



# Survive

Support for survivors of rape and sexual abuse in  
York and North Yorkshire

## Annual Report 2012-2013



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**Registered Charity No:** 1069129

# **Report from the Trustees - Fliss Emery**

## **Our Aims as a Charity:**

We seek to support men and women who have experienced rape, sexual assault as adults or sexual abuse in childhood. We aim to enable them to make sense of their experiences and to assist them with making choices that are right for them as individuals. We also raise awareness of the relevant issues in the wider community. As a Board of Trustees we have continually reviewed the charity's aims, activities and outcomes over the past year to ensure this fits with the charity's key purpose of supporting men and women who have experienced sexual violence. Clients have also been consulted as part of our review processes for the same purpose.

## **Wider Context to our Work:**

Child sexual abuse has become a high profile subject nationally over the past year. This is due to the high number of disclosures of alleged historic child sexual abuse cases by high profile individuals in the media, perhaps most notably Jimmy Savile. Many of these allegations have led to cases being investigated by the Police and to some prosecutions. Details of co-ordinated sexual exploitation of children by groups of adults has also been brought to the public's attention through convictions in court.

These disclosures and convictions, reported in the national media, have hopefully highlighted to the wider public, issues that we at Survive know only too well through supporting our clients, such as the devastating nature of the power dynamics involved in child sexual abuse as well as the often long-term emotional impact on survivors.

## **The Focus of our Work over the Last Year:**

During the year we have continued to offer one to one support to both men and women survivors of sexual violence. We have also continued to offer male and female coffee mornings to provide space for clients to meet with others who have had similar experiences. Feedback from clients is that these sessions are very valued as it has reduced people's sense of isolation in relation to their experiences.

We have also taken an active role in raising the issues related to experiencing sexual violence by giving talks to local community groups and taking part in a radio programme following the allegations made against Jimmy Savile.

Our work has been enabled not only by funding from the Ministry of Justice but also by the continued generous support of local educational establishments, faith organisations, local businesses as well as individual donors. In particular, we were nominated by members of our local community to become Asda's charity of the month in York. Our work has also been made possible by volunteers donating their time, skills and invaluable knowledge to the service.

### **Future Plans:**

Our plans for 2013-2014 are to continue to offer the existing services to clients whilst also aiming to develop a counselling service and an outreach service as both have been identified by current clients as areas of unmet need. We will also continue to strengthen our links with partner organisations with the aim of enabling clients to have the option of receiving the most appropriate support.

**A warm thank you to everyone who has supported our work this year.**

**These include the following:**

<i>The Albert Hunt Trust</i>	4	<i>The Persula Foundation</i>
<i>Sylvia and Colin Shepherd Charitable Trust</i>	1	<i>York Rotary club</i>
<i>York Fund for Women and Girls</i>		<i>York Common Good</i>
<i>Norman Collinson Charitable Trust</i>		<i>N and P Hartley</i>
<i>Ministry of Justice Rape Support Fund</i>		<i>Charity Giving</i>
<i>York University Catholic Society</i>		<i>Charity of Jane Wright</i>
<i>Charity of Lady Mary Bell</i>		<i>Leeds Building Society</i>
<i>Micklegate York charitable Trust</i>		<i>Pocklington School</i>
<i>Dunnington Parish Church Council</i>		<i>York District Nurses League</i>
<i>Police Disposal Property Fund</i>		<i>P and Shepherd Charitable T.</i>

**We would also like to say a huge thank you to the shops and businesses that have held collection boxes for us, and the many people who have supported our work through anonymous donations.**

## **Comments from Clients**

*'Thank you so much for your support. I feel more positive now than I have done for years'*

*'I feel absolutely understood, not pigeon -holed. I feel I can really begin to get better now'*

*'It is a safe space. I do not get this feeling of safety anywhere else'*

*'I feel valued. I feel I can provide something for other people.'*

*'The flexibility of the service helps me to feel in control. I can go months without needing help, but then when I have a dark day, they are there.'*

## **A volunteer account – Kasia**

I have been volunteering for Survive since spring 2013, helping out with the weekly coffee mornings that Survive organises for its clients. Volunteering with Survive has been a unique experience, different from any volunteering I have previously done. Working with Survive requires more of the volunteer; it is at times both challenging and frustrating as the need is bigger than our resources and that requires that extra bit of energy, time and patience. And equally, it is the most rewarding and fulfilling experience I have had as a volunteer. Supporting people at the coffee mornings has been a valuable experience. Being part of an organisation that is doing such important and much needed work I have learned a lot about other people as well as myself. In the last few months I have gained knowledge about sexual abuse, sexual assault and rape. I have understood the severity of the effects that these experiences have on individuals as well as their families. I have also come to realise how crucial the work that Survive does is, as well as how underfunded it is. The small team at Survive provides incredible support to each client with a personal approach. As a volunteer I also feel supported and valued for the work I do by the staff members and other volunteers. We meet regularly and I feel that I can turn to the others if I have got questions or issues in regard to the volunteering. Attending the coffee mornings has made me realise that creating a safe space for people to share their experiences is extremely important. To listen to people who often do not get listened to and to provide that reassuring cup of tea at difficult moments makes a difference. Every week I am impressed at the courage of our clients and every week I am inspired by the people who run Survive. Their commitment, empathy and passion to support individuals who have experienced sexual abuse is to be admired, especially when working with such limited resources. It is the people that make it happen despite difficult times and it is with pride I can say that I am part of the Survive team.

## **Service Coordinator's Report– Mandy Alderson**

The demand for Survive's services has continued through the year. The constant press coverage of historical sexual abuse cases has prompted many survivors to reach out for help. In addition the opening of the sexual abuse referral centre in York has prompted people to look for support in relation to sexual abuse that happened many years ago .It is good to see so many people being held to account for their actions which can cause such long term devastation.

We have welcomed the opening of the Sexual abuse Referral Centre (North Yorkshire Police) and the provision of Independent Sexual Violence Advice through the Independent Domestic Abuse Service. This is improving the experience for those people who choose to report and are finding their way through the criminal justice system. As a consequence of the development of these services we have seen more people in need of support where there is too little evidence for a case to proceed to court. This can be a very hard time for people, when they can feel very vulnerable and need help to understand that although their case did not proceed this does not mean that they were not believed or deserved to be violated.

We have continued to offer coffee mornings and support groups where people can meet other survivors and support each other. This is a unique and fundamental part of what Survive offers and when it is right for people it is amazing how healing this kind of contact can be. We have also continued to offer one to one support to help address a range of needs including attending dental appointments, reporting to the police . Support on the phone is still popular offering flexibility and more possible for those who cannot get to York to see us face to face. However there remains a huge unmet demand for individual counselling .Many services have closed their waiting lists this year and where counselling is available it is often limited to six sessions which is inappropriate for these issues.

I would like to thank all the volunteers for their kindness, enthusiasm and dedication. Without the volunteers there would be no service.

### **Service Statistics**

	2013	2012
No. of clients (excluding anonymous contacts)	94	96
No. of members in groups/coffee mornings	20	13
One to one support sessions	322	214
No of group sessions/workshops	91	60
Support related calls/e-mails	874	875

## **Men's Support Worker—Jason Gillery**

Through what I have witnessed at coffee mornings and the feedback received from working with men I am in no doubt that support groups for male survivors are hugely valuable. Men want to meet with other men and the coffee morning has been a very welcome space for them to come along to.

On a personal level I would really like to thank Alex, a male member of the men's coffee morning for all his willingness to talk out about what happened to him. From Alex's story appearing the press we gained a new volunteer in John who has supported me in the running of the coffee mornings. His experience with Victim support etc has been helpful to those attending. A personal highlight was my radio debut on the Jonathan Cowap radio show to talk about male sexual abuse and to raise not just the profile of Survive, but also an opportunity to raise awareness of the male support service. Though it would be fair to say I was a little nervous beforehand, it felt really good afterwards to be talking about what we do.

The biggest challenge we still face is getting the word out there, and getting male survivors to have the confidence to pick up the phone or to e-mail us. With this in mind I have got a twitter account and regularly send tweets out about the service, through this most of my followers are other organisations across the country, who also work with male survivors so hopefully, it is helping to raise the profile.

In the coming year we plan to offer an evening support group to men because we are aware that this may make the group more accessible for men who are working. We also plan to offer a training event with Manchester Survivors to raise awareness of the needs of male survivors in York.

### **Comments from Survive clients**

*'Thank you for letting me be heard when others would not. Thank you for your patience.'*

*'Survive helps me to maintain my health on an even keel. Without it there would be a huge void.'*

*'The coffee mornings help me to feel like a normal person so I can go back into society and function again'*

# Statement of Financial Activities

For Year Ended 31 March 2013

	Restricted Funds	Designated Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total 2013	Total 2012
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
Voluntary Income	5,686		39,020	44,706	49,351
Activities for generating funds			896	896	495
Investment Income			14	14	16
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>5,686</b>	-	<b>48,062</b>	<b>49,862</b>	<b>50,635</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
Cost of Generating Funds					
Costs of generating voluntary income		-	6,370	6,370	6,689
Charitable activities	5,867	-	39,487	45,354	42,509
Governance Costs			1,374	1,374	1,053
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>5,867</b>	-	<b>47,231</b>	<b>53,098</b>	<b>50,251</b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing)</b>					
Resources before Transfers	(181)	-	(7,301)	(7,482)	(389)
Gross transfer between funds	-	-	-		
<b>MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<b>(181)</b>		<b>(7,301)</b>	<b>(7,482)</b>	<b>(389)</b>
Balance at 1 April 2012	181	15,000	22,284	37,854	37,854
<b>Balance at 31 March 2013</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>14,983</b>	<b>30,372</b>	<b>37,465</b>

There were no activities acquired or discontinued during either of the above financial years.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

## **Being and Longing - Annie Borthwick -Support Worker**

People who come to Survive are amongst the strongest and bravest people I have ever met. This isn't to say they are necessarily paragons of virtue! Far from it! They are as diverse as any other bunch of people – some very quiet and introverted, others wild and feisty. They come from all backgrounds and cultures too – in addition to British survivors, regular attenders at our women's coffee morning were born in at least five different countries. Our youngest client is about 20, and our oldest nearly 70 – although we have had enquiries from people up to the age of 85. Some people are struggling financially, others come from privileged backgrounds. Some are unable to work, others are in high-powered professional jobs.

Whoever they are, each survivor has had to find his or her own way to get on with living, to make life bearable, somehow or other. Most survivors are deeply moral and compassionate, very caring of others and determined to seek for justice. In fact, quite often, the only person they find hard to care for is themselves. Whilst the physical trauma of sexual abuse and assault is horrendous, it's often the psychological damage to self-esteem and confidence that does the most damage.

Despite this, all the survivors I know have an inner integrity and a longing to express it. They may have been given false identities of shame and worthlessness by their abusers in the past, but this never wins completely. There always seems to be a core of knowledge deep down that other people cannot ever totally define us – we need to learn how to be ourselves – our authentic selves.

The longing to be authentic needs to be echoed and recognised by others, and our clients do this for each other. In recognising the goodness and kindness in each other they often start to believe in it for themselves. It is moving and humbling to see how people redefine themselves by meeting other survivors. The two states of longing and 'being' are expressed in the company of others, and become connected into a wider sense of 'belonging' together. This helps people to go back into the wider community and feel they have something worthwhile to offer in relating to others.

We all feel safe when we belong somewhere, where we are accepted without judgement and able to relax. This is what I witness at Survive, and it never fails to make me feel good, - because I'm part of it, too.























