

# Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre

# Annual Report

2022/2023



# The service

Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre's services are free, confidential and non-judgemental. They form part of a comprehensive care pathway for survivors of rape and sexual violence, but in particular for women and girls.

The impact of sexual violence is both immediate and long-term. GRASAC's services enable survivors to manage the impact of sexual violence and to move forward from their experiences.

As a service we provide emotional and practical support as well as advocacy for survivors. We provide advice and information to family members, friends and professionals supporting survivors of sexual violence.

## OUR AIMS

- To relieve the emotional, psychological and/or physical distress of people who have experienced sexual violence, in particular women and girls.
- To educate the public about the nature and extent of sexual violence and its impact.

**“I am not what  
happened to me,  
I am who I choose  
to become.”**

# Foreword by the Co-chairs of the Board of Trustees

On behalf of the board of trustees, it is our privilege and honour to present GRASAC's 2022-23 Annual Report. GRASAC is the only dedicated sexual violence support organisation in the county and continues to be free, confidential and non-judgemental. This annual report demonstrates the breadth of work carried out by committed staff and volunteers on behalf of clients. As a trustee board, we have been particularly moved by the number of compliments and positive feedback that has been received, both from both clients and from professionals that refer into the service and with whom GRASAC works daily, examples and case studies are enclosed with the report.

Recent national statistics show that around 1 in 4 women have been raped or sexually assaulted since the age of 16 years and that the highest number of rapes were recorded by police in the year ending December 2021. The Crime Survey England and Wales (year ending March 2022) found 2.3% of adults aged 16 and over experienced some form of sexual assault in the year, which equates to around 798,000 women (3.3% of women) and 275,000 men (1.2% of men). Of those, about 1.7% experienced unwanted sexual touching and 0.6% experienced rape. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) also estimates that fewer than one in five (17%) victims reported their experience of rape or assault by penetration to the police.

The recently published Gloucestershire Sexual Violence Strategy 2023-2026 noted a 28% increase in reported rapes recorded by the Gloucestershire Constabulary in 2019/20 compared with 2018/2019. For the year ending March 2022 (the latest available data, reported March 2023), there were 2,207 sexual offences (more than recorded residential burglaries and drugs offences). Within those, were 847 rape incidents with adult victims recorded by the Constabulary (a 31% rise on the previous year). Taking the national reporting figure of 17%, we can extrapolate that the actual numbers may be around 12,980 sexual assaults including 4,980 rapes. In addition, there were 777 cases of child sexual abuse and 417 cases of child sexual exploitation recorded in Gloucestershire.

The rate of case referral by the Police to the Crown Prosecution Service is 8% nationally, the South West Crown Prosecution Service charging rate for referred cases is 71.1% and the conviction rate for those charged is 68.3%. This means we can broadly estimate that of those rape cases recorded by Gloucestershire Constabulary in the year ending March 2022 (847), 68 will have been referred to the South West Crown Prosecution Service, 48 will have been charged and 33 will have resulted in conviction (which represents 3.9% of the recorded cases which mirrors the national figures). Thus, the criminal justice system continues to fail survivors. The number of sexual offence cases waiting to go to Crown Court nationally now stands at a new record high of 9,324, a 31% increase on the numbers waiting at the same time last year.

Nationally, the majority of victims of sexual offences are women and girls (86% of sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2022 and 91% of rape offences recorded by the police. This is why it is important that our services are open to all genders, but especially focuses on women and girls.

Irrespective of the gender of the victim, 98.5% of victims identified the perpetrator as being male (male victims 85.6%, female victims 99.0%).

Highlighting that sexual violence remains a gendered issue. The age profile of victimisation by sexual offences is markedly different by gender; boys and men are most victimised before the age of 14 (28.2% of recorded male victim sexual offences) whereas for women and girls the rates of victimisation remain fairly constant from 0-29 years old with female victim sexual offences for 15-19 year olds running at almost 5 times the percentage of the of that age 5.3% of the female population is aged

15-19 years whereas 23.8% of female victim sexual offences came from that age group (the comparable rate for men was just over 2.5 times the population rate). This is why we are so pleased to be able to offer the Phoenix Programme for young women.

As trustees, we sincerely hope that this situation improves, and we will continue to undertake policy work that challenges this appalling situation for survivors.

GRASAC supports all people affected by rape and sexual assault and encourages all users of our services, regardless of gender, sexuality, race or ethnicity – and in particular women and girls from all sections of the community to come forward not only to seek support but to help us to shape services into the future. Your input is invaluable and very much welcomed.

# Overview of the year by CEO, Gilli Appleby

I would first like to extend my thanks to the Board of Trustees, volunteers and staff at GRASAC for welcoming me into the organisation and offering me the opportunity to work with such a committed and passionate group of women. Everyone involved is dedicated to supporting and empowering survivors of sexual violence from across the county of Gloucestershire and it has been a privilege to join and be part of the team as we reflect on our achievements and look to the future.

This last financial year we have seen a number of changes in Board membership and key staff. I would particularly like to note the retirement of Mary Robinson as GRASAC trustee and latterly co-chair of the charity, a passionate and dedicated member of the board for many years.

We also said farewell to Maggie Stewart who, as Chief Executive so expertly led the organisation through a period of growth and development, latterly navigating GRASAC through the challenges of the Covid pandemic.

GRASAC has welcomed new trustees Danielle Vincent, Amy Hale and Honor Binning – all of whom come with invaluable expertise including operations management at a senior level, supporting and empowering young people, and representing victims of abuse.

In introducing the Annual Report, on behalf of everyone involved, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our commissioners and funders for their continued support and funding.







# Casework

Our Specialist Support Workers deliver up to 20 one-to-one emotional support sessions to our clients.

GRASAC's team of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors provide specialist advocacy support for clients who are navigating or who are thinking of going through the criminal justice system.

# Support Pathways

Support is available through our face-to-face and videocall sessions. There are also ongoing telephone, text and email support services available to clients.

# Fundraising

The fundraising team is made up of staff and volunteers who have found new and innovative ideas and activities to fundraise for GRASAC.

We were also Hazlewoods Accountants' Charity of the Year who kindly raised a very impressive £50k.

John Lewis donated £1k which funded our the pilot programme for Phoenix Group.

Thanks must also be extended to individuals who have given one-off donations or who donate to us regularly.

# Who and how we help

GRASAC supported over

# 800

people this year

Over

# 8,500

contacts were made with clients across the service

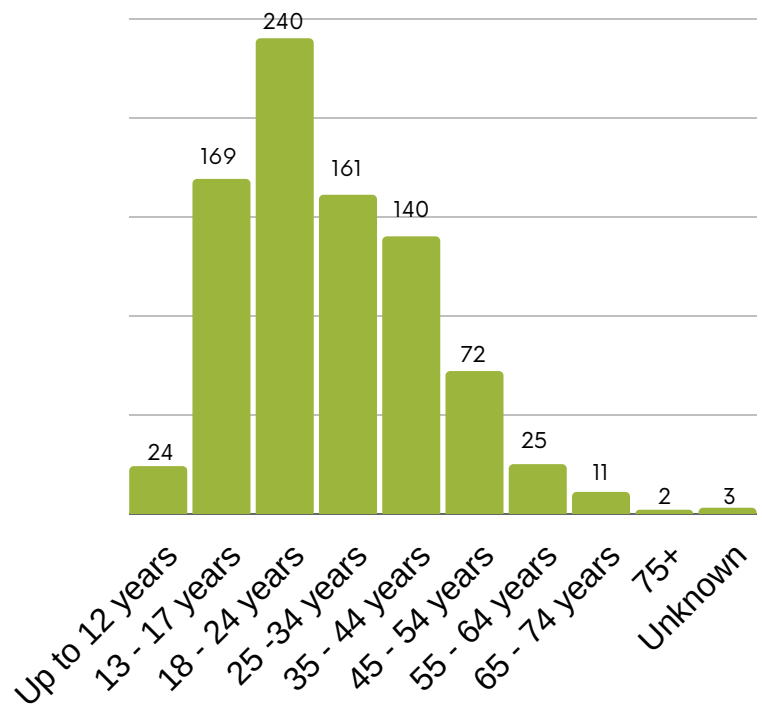
# 56%

of clients experienced childhood sexual abuse/exploitation

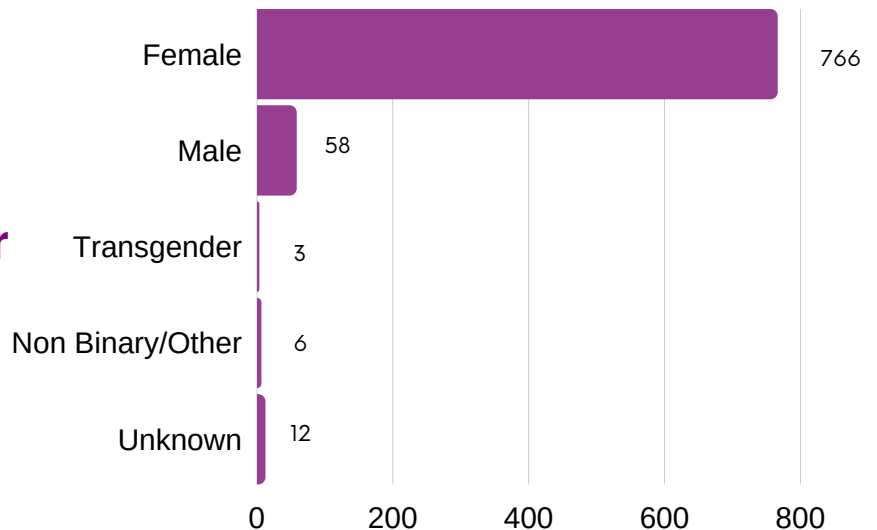
# 35%

of clients experienced recent sexual abuse

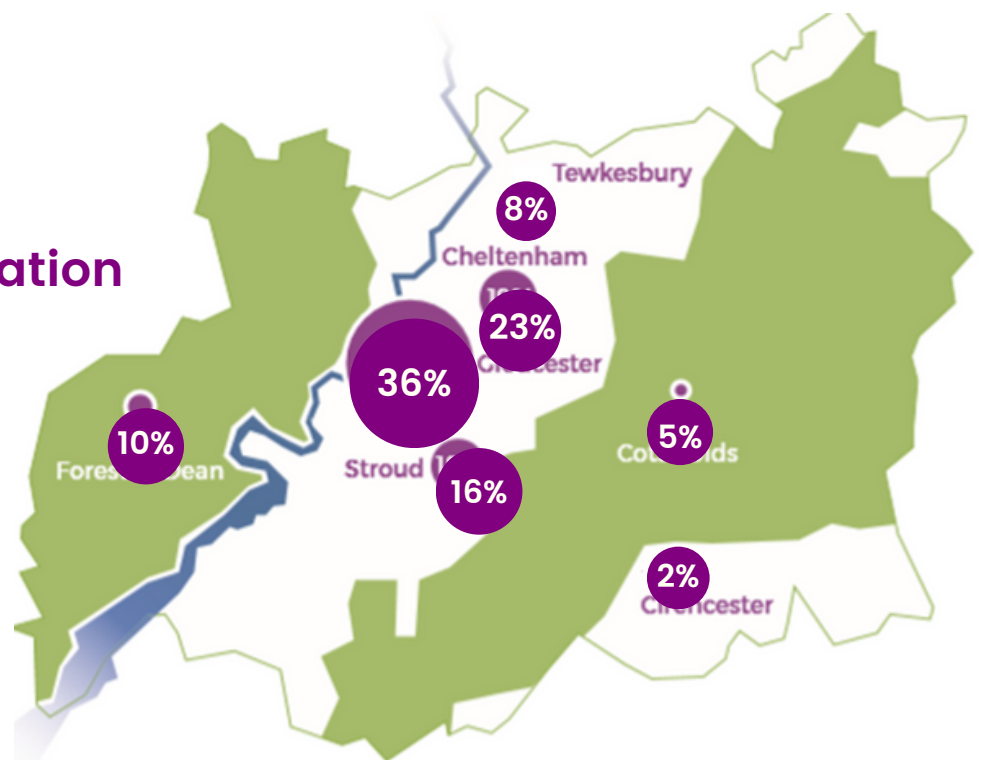
## Age



## Gender



## Location



# Who and how we help

Around

**10%**

of clients identify as being part of the LGBTQ+ community

**61%**

of clients have depression, anxiety, and/or PTSD

**53%**

of clients felt they are better able to manage flashbacks, panic attacks and/or anxiety while

**61%**

said they're better equipped to manage their depression, suicidal feelings, and self-harm after support

**68%**

of clients felt their ability to take better care of themselves physically and mentally increased

Around

**30%**

of clients had been subjected to sexual violence at the hands of their current or previous intimate partners

**54%** of clients have reported their experience of sexual violence to the police

**29%**

of clients disclosed having a disability

**63%**

of clients reported they felt more confident in themselves after GRASAC support

# Feedback from clients

"I have been given the gift of choice again. I can choose to be in an intimate relationship if I want to be. I can choose to respond or not react. I have now made many healthy choices which have benefited me greatly. Sexual abuse as a child and rape as an adult took away my choices for a while, GRASAC changed that for me"

Emotional Support Client

"Thank you so much for your help. It has been a pleasure knowing you, you have been an amazing support to me. I'm a little sad our time has come to an end but I'm aware your kindness, knowledge and support is needed by many others and they will be very lucky to have you on their side"

ISVA Support Client

"Thank you so much for all the love and support you have showed me for these 4 years. I couldn't have done it without you. And thank you so much for sitting with me when I was giving evidence. You're the most beautiful soul to ever walk this earth, I really hope you know that. You deserve the world and more for what you do for us survivors"

ISVA Support Client

"I would just like to say a huge thank you. My life has been changed completely I can now see things more clearly and appreciate things in a different way. I can now see a life without fear and without viewing myself as a victim."

Emotional Support Client

# Case Study

'I will remember you for the rest of my life...in all the years of hating myself, your words have brought me the closest to being truly kind to myself than anything else I have been told. When I feel destructive, your voice is always in the back of my mind. You have comforted an inner child plagued by fear and anger and being able to tell you anything- even the darkest things that I could not share with anyone else has saved my life more than once. I may still struggle, but parts of me that I thought were broken have been healed. I am so grateful for you and how non-judgemental you have been, your patience, kindness, and genuine care. Thank you for everything'.

This client experienced historic childhood sexual abuse and online grooming. The impact of this trauma was manifested in multiple of different ways - the client was struggling with flashbacks, dissociation, nightmares, PTSD and self-injury. The sessions were focused on building a safe a supportive space, which meant allowing the client to feel that if she did not want to talk, she did not have to. Instead, we would spend time colouring, doing grounding exercises, and writing. As our relationship grew throughout the 24 sessions, the client began to talk about her experiences of historic CSA - this was challenging as the feelings that surfaced were complex and at times overwhelming. The client struggled with issues around self-esteem, also seeking support for an eating disorder and drug misuse whilst working with GRASAC. Gently and at her pace, she began to recognise the heavy feelings of guilt, shame and blame were not her fault; she began to feel that she could see a future, one that she could look forward to and invest in.

We talked about the ending of our sessions, both of us decided that we would meet on the top of a hill that we both knew. My client wrote her hopes and dreams for the future on a balloon and we let it go. She said that it was not the end, it was the beginning of the next chapter of her life.

# Feedback from clients

"I would like to thank you so much for your support through this difficult time. You have been an amazing person to talk to and very understanding. It would be very hard without you so I just want to let you know how much it means to me. I will be honest, I don't count on the compensation, and it is not my priority, children are and I need to get stronger for them. I wish you all the best in the New Year and I hope you will continue what you do for those who need it the most. You're support is absolutely priceless and amazing."

ISVA Support Client

I finally had a safe person to discuss uncomfortable, embarrassing or shameful feelings or issues I was having with my body as a result of my trauma. Without this gift, the length and quality of trauma support/sessions, I would probably still be having unsuccessful counselling on and off and no place to talk about the sexual abuse that happened to me when I was 3 years old. I have finally found the missing puzzle pieces; I can now understand my journey and more importantly where I want my journey to go to next."

Emotional Support Client

# Case Study

Client in her twenties referred themselves to GRASAC services. Client had been gang raped in a foreign country. Client was not able to pursue a criminal investigation due to the different jurisdiction in the country where the abuse happened. Client also felt that she did not receive sufficient support from services at the time the sexual assault happened. During this process Client's mental health and wellbeing deteriorated. Client was referred to the ISVA service for support through the ongoing investigation in the foreign country as well as the UK. After the Criminal investigation ended in the UK, the client sought emotional support at GRASAC. At this point, Client had a clearer understanding from the ISVA support around what had happened and the difficulties of the investigation moving forward. Client began their healing journey by starting their emotional support with GRASAC. During the Client's 24 sessions of support, they were able to explore the trauma of the sexual assault, re-claim memory, and configure their own toolbox of coping strategies. GRASAC also provided essential advocacy in writing a supporting letter for compensation needs. Through this experience, the Client reflected that GRASAC's emotional support service had made a positive difference to their life, which was evident through Client's newfound confidence and motivation for life. Client is now able to see a future and has cleansed relationships and associations with the foreign country. The therapeutic interventions enabled the Client to challenge unanswered questions and empower herself to seek inner justice.

# Financial Overview

In 2022/2023, GRASAC's funders were:



The  
Commissioner's  
Fund  
Breaking the cycle of crime



Ministry  
of Justice



We were also the Charity of the Year for Hazlewoods Accountants (to May 2023). We thank all of our funders, donors and individual supporters.

## GRASAC statement of income & expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023

<b>Income From:</b>	<b>Total Funds 2023</b>
Donations	16,162
Police and Crime Commissioner	447,357
NHS/CCG	56,333
Ministry of Justice	110,817
Children in Need	44,253
Lloyds Bank Foundation	27,250
Barnwood Trust	21,912
Other	2,377
<b>TOTAL Income</b>	<b>726,461</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	
Staff Costs	504,168
Support & Development Costs (staff & volunteers)	52,927
Office Costs	66,133
Administrative Costs	29,648
<b>TOTAL Expenditure</b>	<b>652,921</b>
<b>Net Income/(expenditure)</b>	<b>73,540</b>



# Trustees

GRASAC's board of trustees meets bi-monthly and is an active team in all aspects our organisation's work - from policy making to volunteering.

**Dr Louise Livesey – Co-Chair**

I have a day job teaching Criminology at the University of Gloucestershire. My passion is challenging sexual violence through research, teaching and activism. I joined the trustee board in 2016

**Helen Bromley – Co-Chair**

I have over 15 years of experience in Human Resources and Organisational Development. I work for a Bristol-based charity.

**Nicola Jones**

I was joined GRASAC as a trustee in November 2021. Born & raised in Gloucestershire, I worked in public service as a social and community worker, a national and international civil servant, and a women's rights activist, funder, & researcher.

**Amy Norton**

I am Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the Office for Students, the independent regulator for higher education in England. I am keen to combine my professional and personal commitment to tackling sexual violence.

**Zoe Stoddart**

I joined GRASAC as a trustee in June 2022, having previously volunteered for the charity, and worked on the Helpline. My career background is in project management.

**Amy Hale**

I joined GRASAC as a Trustee in the Autumn of 2022. My day job is in the Civil Service and I've worked in this sector for around 17 years.

**Honor Binning**

I joined GRASAC as a board member in July 2022. My background is in working with young people: managing mentoring projects and leading on community groups.

**Danielle Vincent**

I joined GRASAC in 2022. I am a senior associate solicitor in a London law firm specialising in representing sexual abuse survivors (both children and adults) in civil claims.

**Julia Davey**

Having spent the last 10 years in volunteer management, four of those years at GRASAC, I returned in 2022 as a volunteer group facilitator and as a Trustee.

# Contact Details



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@glosrasac



**Gloucestershire Rape  
and Sexual Abuse Centre**  
*here for you*

Thank you to our staff  
and volunteers who  
made this amazing  
year possible!