak to them. I consider myself very lucky to have this support. Thank you, you have helped me at every moment.”*

Feedback from Aisha

## Development Work

We work with statutory and voluntary organisations to facilitate and raise awareness of the impact of gender-based abuse on women from the minority ethnic community.

Our training and awareness raising sessions include cultural barriers, no recourse to public funds, forced marriage, general service provision, honour-based abuse, specific to children and young people from the Asian and BME communities. We have provided training to a range of organisations during the year including Talk Now Counselling Services, Bridgeton Citizen Advice Bureau, and Shettleston Health Centre.

We are members of the Domestic Abuse Operational Group Forum, the national violence against women network forum.

The Scottish Government have been organising "deep dives" events to discuss MARACs. We had the opportunity to feed into this process as SWA had organised an event to support groups to come together to collate information gathered from this event and feed it back to the Scottish Government.

Attended a roundtable discussion to consider the potential impact of the UK Nationality & Borders Bill on women and children affected by GBV.

We have facilitated awareness raising sessions with doctors' surgeries, health visitors and midwives. We participated in SafeLives Focus Groups involving Honour Based Violence, forced marriage cases and best practice at MARAC.

A staff member is an appointed Scottish Commissioner on forced marriage research and took part in online discussions facilitated by the Rt Hon Baroness Elizabeth Butler- Sloss GBE.

A staff member is an advisory group member and contributed to research being undertaken by Glasgow Caledonian University in relation to Police Scotland Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme.

Staff members met with senior police officers at London Road police station to develop referral pathways for victim-survivors of gender-based abuse.

Staff members contributed to research undertaken by David Brooks of Ashbrooke Consulting concerning the impact of covid-19 on gender based domestic violence in Scotland and India.

Staff members met with representatives of the Scottish Government Family Law Unit to seek our expert view on increasing the minimum age of marriage and civil partnership which in line with other jurisdictions.

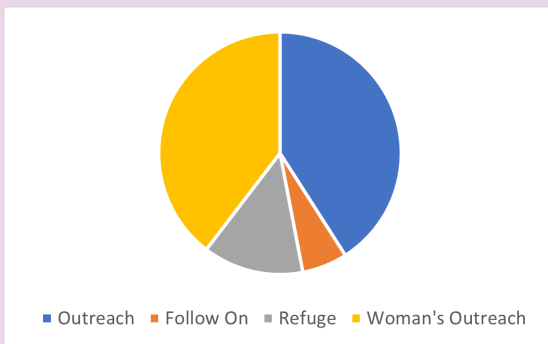
A staff member delivered a presentation in relation to forced marriage and our practical working knowledge of the forced marriage legislation and case law when supporting victims of forced marriage.

## Children's Service

During 2021-22 the children's service supported 149 children and young people. (CYP)

20 CYP were supported while living in refuge accommodation, 9 CYP received support through our follow-on resettlement service and 61 through outreach and school-based support and 59 through our woman's outreach service.

The refuge play flat reopened on the 30 November 2021, following pandemic restrictions. Support provided was based on the individual need of each CYP disadvantaged by domestic abuse reducing the negative impact they have experienced.



Support Provided included:

- Structured/unstructured activity
- Face to Face/support planning
- Remote/online/telephone
- Advocacy/legal/child protection
- Housing
- Emotional/listening ear
- Practical/basic needs met
- Social/outings/trips

Children's workers support CYP living in refuge using various activities, remote and face to face support to deal with the impact of their experience of domestic abuse.

Workers settle CYP into the refuge when they arrive and introduce them to activities that are led by the CYP to help workers understand them and meet their needs.

Workers provide age appropriate activities such as reading stories and singing rhymes to the younger ones, using paper origami and doing simple exercises to help CYP deal with anxiety and anger.

When CYP arrive in refuge they come with little or no belongings. Funding from Children in Need allows us to provide toys, games, books and basic items such as clothing and toiletries.

The support provided to CYP includes support to their mums which involves confronting a variety of barriers for example linguistic difficulties where their first language is not English, living in an unfamiliar area, lack of digital technology skills and having small children/babies.

Workers help mums maximise their benefit entitlement with online applications for access to grants such as 'Best Start' and provide childcare for when mum attends appointments.

Children in Need funding allows us to provide CYP with a sum of money to select items for their bedroom when moving to their new homes. This empowers CYP and encourages them to make their own choices and decisions when selecting items. When moving to their new homes they have their own toys chosen by them which ultimately allows them to settle into their new home.

Our CYP outreach service has been busy. We continued support during the pandemic.

The 'Connecting Scotland' campaign provided iPads and MiFi devices ensuring that CYP were able to access support.

Children in Need funding enabled us to provide children and young people with digital devices to allow them to access support.

Due to covid restrictions during the pandemic we were unable to accompany CYP on trips, however, Children in Need funding allowed us to provide cinema tickets and vouchers to let mums to take their CYP.

When schools opened in August 2021 we resumed our 'school based' support sessions. Issues identified CYP needing support with included living in a domestic abuse environment, struggling at home due to cultural pressures and to conform, sexual identity, sexual abuse, online abuse and abusive relationships. In January 2022- Children started story play session with Lickety-split theatre company who worked with Women's Aid to teach staff how to plan and deliver story play. This was a great opportunity for the workers, mothers, and children. Hemat Gryffe children service jointly co-delivered 6 weeks of play sessions with Shetland Women's Aid and Shakti Women's Aid giving mum's and CYP the opportunity to meet families from Shetland, Edinburgh, and Glasgow.



Images From Story Play



## Digital Media

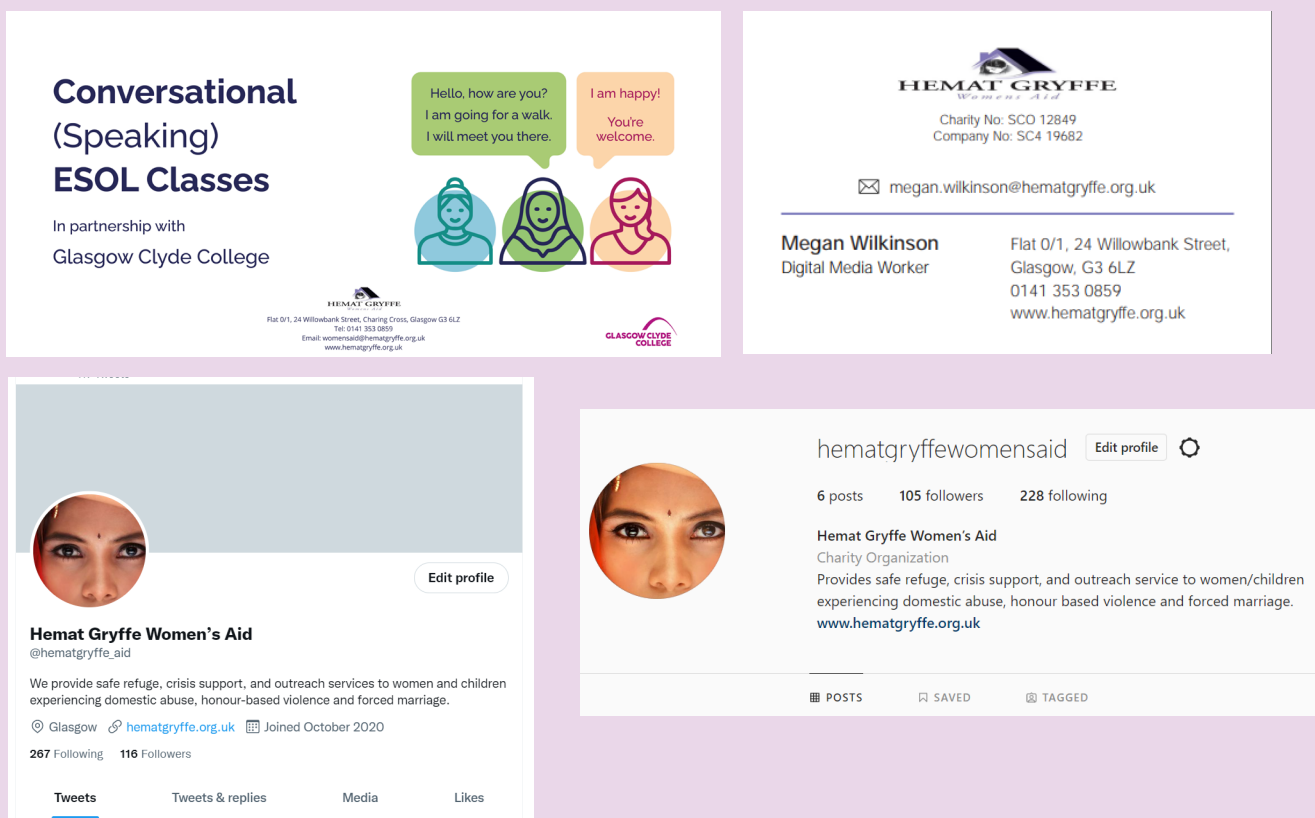
A Digital Media Worker was employed in March 2022. The Digital Media Worker is responsible for the development of the organisation's social media presence. Further clarifying the organisation's brand and engaging with peer services will help raise public awareness about domestic abuse as well as the support that Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid can provide to women and children. Research to inform the organisations media social output was collected by examining successful content that peer organisations shared online.

An Instagram account was set up to help promote the service and allow the organisation to remain engaged with peer organisations and is active on the following social media platforms: Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.

The Digital Media worker is responsible for internal and external communications projects across the organisation.

The development of a quarterly newsletters to promote the service and the women's group are in place. Delivered externally, the newsletters serve as a platform to highlight all the work undertaken across the organisation during a specific period. The newsletters are to be issued in June, September, December, and March. See our website [www.hematgryffe.org.uk](http://www.hematgryffe.org.uk) for the first newsletters covering the period April 2022 – June 2022

Business cards with company heading were developed for all staff members. The Digital Media Worker has also promoted events happening across the organisation by developing posters/promotional material delivered externally and across social media channels



ESOL Classes Poster, Business Card, Twitter Account, Instagram Account, pictured above.

## Finance Report

Glasgow City Council core grants paid in full; housing benefit was increased in September 2021 to accommodate the rise in the refuge rent.

Glasgow City Council also reimbursed the loss of rental income due to voids in the refuge because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Glasgow City Council – The Family Support Project, making a House a Home provided financial assistance to women with children to furnish their homes to help with tenancy sustainment.

The Scottish Government Equally Safe Fund (SGESF) stopped in September 2021 and was replaced with the Delivering Equally Safe Fund allocated from October 2021 to September 2023. This grant supports women, children, and young people in the refuge, follow on and outreach service. This support includes face to face meetings with women, follow on support with women when moving from the refuge to live in permanent accommodation, a range of therapeutic activities involving the women's group; staff salaries, recruitment, staff training and associated running costs.

A grant from Children in Need was used to support children and young people, purchase resources and equipment for use in the play flat, Apple I pads were distributed to children and young people, gifts were given at various festivals, crisis payments, gift cards, cinema vouchers, school bags, clothing, items for school. Children and young people also selected bedroom items when moving from the refuge to permanent accommodation.

Cash for Kids – awarded gift vouchers for children and young people in refuge, follow on and outreach services.

The Scottish Sadaq Charitable Trust makes a monthly donation used to provide crisis payments to women and support women who have no recourse to public funds.

STV providing a grant for children in poverty.

## Covid-19

The charity successfully accessed emergency grant funding to support women, children, and young people during the pandemic. Funds from the Charities Aid Foundation, Comic Relief, the Rosa Foundation, the Scottish Government and Cash for Kids were spent during the financial year.

The refuge returned to full capacity in August 2021. Health and Safety risk assessments for women living in shared accommodation were updated to incorporate specifics relating to COVID-19. The refuge is maintained to a high standard: furniture, beds and bedding, carpets, repainting, and general upgrade occurs regularly.

## Balance Sheet

### 31 March 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total Funds £	2021 Total Funds £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
<i>Tangible Assets</i>	11	711	197	908	4,940
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
<i>Debtors</i>	12	-	1,156	1,156	28,729
<i>Cash at bank and in hand</i>		<u>128,858</u>	<u>150,646</u>	<u>279,504</u>	<u>263,234</u>
		128,858	151,802	280,660	291,963
<b>CREDITORS</b>					
<i>Amounts falling due within one year</i>	13	<u>(1,447)</u>	<u>(19,360)</u>	<u>(20,807)</u>	<u>(28,572)</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>127,411</u>	<u>132,442</u>	<u>259,853</u>	<u>263,391</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>128,112</u>	<u>132,639</u>	<u>260,761</u>	<u>268,331</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>128,112</u>	<u>132,639</u>	<u>260,761</u>	<u>268,331</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>	14				
<i>Unrestricted Funds</i>				128,122	122,465
<i>Restricted Funds</i>				<u>132,639</u>	<u>145,866</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>				<u>260,761</u>	<u>268,331</u>

This sheet does not form part of the statutory financial statements

## Note of Thanks

We take this opportunity to thank our funders:

The Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council, Cash for Kids, Children in Need, the Charity Aid Foundation, Comic Relief, the Rosa Fund and STV poverty appeal for providing core funding and emergency funding to positively respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

We acknowledge and offer our sincere thanks to the following

Grateful thanks to the Scottish Sadaq Trust for regular donations.

To the individual women's group within Glasgow violence against women sector in particular the Standing Group on Violence as well as the partnership manager at the Glasgow Violence Against Women partnership for their unstinting support to the board, staff, and service users.

Glasgow West Housing Association, Charing Cross Housing Association, Sanctuary Housing as well as the Glasgow City Council Homeless Case Work Teams who we continue to enjoy positive working relationships with.

To education services and schools in their cooperation and positive partnership working relations to allow us to support children and young people, particularly Woodfarm and Notre Dame.

We also thank Glasgow City Council Social Work Services, Children and Families Commissioners for their continued support and the housing benefit team.

We are also grateful to the support that we receive from J Bruce Andrew, Chartered Accountants, Thomas Barrie & Co Chartered Accountants, Fleming & Reid, Solicitors, R H & Co, Solicitors, T C Young, Solicitors, Kiswebs and Eurosystems.

To all our partners and funders without whom the project would not be the success that it is today.



# Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid

*'A river of courage'*

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