

Annual Report

2024-25



Introduction



No survivor should be forced to wait weeks or months to access the support that they need and deserve, yet there continues to be unprecedented demand for frontline Rape Crisis support.

Local services across our network are seeing an increasing number of referrals, with many forced to operate waiting lists. Our helpline continues to receive a high volume of calls, with an increasing number of survivors choosing to access written support through text messages, emails, or web chat. Our National Advocacy Service, which provides specialist support to survivors at every step of the criminal justice process, continues to expand. However, even as our advocacy workers log a record number of support hours, the demand for services only continues to grow.

It has been another significant year for legal and policy changes, and we have worked hard to ensure that the voices and experiences of survivors are at the heart of decision-making. The Scottish Government's Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform Bill will provide landmark changes to the criminal justice system for survivors of rape and sexual violence, including the removal of the Not Proven verdict, and we continued to support the development of that Bill. We also intervened in a Supreme Court case around what kinds of evidence can be brought up by the defence in sexual offence trials to ensure survivors' right to privacy remains protected.

A key part of our mission to eradicate sexual violence is stopping it before it starts. We continue to develop our Sexual Violence Prevention Programme, which delivers age-appropriate education around issues like consent and healthy relationships in schools across Scotland. Our hope is that, one day soon, every young person in Scotland will have access to this kind of education.

National helpline



The Rape Crisis Scotland National Helpline is open every night from 5pm – midnight, providing initial, crisis and short-term support to survivors of rape and sexual violence by phone, email, text and webchat.

Over the past year, the Helpline received a total of 4,835 support and information contacts over the year. More than half of these contacts (2,621) were phone calls, however, there continues to be increasing demand for written support channels which now makes up 42% of our overall contacts (up 7% from 2023-24).

Survivors continue to highlight in feedback the importance of being able to access helpline support via a variety of methods to suit different circumstances and needs. In addition, we also had 3,089 hang ups and 851 silent calls, which represents a significant increase compared to 2023-24.

“I really wish I could properly thank the worker I spoke to tonight. I’ll never forget it. There was no judgment and no big/scary words. The worker clearly took things at a pace I was comfortable with and gave me no judgement and didn’t try to push me in any direction of action. They respected what I wanted and helped me get what I needed in this moment.”

The National Advocacy Service (NAS) is a network of specialist Rape Crisis Advocacy Workers across Scotland who help survivors to access justice.

Advocacy Workers provide support and information at every stage of the criminal justice system and provide emotional support throughout the process and after court is finished.

In 2024-25, 3,055 survivors were supported by the NAS across Scotland. We supported survivors at every stage of the criminal justice process, with 241 survivors supported at police statements, 57 with video recorded interviews, 63 in writing victim impact statements and 222 supported at precognition. In addition, 329 survivors were supported at court, 146 supported at court familiarisation visits and 60 survivors supported to engage with complaints processes.

Advocacy workers provided a total of 32,289 support hours.

However, caseloads and waiting lists for the National Advocacy Service remained high and continue to affect survivors' ability to access specialist support quickly.

During the 2024-2025 period, 13 out of 19 Rape Crisis advocacy services in Scotland operated a waiting list, with 1,127 survivors spending time on a waiting list for criminal justice advocacy support – this is up from the 866 survivors who spent time on a waiting list in 2022-23.

Survivors' experiences of the criminal justice process continued to form the basis of our regular meetings with Police Scotland and COPFS, where we advocated for a system that better meets the needs of survivors. Survivors' feedback also informed the development and delivery of our justice service training.

National Advocacy Service



Training, development & participation



The Training and Membership Development team continued to provide training, development and support to the wider Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS) membership. Alongside a programme of training for staff, this included the continued development of the sexual violence accredited training programme. We also continued to operate the Rape Crisis Knowledge and Learning Hub, which allows Rape Crisis Centres to share resources and best practice across the membership.

This year we began assessment of the Rape Crisis National Service Standards across our member centres. This work continues and will conclude in 2026. In addition, we have been working with our member centres to refresh to RCS Best Practice model.

We continued to develop our participation work, supporting survivors to influence policy and practice at a local and national level, and ensuring that their voices are at the heart of RCS and its membership. This has included supporting survivor activism projects at member centres, supporting survivors to attend the Victims' Advisory Board of the Victims' Taskforce, supporting survivors to attend workshops to develop a Victims Charter for Scotland, and supporting the Sexual Assault Response Coordination Service (SARCS) Lived Experience Representative.

We also continued to provide training to a wide range of partners, including Police Scotland, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority. Through training provided by the Scottish Women's Rights Centre (SWRC), focusing on domestic abuse and the law, we currently have over 70 solicitors on the SWRC Solicitor Signposting Network.

Comms and External Affairs

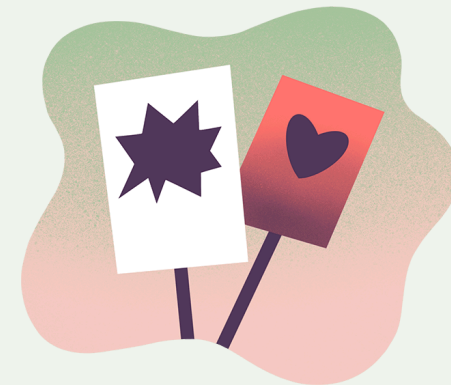
Our communications, policy and external affairs work ensured that we continue to be a leading voice in Scotland in raising awareness of sexual violence, highlighting support services, platforming the voices of survivors, and holding decision makers to account.

We have engaged with the media on a wide range of issues to raise awareness of sexual violence and have issued comments and given interviews on topics including jury decision making, sentencing guidelines, court judgements on corroboration in sexual offence cases, low conviction rates for rape and sexual assault, non-harassment orders, choking and strangulation as sexual violence, and access to support.

Over the past year, we have responded to the Scottish Sentencing Council's consultation on sentencing guidelines for rape, participated in the Covid-19 Inquiry, intervened in a Supreme Court case relating to complainers' right to privacy, and submitted written evidence on the Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill.

We continue to be represented on key working groups, including the Equally Safe Joint Strategic Board, the Governance Group for implementing Lady Dorrian's review of the management of sexual offences, the Victims Taskforce and the COPFS Expert Group on Sexual Crime.

Survivors have been a vital part of developing responses to consultations and informing our campaigning and policy work, and we would like to extend our thanks to them.



Prevention

Prevention remains a crucial part of our work. Young people often tell us about sexual violence they experience in many areas of their lives – in relationships, peer groups, homes, education settings and in work, both on and offline. Increasingly they tell us that sexual harassment, intimate image abuse, sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence are a problem.

Education on issues like consent, gender equality and healthy relationships is key to preventing sexual violence and to making lasting change. These issues sit at the heart of our conversations with young people, which also create opportunities to let them know how they can access support if they need it, and that they're not alone.

Our Sexual Violence Prevention Programme (SVPP) works with young people across Scotland to discuss issues such as consent, power, and understanding sexual violence. Rape Crisis Scotland coordinate the programme and support Prevention Workers employed by local Rape Crisis Centres to deliver it directly to young people in school and youth work settings.

In 2024-25, the SVPP delivered 2866 workshops on consent and healthy relationships to 41,956 young people in 181 schools.

Equally Safe at School (ESAS) is the national whole school approach to responding to gender-based violence. ESAS was identified as a priority in the Scottish Government's Equally Safe delivery plan, and this has driven increased interest in the programme.

A total of 154 schools were registered by the end of March 2025, 55 of whom signed up during 2024-25.

Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities (ESCU) has benefited from the employment of a dedicated member of staff, who has reinvigorated the work of deepening our engagement with institutions and updating the content of our First Responder training – which was delivered to 10 colleges and universities in 2024-25.

The new ESCU coordinator is also taking forward the work of engagement with student survivors, which will roll out across the sector during 2025-26.



Scottish Women's Rights Centre provides free, specialist legal advice, representation, and advocacy to promote access to justice for women aged 16+ who are survivors of gender based violence including domestic abuse, honour based abuse, rape and sexual violence.

We aim to use our experience of supporting women survivors of GBV in the justice system to inform the development of policy, practice and the law in Scotland.

Scottish Women's Rights Centre is a collaboration between Just Right Scotland, Rape Crisis Scotland and the University of Strathclyde's Law Clinic, established in 2015.

The SWRC also works in partnership with the RCS National Helpline to deliver the Followit App – a smartphone app which allows survivors to record and report incidents of stalking and harassment. The app has 764 registered users.

The SWRC advocacy service provided ongoing advocacy support to 28 survivors.

SWRC responded to 401 helpline calls and 202 online contact. The pro-bono solicitor helpline completed 87 calls, and 123 legal advice call backs were provided to survivors. We continue to operate our legal surgeries, delivering 108 advice appointments online over the past year.

This year, the SWRC piloted an in-person legal surgery with a host organisation Kairos Women. A weekly immigration surgery is also delivered in partnership with JRS solicitors, and in this period 26 immigration surgery appointments were held.

Scottish Women's Rights Centre



Finances 2024-25

Donations:	£31,607
Charitable activities:	
Sexual Violence Support:	£5,634,398
Investment income:	£2,948
Expenditure on Charitable activities:	
Total resources expended:	£5,667,298
Net income:	£1,655
Other recognised gains/(losses):	
Actuarial gains/losses on defined benefit schemes:	£0
Net surplus:	£1,655
Funding:	
Other Grants:	£15,520
3rd Sector Early Intervention:	£336,000
Justice Funding:	£2,017,872
Scottish Women's Rights Centre:	£613,974
National Prevention Post:	£42,841
Equally Safe in Colleges & University:	£45,000
Equally Safe at School (Capacity)	£27,318
Waiting List:	£1,167,000
Delivering Equally Safe:	£937,054
Delivering Equally Safe Partnership:	£411,036
Small Grants:	£20,783

Total funds:	2024*	2025
General funds (unrestricted):	£395,968	£420,424
Restricted funds:	£213,339	£190,538
Total funds:	£609,307	£610,962

***Total funds as restated.**



Rape Crisis Scotland would like to thank everyone who has supported our work during the past year. We are grateful to the Scottish Government for their continued financial support, as well as to the many individuals who have made incredible fundraising efforts on our behalf.

Rape Crisis Scotland
138 W Regent St,
Glasgow
G2 2RQ

Office tel: 0141 331 4180
E: info@rapecrisisScotland.org.uk
www.rapecrisisScotland.org.uk

Rape Crisis Scotland is a charitable company limited by guarantee.
Registered in Scotland No 258568.
Recognised by the Inland Revenue as a Scottish Charity No SC025642

