

# Annual Review



**2021-  
2022**

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# Chairs Welcome

## A year of first and new work

This year we saw a landmark for victims & survivors of domestic abuse with the introduction of the domestic abuse act of 2021. The Act is the first of its kind in the UK and is aiming to:

- create a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling or coercive, and economic abuse.
- Create the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner,
- Create new safety measure such as Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order, stop domestic abusers from cross examining their victims in court, ensure victims who go to court have safety measures to protect them as a start point.
- Update the current offences of controlling or coercive behaviour to cover post-separation abuse & revenge porn to cover threats.
- Create an offence of non-fatal strangulation
- Support victims facing homelessness by providing 'priority need' and placing a new duty on local authority to house victims in appropriate housing.



As we welcome the Domestic Abuse Bill, we will look to contribute, cascade and educate professionals and members of the public on these changes and ensure that the victims we have communications with are aware of how these changes will support them.

Our vital work on the helpline has continued this year with us speaking to 3521 people seeking support. We know that Covid 19 had a huge impact on callers with 54% reporting it had made the situation worse. This year we are incredibly proud to have introduced a freephone to ensure that all victims are able to access the support offered by the Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline, Sending out over 2000 publicity packages, and creating targeted social media and communications has meant we have been able to spread the number across the Greater Manchester area to those who are in most need.

We are delighted to be working with Safety 4 Sister once again. The project will see practical and emotional support delivered by a part-time worker alongside financial support to accommodate and ensure that victims are able to have their basic safety needs and human rights met is a imperative piece of work for this often overlooked. With the Covid 19 restrictions being lifted we have been able to move back to office based work and have welcomed back our dedicated volunteers onto the helpline and have welcomed new volunteers to the team. This year we also appointed a new manger to the organisation, Hayley Brewer. Hayley has a long association with ICGM, having had various roles within the organisation, and we were delighted to choose her as the new manager.

### Looking to the future

We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with other organisations with similar aims as ours to support survivors of domestic abuse and raise awareness. This includes third sector voluntary organisations, women's organisations, statutory authorities, police, schools, health, community groups and the private sector.

With the staff team, volunteers and trustees firmly committed to Independent Choices Greater Manchester we are confident that the future will be a positive one which will ensure we are providing expert support for victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse their families & family and we are advancing public and professional education and understanding of the issues of domestic abuse/ violence.

### Thanks

My personal thanks to the staff team at Independent Choices Greater Manchester for their ongoing dedication to delivering high quality services for victims/ survivors of domestic abuse. I would like to thank the Board for their continuing support and expertise and I look forward to working with you for another exciting year for Independent Choices Greater Manchester. Finally, a thank you to all of our supporters, volunteers, patrons and colleagues that have continued their support for Independent Choices Greater Manchester in this last year.

# Our Mission & Values

As a charitable organisation our key objectives are:

- To provide support for victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse for people aged 16 or over and their families, throughout the United Kingdom
- To advance public and professional education and understanding of the issues of domestic abuse/ violence throughout the United Kingdom.

This year we took the time to look at our organisation and refocus our values based on the incredible work we are committed to delivering and ensure that our values are displayed throughout our work

01

- Empowering – giving people the means to take control of their lives through informed choices; giving people the space to talk openly without feeling judged, in a safe environment

02

- Integrity – sincere, open and genuine with who we are and what we do; compassionate treating everyone with dignity and respect, supportive and non-judgmental

03

- Enabling change – through collaborative working, striving for excellence, raising awareness and encouraging discussion, educating individuals and wider community about domestic abuse

04

- Ambitious & outward looking – dynamic organisation striving for a better future, passionate about what we do, providing excellent quality services

05

- Inclusive – provide a service to a wide, diverse community where multiple disadvantages may exist

# John's Story

The impact of domestic abuse is not only felt by the victim - children, Family and friends are affected. This is John's experience of looking for support when he found out his daughter was being abused by her partner.

We were contacted by a very worried parent, John. He explained that his daughter Lilly (19) was in a relationship with Ken (22) that their relationship had moved very fast, they had moved in together after only seeing each other for 3 months.

John discussed that he felt Lilly was being controlled. Ken would stop her seeing friends and when Lilly did see them, Ken wouldn't talk to her or go through her phone. John spoke about two physical incidents, which led to A&E visits, initially Lilly attributed these two accidents but later explained that Ken had hit her in the head.





# Johns Story

John was providing financially for his daughter, he believed that the money he gave her was being controlled by Ken for drug and alcohol. The financial dependency was increasing to a daily request for money which if not given, Ken would not allow Lilly contact with her family. John felt trapped, he would worry if the money was not given that Lilly would be harmed.

John talked to us about how the abuse was affecting the whole family. He had developed anxiety, was having trouble sleeping and due to the phone calls and lack of sleep, it impacted his ability to work. For other family members they had lost contact with Lilly, they were upset and felt that they had no options to help. Ultimately, they were all worried about receiving a call from the police saying his daughter had been murdered.

John was taking all the right actions in supporting Lilly. He would check on her daily, reassuring her that it was not her fault, her family are there for her and she can come home anytime. John would also explain that if she felt in danger with Ken that the police are there and to call 999.

During our conversation, we spoke about the abuse and aired our concerns that the abuse seemed to be getting worse and increasing in frequency. We spoke about risk and assessment that we could complete called A DASH RIC, which would help us determine if Lilly was at risk of being seriously harmed or killed. After consent we completed the form and discussed with John that Lilly was high risk and discussed the next steps that we could take and the need for referrals. As John had daily contact with Lily, it was agreed that he would call us when he was with her, and it was safe to do so. We also talked about actions that he could take in the meantime to keep himself and the family safe.



# Johns Story

When we first talked to Lilly, she seemed hesitant to talk about what was happening and didn't feel that the relationship was abusive. Over the following contacts we built up trust and Lilly began to open more, explaining that she had to watch what she says, felt like she was walking on eggshells and felt afraid of Ken. She explained that when it came to being intimate with Ken, she felt she couldn't say no to him because she thought that was what is expected in a relationship. We talked about rights in relationships, that sex is not guaranteed and if pressured is used, that it is abuse.

We talked about what her ideal relationship looked like; these open conversations supported Lilly in understanding that she was in abusive relationship.

We talked with Lilly about keeping safe whilst in the relationship, we gave advice on ways that she could keep safe and planned together how this would look.

Lilly was starting to question if she wanted to continue in the relationship and with our support looked at what life could look like outside the relationship.

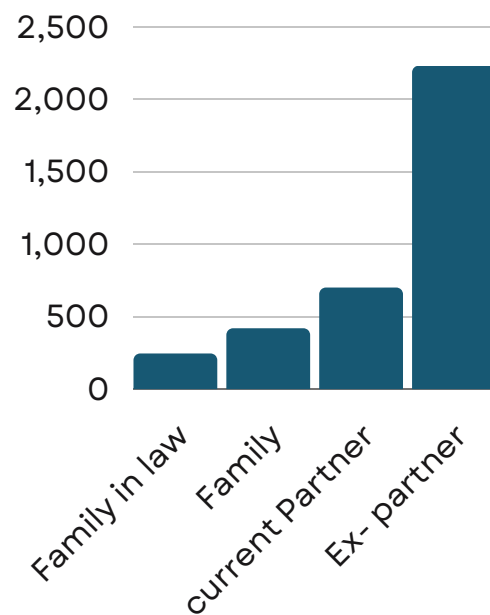
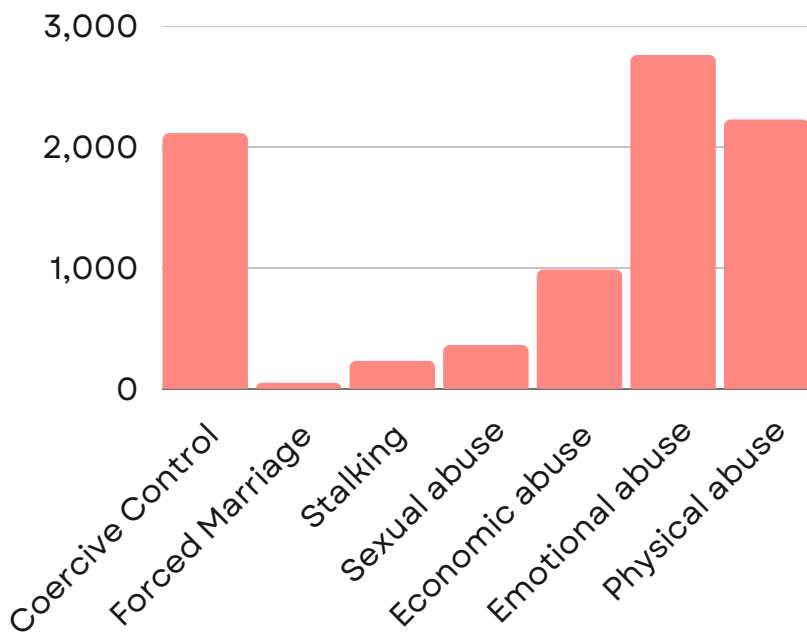
We supported all the family members through this along with Lilly. The family's frustrations about Lilly not leaving the relationship were able to be spoken about in a safe environment, we supported the family in understanding Lilly's feelings for Ken and what some of Lilly's uncertainties were about leaving. We talked about the family's safety if Lilly was to return to the family and how as a family, they could support each other. We were on hand to answer their questions throughout, and support work done with other agencies.



A few weeks after starting work with the family, we received a call from John with news that Lilly had decided to leave - he was picking her up and taking her home. Lilly is now back home living with her family and left her abusive partner & the relationship. John updated us that Lilly is now socialising with her friends and family and is happier.



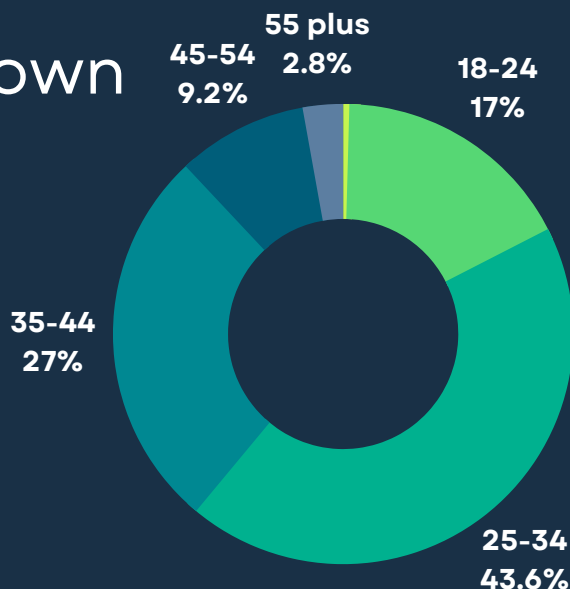
# GM domestic abuse helpline @ A Glance



## Key Stats

- 52% of callers felt Covid-19 made the situation worse
- 3% of callers accessed support through email

## Age breakdown





## Our Freephone Number

This year saw the launch of ICGM's brand new freephone number. Introduced to make the Helpline freely accessible to more victims of domestic abuse.

Ahead of the launch of the new number, we compiled an extensive database of Greater Manchester-based organisations, charities, companies who we felt would benefit from knowing about this new number. We wanted to use the number launch as an opportunity for us to introduce ourselves to a huge number of places, as well as a chance to remind other people and organisations of the vital work we do here.

We updated our posters and social media posts to reflect the new number, and then undertook the mammoth task of sending information packs in the mail and via email to over 2000 organisations across Greater Manchester.

Our 0161 number is still known used across the region, as historically it was the primary way to get through to the Helpline. However, we are now seeing a real upturn in the number of callers coming through on the 0800 number – it is almost a 50/50 split now, and we hope as times goes on more people will come through on the freephone number.

If your organisation would like any of our publicity material please contact [admin@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:admin@independentchoices.org.uk)

# HBV Project

We were granted funding by Manchester City Council to work with the BAME communities in relation to Honour Based Violence/Abuse. We decided to work with the Chinese and Irish Travelling communities to raise awareness around honour-based abuse.

Discussions were held with both the Wai Yin Centre & The Irish Community Care to establish how prevalent honour-based abuse is and explore the barriers to seeking help within these communities. These discussions led to specific training for their staff around what honour-based abuse is, which included the differences between arranged and forced marriages and how to support victims in their communities.

There were dialogues around how the word honour and how that word had been stigmatised around the South Asian communities, but the acts committed happen in all communities.

ICGM had discussions with both organisations regarding publicity and suggestions were made, resulting in the design of two new posters.

One poster has an extravagant wedding cake with a horse and wagon as a wedding topper, and a bride handcuffed to the groom which represents a forced marriage, with the slogan “Till death do you pa rt?”



The other poster is of a woman hiding in her shadows with a red fan inscribed with powerful words a victim often feels, like pressured, forced, no choice, shame, manipulated, controlled, immigration threats, no access to money. There are images of a dragon & Koi that symbolises strength and perseverance.

# Joint NRtPF Project

ICGM & Safety 4 Sisters are working together on a project to deliver emergency support for women without children experiencing domestic abuse/ violence who are subject to immigration control in the Manchester area only.



The project provides:

A dedicated project worker to support women and provide emergency (crisis accommodation & subsistence) support for victims who present as homeless because they are NRPF and can't access refuge space. It also works with Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit to provide immigration advice and legal aid immigration work relevant to the women's situation to regularise her status

## A snap shot of some of the work

The project worker has offered a holistic service to 15 women in the first quarter.

- Working with victims in their first language
- Creating a safe space to explain and described their situation and safety needs
- Ascertaining all immediate physical needs
- Responding to the needs e.g., hospital visits
- Providing immediate resources e.g., sim cards, travel, food & toiletries
- Completing safety planning with the woman for them to manage risk e.g., phone safety with apps, extended family threats
- Support women to access immediate legal aid immigration advice & representation
- Advocacy for women gaining access to refuge (this can include supporting refuge in understanding how to support)
- If refuge isn't available sourcing & paying for emergency safe accommodation (B&B)
- Ensuring where possible that cultural needs are met in B&B
- Completing all relevant safety forms and referrals (inc DASH RIC, social service referrals)
- Emotional support through out case work
- Referrals into group work
- Case work and management
- Advocacy with other agencies – e.g., ensuring that the police are following best practice & support women who want to make a statement

# End the Fear & Social Media

ICGM manages and run the End the Fear website. This is a Greater Manchester-focussed website providing key information and support for victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse, as well as for their family, friends, professionals and perpetrators.



This year we have continued to post regular updates on the site with job vacancies, news, reports, articles and information from within the VAWG sector.

This information is then compiled into a weekly newsletter and sent out to all our subscribers.

End the Fear provides a valuable resource for people across the region, with the site being visited thousands of times a month.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list contact [etf@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:etf@independentchoices.org.uk)

## Annual review 2021/2022

We continue to maintain our social media presence, reaching almost 45,000 people on Facebook alone in this past year.

Our social media posts focus on our number, services and the support available here at ICGM. We also share relevant news, information & reports from within the VAWG sector. Social media is now fully embedded within our organisation as a key way for us to share information and show victims, survivors, friends/family and professionals who we are, the type of work we do and how we can help.

If you don't already follow us you can find us in the following ways



@independentchoicesGM



@WDAChoices



@independentchoicesGM



# Financial Statement

INDEPENDENT CHOICES GREATER MANCHESTER

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31.3.22 Total funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>					
Donations and legacies		11,030	159,163	170,193	191,339
Investment income	2	348	-	348	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>11,378</b>	<b>159,163</b>	<b>170,541</b>	<b>191,339</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>					
Raising funds	3	19,800	70,615	90,415	64,769
Charitable activities					
Costs of Generating Funds		2,499	89,307	91,806	114,395
<b>Total</b>		<b>22,299</b>	<b>159,922</b>	<b>182,221</b>	<b>179,164</b>
<b>NET INCOME (EXPENDITURE)</b>		<b>(10,921)</b>	<b>(759)</b>	<b>(11,680)</b>	<b>12,175</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
Total funds brought forward		235,214	20,600	255,814	243,639
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>224,293</b>	<b>19,841</b>	<b>244,134</b>	<b>255,814</b>

## Thanks & Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of our staff, volunteers, and board of trustees for their dedication.

We thank our continued supporters who have continued to donate.

We would like to recognise our funders Manchester City Council, GMCA.



## Ways to Donate

JustGiving

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## Membership & Supporters



**SUPPORTER**

