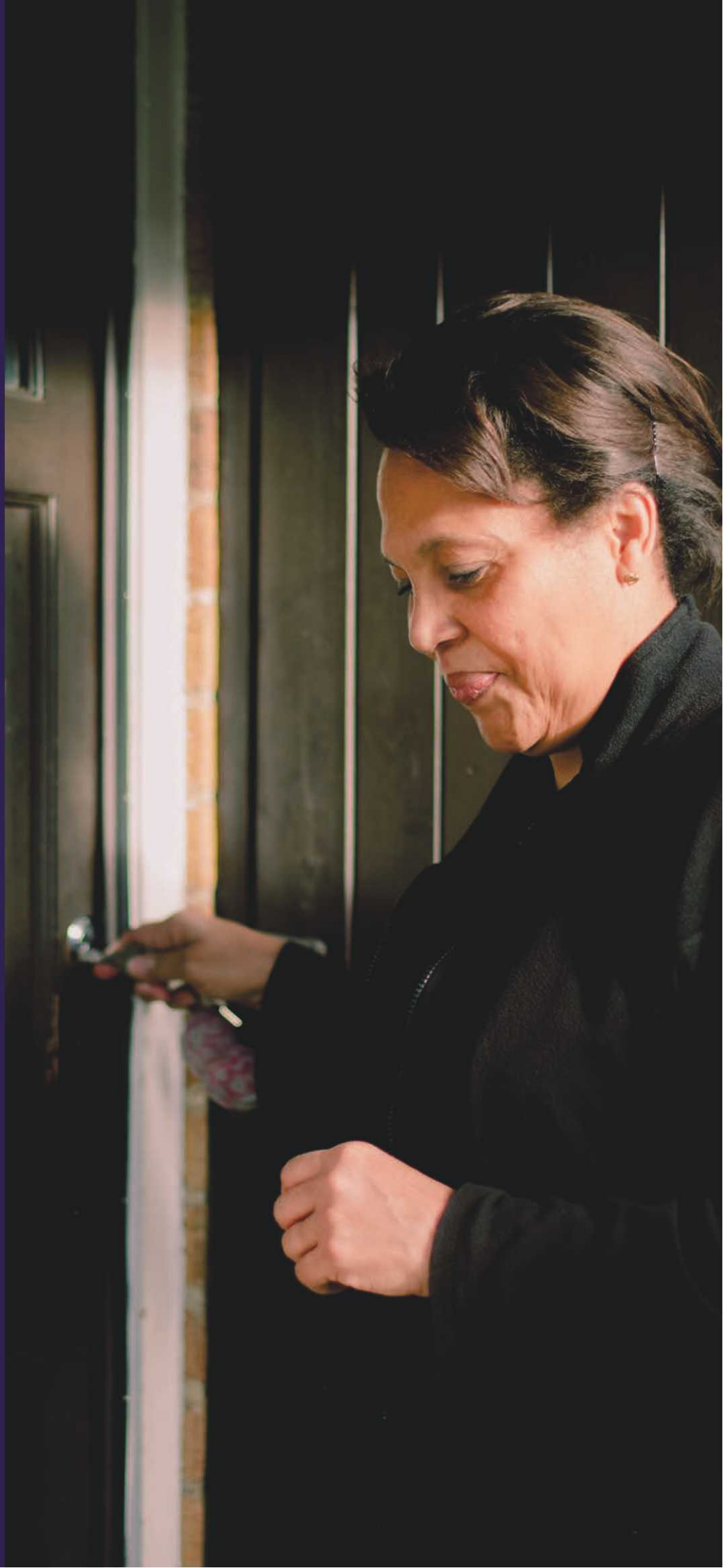


# CHANGING LIVES

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Our year  
2019-2020



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## Adapting and delivering in 2020

### "HOUSING FOR WOMEN IS A HOUSING PROVIDER AND CHARITY WITH A MISSION TO EMPOWER WOMEN AND CHALLENGE INEQUALITY"

As an organisation which has been around for over 80 years, we are no stranger to challenging times. This year we met one of our greatest challenges to date, as the outbreak of Covid-19 left no corner of our lives untouched. Not only has the Coronavirus pandemic, and resulting lockdowns, hit women hardest, but it has had a huge impact on our ways of working and how we deliver our services.

While the first half of the year, from October 2019, was business as usual, by March we were adapting to remote working and digital service delivery, while coping with the very immediate impact of lockdown – a significant increase in reported cases of domestic abuse, isolation of vulnerable tenants, and many tenants experiencing increased strain in their finances.

It is a testament to both our team and our tenants that we have continued to deliver our services, providing safe, secure and affordable housing in such challenging circumstances. The impact of the pandemic on women this year has shown us just how important Housing for Women's services are. We remain committed to supporting women into safe homes and better futures.

## Welcome

### A message from our Chair and Chief Executive



Susan Kane  
Chair



Zaiba Qureshi  
Chief Executive

This year has been one of two distinct halves. For the first part of the year, from October 2019, our teams focussed on delivering our Business Plan goals; delivering housing, repairs and support services to our residents.

However, from 23 March 2020, like the rest of the world we were hit by the realities of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Fortunately, we were able to quickly mobilise our people to remote working thanks to our investment in new mobile devices for staff and an upgrade to some of our operating platforms in the previous year.

We deployed our Business Continuity Plan, keeping a close eye on Government guidelines. It was crucial to us that we play our part in balancing the need to keep people safe while continuing to deliver services.

We were delighted that staff volunteered to join the Covid Task Force, providing emotional support and signposting to a number of tenants who may otherwise have had no support during the initial lockdown.

While some projects, including embedding our new Scrutiny Panel, had to take a backseat, we look forward to improving our approach to customer engagement and satisfaction in the coming year. With the recently published Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and Social Housing White Paper, our plans are now timely and well-informed. Our learning over the past year is informing the evolution of our service delivery with a focus on driving an improved experience for our customers over the forthcoming year.

In May 2020 we had a significant fire at our Childers Street scheme. Thankfully, there was no loss of life or injuries, though significant damage to one block led to the safe decant of those affected. We are currently identifying and delivering the work required to reinstate this property. This will be a key project for our Asset Management team over the next 12 months.

We were very pleased to secure additional COVID funding for our refuges and specialist projects, allowing us to provide PPE to staff and service users, carry out additional deep cleaning to houses with multiple occupants, and provide mobile devices to women so that they were able to have virtual support sessions with their workers. In addition, we were able to extend our Floating Support service in response to the increased demand for Domestic Abuse services.

We were delighted to join the London Women's Alliance and develop a new partnership with the Industrial Dwellings Society which has enabled us to deliver a new service model for trafficked women. Partnerships like these are vital, both for continuing services, as well as enabling us to develop new projects to meet service gaps. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our funders and donors for their generous ongoing support.

We could not achieve our successes without the dedication of our staff, volunteers and Board of Trustees, who commit their time and energy to achieving our mission – we extend our grateful thanks to you all.

# Our year in numbers

849



We provided permanent homes to 849 women and their families

1,295

We supported a total of 1,295 women

98



98 women found homes in our refuges

2,349



19 volunteers gave a total of 2,349 hours of their time

CHANGING LIVES

5,398



5,398 calls handled through our Domestic Abuse referral and advice line

11



We provided services in 11 boroughs of London

12

12 women leaving prison were given the homes & help they needed in our supported housing

185



We supported 185 survivors of abuse living in the community

122



We coordinated 122 referrals for the sanctuary scheme, facilitating the provision of additional security to keep survivors of domestic abuse living safely and securely in their own home

8



We awarded 8 training grants to women, to put towards further education or training opportunities

29



Our specialist services supported 29 women who have survived trafficking

1,800



Our dedicated team completed 1,800 repairs in our tenant's homes.

# Highlights of our year

Housing for Women had a makeover and we launched our new-look brand and website.



During the year we welcomed a number of **new members to the Board** of Housing for Women. Dr Sally East brings a wealth of charity experience from working for large and small charities. Caroline Davies has extended experience in asset management, compliance and contract management. Yewande Showumni has a strong background in HR and specialises in developing and executing outcome-led people plans.

We also welcomed our **new Chair**, Susan Kane who has extensive experience in the housing and local authority sectors, as well as 20 years of experience in specialist housing consultancy.

We teamed up with Kingfisher PLC to **refurbish one of our refuges** just in time for Christmas. Volunteers gave the communal areas a new lease of life and updated the playroom; making the space feel like home for women and children escaping abuse.

We made more progress with our **cyclical works and new kitchen programme**. In January 2020 we completed the installation of **56 new kitchens** for tenants.

As part of our External Affairs work with the Women's Housing Forum, our Chief Executive Zaiba Qureshi, appeared on BBC Woman's Hour with fellow Forum Co-chair, Denise Fowler. Zaiba and Denise discussed the link between gender inequality and housing.



We launched our national **Keep Up Challenge** fundraising campaign to help support our vital services during the outbreak of Covid-19. In August, Kelly Smith MBE took part in the campaign, raising our profile, and giving a boost to our fundraising efforts.



In response to Covid-19, we set up an emergency taskforce to make weekly phone calls to vulnerable residents and those aged over 55. The Welfare Call Task Force made over **890 welfare calls over six weeks** in March and April.

# Our homes

As the affordability gap between men and women for private rented accommodation in London persists, we continue to provide safe, affordable housing to women and their families across the city.

In addition to our general needs housing, we also operate a range of supported housing including; refuges for women and children escaping domestic abuse in Ealing and Greenwich, and specialist supported accommodation in Brent and Lewisham for women leaving prison.

- |               |                        |
|---------------|------------------------|
| 1 Barnet      | 7 Southwark            |
| 2 Brent       | 8 Kensington & Chelsea |
| 3 Ealing      | 9 Lambeth              |
| 4 Hounslow    | 10 Lewisham            |
| 5 Camden      | 11 Greenwich           |
| 6 Westminster |                        |



# Our work

## General needs housing

This year we continued to provide permanent, affordable homes to 849 women and their families, across 11 London boroughs.

Persistent inequalities impact women in a myriad of ways. Women's lower average incomes, additional caring responsibilities and greater experience of domestic abuse and sexual violence, as compared to men, can have a significant effect on their ability to access and keep suitable housing.

The impact of Covid-19, has further exacerbated some of these structural inequalities. There was a significant increase in domestic abuse cases because of the national lockdown and a lack of affordable housing options restricting women's ability to leave abusive homes.

Women, particularly BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) women, have also been disproportionately affected by the socio-economic impact of the crisis. A post-covid recession will see sectors where women make up the majority, hardest hit, with women losing hours, jobs and ultimately income. The housing affordability gap between men and women is at risk of widening further.

While the Housing for Women team have worked hard to adapt to the challenges brought by the coronavirus pandemic, this crisis has also highlighted the need for more awareness of, and support for, the need for good quality housing for women, in order to create a more equal society.

### Over the year:

- + 849 women and their families were housed in permanent affordable homes
- + 1,800 repairs completed at residents' request
- + We upgraded 56 residents' kitchens, costing over £400,000
- + 890 welfare calls were made to provide emotional and practical support to residents during the first national lockdown.



## Delivering repairs during a national lockdown

Each year our dedicated repairs team coordinate contractors to deliver both responsive repairs and planned maintenance, from leaks and broken doorbells, to new boilers and kitchens.

The impact of Covid-19 during the latter half of the year meant that repairs were restricted to emergency only, in line with the Government's advice and the national lockdown restrictions'. Our team worked with residents to resolve as many issues as possible during this time.

This year we spent over £380,000 on large projects at key sites. We completed a full refurbishment of three flats and the communal areas at a property in Greenwich. We reinforced and stabilised the staircase bannister of a four storey property in Kensington, while maintaining the beautiful original style of the baluster, and we installed a new front door and entry system at one of our properties in Lewisham.

As our Property Services Manager, Elly Farthing, explains, "The repairs service was restricted to emergency-only service for almost six months, meaning a lot of residents had to wait for extended



periods of time for their non-urgent repairs to be completed. We racked up an incredible £40,000 worth of work that was considered "on hold" due to the pandemic, which the team then had to prioritise when restrictions were eased by the government. We also had to put a stop to four major projects during this time, with a value of almost £200,000. We're pleased to say that three out of four of these are now complete, with the fourth to start imminently. We cannot thank our residents enough for their patience throughout this period."

## Supporting residents in a pandemic

In response to the Coronavirus crisis and Government restrictions, we set up an emergency taskforce to make weekly phone calls to vulnerable and older residents during the first lockdown.

The Welfare Call Task Force made over **890 welfare calls** over six weeks. The Task Force was made up of volunteer staff whose usual duties were reduced or on hold due to the lockdown. These volunteers checked in on residents to make sure they were safe and provide practical support, such as shopping for food and collecting medication.

Residents told us the calls offered real comfort amid the anxiety and fear they were experiencing because of the pandemic. For those who live alone, the calls were a lifeline that helped ease feelings of loneliness and isolation. The task force became an invaluable gateway into the community as residents were able to report any concerns they had about the wellbeing of their neighbours, whose activity may have changed or disappeared.

Our staff who volunteered enjoyed this eye-opening experience, as many have very little direct contact with our residents.



## Resident training grant

Each year, as part of our commitment to our residents and service users, and their personal development, we award grants of up to £500 to help women pursue training and development opportunities.

This year we had 11 applications and were pleased to offer **8 women** a grant to help cover the costs of educational or professional courses, equipment such as laptops, or even help with childcare to enable further training.

## Kim's\* Story

"I am now in possession of my shiny new laptop, which was delivered to me by Chima, my Neighbourhood Officer, this morning. This makes a huge difference to my quality of life in a lot of ways. It will allow me to start studying again, and update and grow my skills. I had a very successful career as a senior risk analyst which ended in 2013. I had always enjoyed my job and the opportunities that came with it, as well as the sense of achievement and value it gave me. I am excited about starting my financial analysis training which adds to my previous skills and will give me an opportunity to re-enter the workplace, as well as allowing me to engage my brain again.

The laptop also provides a window to the world during a very isolating time. I have installed applications that now allow me to communicate with others via video conferencing, something that I was unable to do before. It allows me to communicate with family and wellbeing services "face to face".

**"THIS MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE TO MY QUALITY OF LIFE"**

"Helping residents has been very satisfactory. I can see my work has a positive effect on [residents] wellbeing. It is nice knowing I can help someone have a better life, even just by listening to them. These weekly calls keep the spirits up – both theirs and mine. I have been given family recipes for wonderful bakes, discussed the weather and news, and shared ideas for music, films and outdoor activities."

**Maria, Volunteer Coordinator**



## Domestic abuse services

**Number of women we supported:**

- + **98** women in our refuges
- + **6** women with complex needs
- + **5,398** callers to our domestic abuse referral and advice line.

The impact of a national lockdown and other Government restrictions, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, have been significant. As people were asked to stay at home, cases and reports of domestic abuse soared and women had very few places to go. The need for, and importance of, refuges for women and children has never been greater.

For more than 40 years, Housing for Women has been supporting women and children across London escaping domestic violence and abuse, providing practical and emotional support to survivors through our specialist services.

More than **20** frontline staff support up to **355** women and children a day across our refuges and community outreach services. In addition, we support an average of **15** callers a day via our referral and advice line.

## Refuge accommodation

Refuge accommodation provides vital homes for women and children who have escaped domestic abuse and are in need of somewhere safe and secure to begin to rebuild their lives. Housing for Women runs Refuges across **2** London local authorities.

Our staff provide practical and emotional support to survivors, empowering them to overcome trauma and regain their independence. We deliver tailored support to survivors to meet their individual needs, including help in relation to finances and welfare benefits, housing, legal matters, immigration, health, training and employment.

Recognising the impact of domestic abuse and related trauma, we also run a specialist refuge for women experiencing complex needs, including mental health issues and substance misuse. Working in partnership with our specialist agencies, we provide holistic support to help residents get to the root of their substance misuse and build drug and alcohol-free futures.

**Housing for Women runs refuges across 2 London local authorities.**

## Sara's Story

"Before coming to the refuge, I had no control over my life and suffered abuse every day. I felt like a prisoner. I wasn't allowed to go out on my own. He used to constantly threaten to take my baby and used to put me down all the time.

Since contacting Housing for Women, I feel safe and empowered, able to make my own decisions for my daughter and me. My relationship with my family has improved since coming into the refuge as before I was not allowed to speak to them. Now I can contact them whenever I want, it's lovely that I can share my daughter's milestones with them without feeling scared.

Living in the refuge means stability and financial security – I have been encouraged to go back to work part-time and to return to studying. I've even been awarded a Housing for Women training grant, which helped me buy a laptop and study for Uni.

I hope to graduate from University and become a primary school teacher. The most important thing for me is to be a role model for my daughter. I just need her to be safe and happy.

If I hadn't heard about Housing for Women, I would probably not be here today."



## Support for children

This year we have supported **72** children in our refuges. Domestic violence and abuse can have a devastating impact on children but with the right support, children can begin to overcome the trauma of witnessing or experiencing abuse and go on to live safe, and happy lives.

We provide dedicated support to children in our refuges through our Children's Workers who spend one-to-one time with them and their mums, helping to rebuild trust and bonds through play and therapeutic activities.

Our Children's Workers are specialists who can advocate on behalf of the children and their mums liaising with social services and family courts where appropriate.

"When Hannah arrived at the refuge, she was very reserved and shy, and seemed afraid of people – with good reason. I started to have regular one-to-one play sessions with Hannah every week. We did messy play, I read to her, role play, arts and crafts and dressing up. I took her to the local park and let her run around and play with the other children.

Hannah's growth, development, confidence, health and trust towards adults has improved a lot since coming to the refuge and engaging with the weekly play sessions provided. We have seen such a huge change in her."

**Janelle, Children's Support Worker,  
Ealing DVA Services**

## Community outreach and floating support

Open to both male and female victims of domestic abuse, our community outreach services offer support to those who may not be ready to leave their home or may be unable to access a place in a refuge.

This year **we helped 185 women and 5 men** in London through our floating support services. Our support workers are trained to help women and men consider their options, as well as providing emotional and practical support with health, safety planning, housing, finances and accessing further services, including police support.



Through the **Sanctuary Scheme**, we support women in Greenwich to live safely in their own homes by organising the installation of additional security such as new locks, window alarms, and personal alarms. This year we referred **122 women** to the scheme, enabling them to stay at home and rebuild their lives with minimal disruption.

Our **Freedom Programme** is a group workshop, which focuses on domestic abuse awareness and self-esteem. The programme helps women to deconstruct the behavioural patterns of their abusers and recognise the early signs of abusive behaviour so that the cycle of abuse can be broken.

"I attended the Freedom Programme, which was helpful in recognising the abusive patterns and being able to understand it is never the victim's fault."

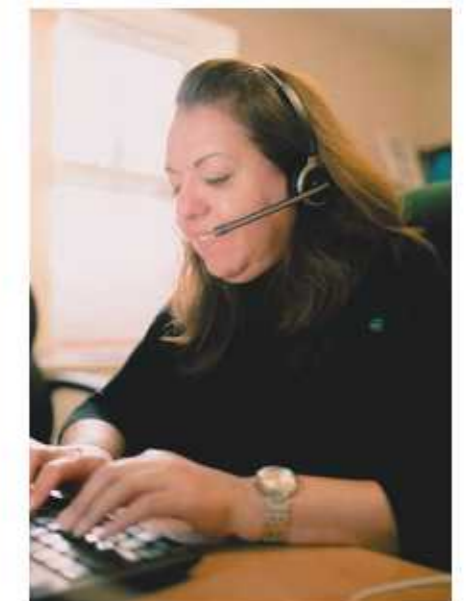
**Anna, Floating Support Service user  
and Freedom Programme attendee**

This year  
we provided  
emotional support  
and information  
to **5,398** callers  
across London.

## Referral and advice line

As a result of the national lockdown, and increase in cases of domestic abuse, we experienced a **50% increase** in calls through our Referral and Advice Line. This year we provided emotional support and information to **5,398 callers** across London.

For many women, contacting our referral and advice Line is their first step in seeking support or leaving an abusive relationship, and as such, is a vital part of our service. Our referral line team are trained to give short-term support and up-to-date advice on safety planning, legal rights, housing options, finances, immigration and safeguarding.



# REUNITE

Two-thirds of women in prison are mothers with dependent children (Ministry of Justice).



**OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SUPPORT WORKER DIRECTLY SUPPORTS THE CHILDREN HELPING THEM RE-ESTABLISH HEALTHY BONDS WITH THEIR MOTHERS AND OVERCOME THE TRAUMA THEY MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED.**

**NONE OF THE WOMEN IN THE PROGRAMME REOFFENDED OR WERE RECALLED OR RE-ARRESTED FOR ANY CRIMES.**

Many mothers lose their homes when they go into prison, and therefore do not have adequate housing upon their release, which in turn makes it difficult for them to regain care of their children. Every year, over 17,000 children are separated from their mothers and 95% of those children will also lose their homes. These factors play a significant role in the high rates of women re-offending and can increase the potential for the child to engage in criminal activity.

ReUnite provides holistic support to mothers leaving prison to access housing and regain care of their children. By providing access to accommodation and tailored support after release, women can be reunited with their children in a secure, supportive environment, in which they can begin to rebuild their lives together.

Skilled Support Workers create a tailored package of practical and emotional support to women joining the project.

#### How we help:

- + Meeting women on the day of release
- + Carrying out risk and needs assessments
- + Identifying goals for resettlement and agreeing steps to achieve them
- + Identifying triggers for re-offending and solutions to prevent this
- + Advocacy with local authorities to prevent homelessness
- + Tailored support around managing a tenancy and budgeting
- + Identifying and supporting access and attendance to training and education opportunities
- + Providing emotional and practical support for custody, care arrangement and parenting issues.



Our Children and Young People's Support Worker directly supports children helping them re-establish healthy bonds with their mothers and overcome the trauma they may have experienced.

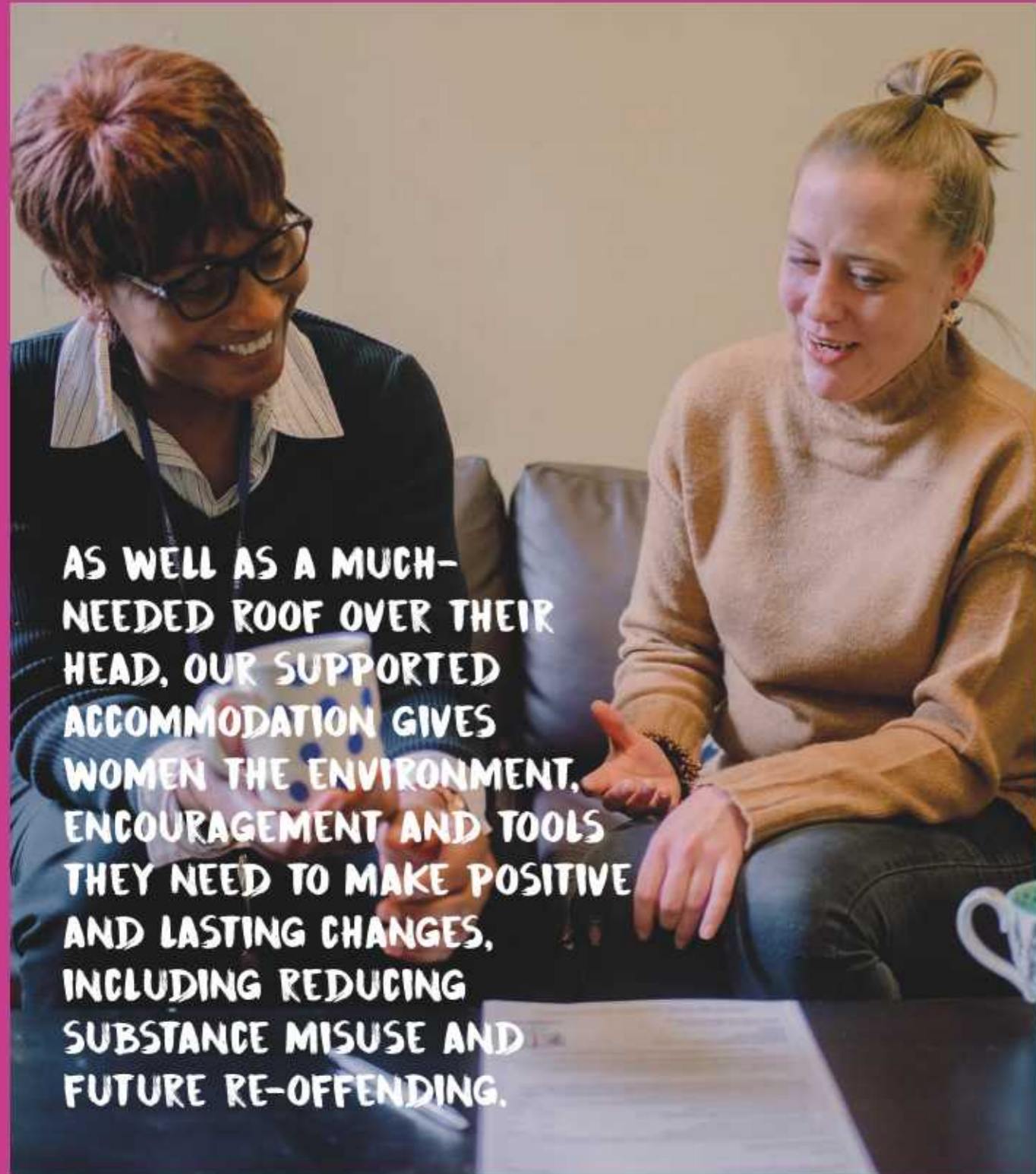
Women who have been through our ReUnite programme have a re-offending rate of less than 2% compared to the national average of over 61%, and 72% of service users are in education, employment or training at the time of moving on from the project.

#### Over the year:

- + We have worked with **8** women in our ReUnite project
- + **4** women engaged in education, training and/or paid employment
- + **None** of the women in the programme reoffended or were recalled or re-arrested for any crimes.

# RECONNECT

6 out of 10 women leaving prison have nowhere safe to go.



**AS WELL AS A MUCH-NEEDED ROOF OVER THEIR HEAD, OUR SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION GIVES WOMEN THE ENVIRONMENT, ENCOURAGEMENT AND TOOLS THEY NEED TO MAKE POSITIVE AND LASTING CHANGES, INCLUDING REDUCING SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND FUTURE RE-OFFENDING.**

Housing for Women recognises that women leaving prison are among the most vulnerable in society, with complex needs that cannot be supported with a one-size-fits-all approach. 57% of women in prison have been victims of domestic abuse, 31% have been in care, and 53% suffered abuse in childhood (Prison Reform Trust, 2017). In addition 58% of women reported poor mental health and well-being (Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile, 2015), and half reported needing help with a drug problem on entry to prison (Prison Reform Trust, 2017).

Designed to meet the Mayor's pan-London strategy to reduce women's re-offending, the ReConnect project provides crucial support to women who are leaving prison homeless and dealing with substance misuse and other complex needs. As well as a much-needed roof over their head, our supported accommodation gives women the environment, encouragement and tools they need to make positive and lasting changes, including reducing substance misuse and future re-offending.

**"I can't believe I have a job interview. Thanks for the support and encouragement, it really helped me get on"**

**Georgie, ReConnect Service User**



**Over the year:**

- + 13 women supported
- + 5 women engaged in education, training or paid employment

## Amina's Story

Amina was separated from her mother in childhood and moved to the UK at a young age, leaving her with significant trauma, which she later tried to block out with the use of drugs and alcohol.

Amina had no secure home, no family or support network, and was 'sofa-surfing' to survive. In 2019 she was arrested for fraud and received a two-year custodial sentence. She was then referred to Housing for Women by our referral partner, St Mungo's.

In order to support Amina and help her achieve positive and sustainable outcomes, we provided secure accommodation and our skilled support workers developed a robust support/risk management plan with Amina.

Since entering the project, Amina has remained abstinent from drugs and alcohol, secured employment with St Giles Trust, and started a peer mentor role with the charity Women in Prison. She has also become actively involved in prison reform through the criminal justice charity User Voice, securing an internship in their HR department. She has gained the skills and confidence to realise her long-term goal of working in the Social Care Sector.

Amina has continued to positively engage in the project support offered by Housing for Women, attending all key work sessions and numerous groups/activities.

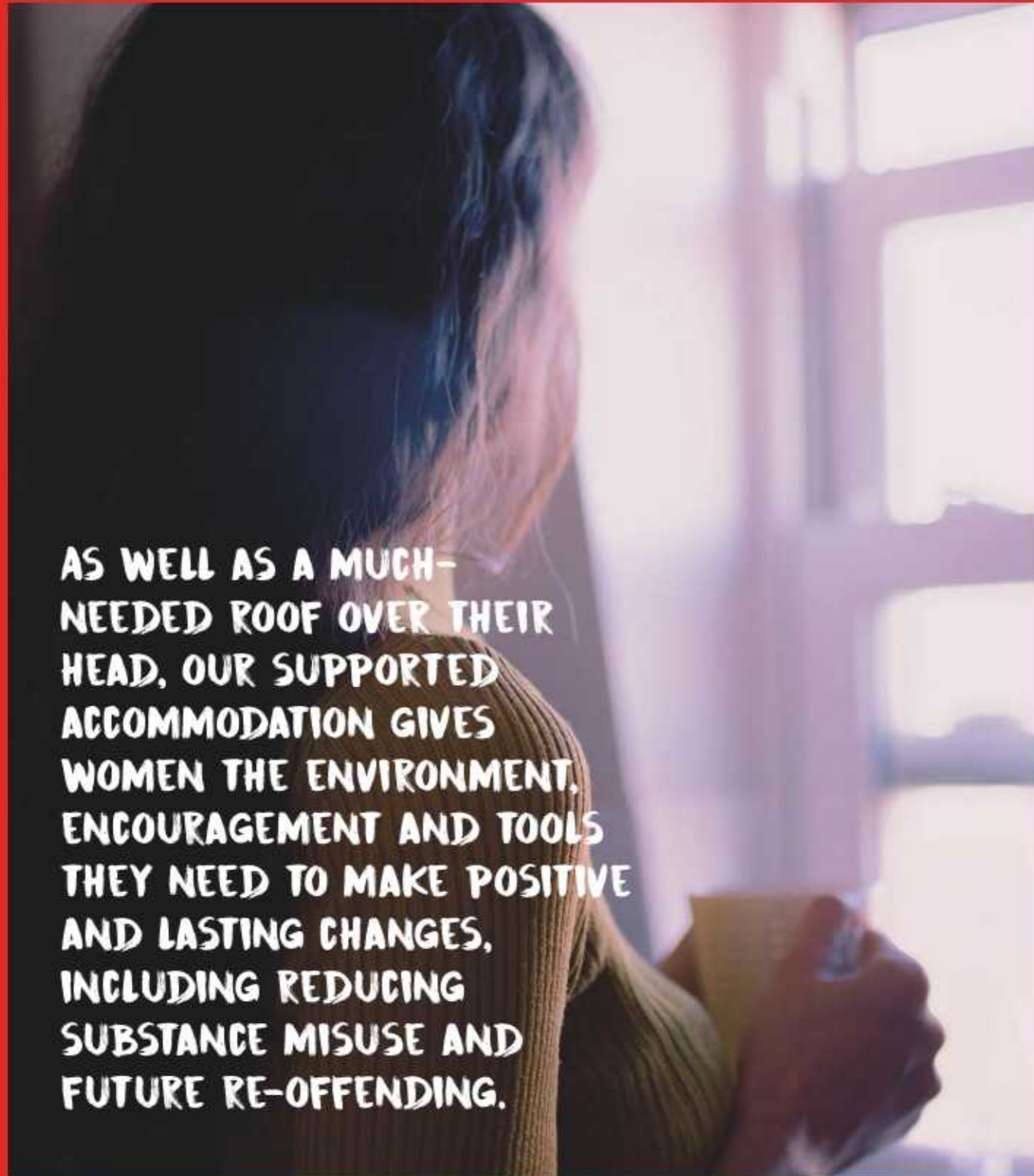
Amina has demonstrated an understanding of how her drug and alcohol use impacted on her emotional health, offending patterns, and relationships. She has made some positive steps in rebuilding her relationship with her family.

Amina says that the consistent support provided by ReConnect was the motivation she needed to stay on track and focus on herself.



# REPLACE

The Home Office estimates there to be as many as 13,000 people held in modern slavery in the UK.



AS WELL AS A MUCH-NEEDED ROOF OVER THEIR HEAD, OUR SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION GIVES WOMEN THE ENVIRONMENT, ENCOURAGEMENT AND TOOLS THEY NEED TO MAKE POSITIVE AND LASTING CHANGES, INCLUDING REDUCING SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND FUTURE RE-OFFENDING.

10,627 potential victims of modern slavery were referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) in 2019, an increase of 52% from the previous year. We provide in-depth support to survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery. We help single women over the age of 18 who have been trafficked to the UK from outside the EU. All women must have been referred to the National Referral Mechanism.

Housing for Women's RePlace project was established in 2008, in response to survivors saying long-term support was needed to enable women to recover. The Project has been successfully meeting positive outcomes for trafficked women in London and providing comprehensive services in collaboration with community partners. Statutory and legal services support women's recovery and ability to successfully transition into society.

There is a significant need for Housing for Women's RePlace Project, particularly for some of the most vulnerable women. Ours is the only project in London providing accommodation and support to women from outside the EU, who have no recourse to public funds.



## How we help

Our Support Workers provide practical and emotional support to survivors of trafficking. We empower women to overcome trauma, rebuild their lives, and regain their independence. We work with survivors to develop a tailored support plan to meet their individual needs.

- + **Financial assistance** – including help applying for benefits and grants
- + **Practical assistance** – support accessing education, training, voluntary work, employment and liaising with Local Authorities on housing options
- + **Health and emotional support** – supporting mental and physical health, referring to counselling, reducing isolation and improving confidence
- + **Legal issues** – working alongside solicitors to support them through the immigration process
- + **Signposting** to specialist agencies to ensure all needs are met.

This year, our RePlace project provided wrap around support to 29 adult survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery.

# Fundraising

In 2019-20, we raised a total of **£646,241.76** through a range of fundraising, including public campaigns, individual donations, events, corporate partnerships and trusts and foundations. Our fundraising activity enables the ongoing provision of projects to support some of the most vulnerable women in London.

## Projects include but are not limited to:

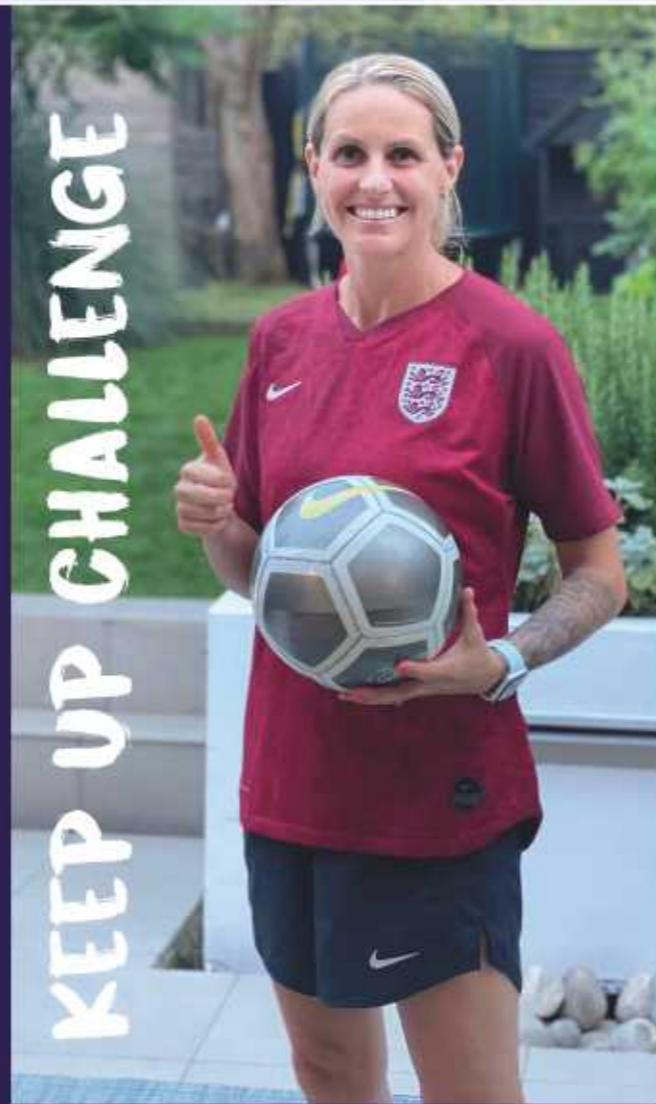
- + The RePlace Project, supporting women escaping trafficking
- + The ReUnite Project, providing support and accommodation to women leaving prison who are reuniting with their children, and support to children who have experienced trauma as a result of separation from their mothers and/or time spent in the care system
- + The ReConnect Project, providing support and accommodation to women leaving prison who have complex needs such as mental health issues and substance misuse
- + Provide Children's Services in our Ealing and Greenwich Refuges, as well as our ReUnite Project.

## Fundraising Campaigns

Our events and campaigns this year raised a total of **£15,989** towards our fundraising targets.

As the country went into lockdown, we invited our supporters to **'Share Your Fare'**, donating the equivalent of 1 day of their weekly commute to help provide homes and vital services to women across London.

Our **'Keep Up Challenge'** campaign was a stay-at-home-friendly challenge to see how many football keepie-uppies individuals could do, while raising money to keep our services going. To grow the campaign, we worked with England Footballer, Kelly Smith MBE, who took the challenge and shared her video with over 110k followers on social media.



During the summer of 2020, one of the Housing for Women team, Dipa Shah, along with her husband and three young children set themselves a family fundraising challenge. In eight and a half days, they cycled from London to Paris, fundraising to support our life-changing services. They raised an amazing **£3,250**.

**Our events and campaigns this year raised a total of £15,989 towards our fundraising targets.**

# Volunteering

We would not be able to deliver our vital services to women and children without the support of our dedicated volunteers. Volunteers offer their time, passion, and energy, helping us to continue supporting women and their children across London. They make a valuable contribution to our services by engaging with tenants and service users, or supporting our core operations such as finance and communications. In return we offer our volunteers meaningful roles with regular supervision and training opportunities.

We recruit volunteers across several areas including office volunteers, telephone befrienders, refuge volunteers, and student placements.

During the financial year 2019-20 we recruited and worked with 19 volunteers across the four departments, including four Social Work student placements working at our DVA services in Greenwich (three students placements) and Ealing (one student placement). Fifteen general volunteers supported key areas including property and housing services, finance, communication, supported housing and special projects.

Volunteers contributed a total of 2,349 hours for the year 2019-20. This, based on the London Living Wage of £10.75 per hour, translates into a monetary value of £24,963.39.

The total annual volunteers' costs for this financial year amounts to £1,163.47.

Our recruitment target for the year was 35, however, recruitment was suspended for five months from March to August due to Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this significant setback, our Volunteer Coordinator was able to successfully adjust the recruitment and volunteering process to offer remote volunteering opportunities where appropriate. While this is not suitable for all volunteer roles at Housing for Women, this learning will enable us to increase our offering of volunteer opportunities in the future, which are both cost-effective and provide more accessibility for our volunteers.

To ensure that volunteers are well-supported by Housing for Women, our Volunteer Coordinator delivered internal training and workshops on supervising and supporting volunteers, including lessons on remote volunteering.



**"The best part of volunteering at Housing for Women is knowing that I am able to make a difference to individuals' lives."**

## Aleena - Volunteer Telephone Befriender

I decided to become a volunteer because I feel passionate about women's equality rights; my interest and drive to make a difference pushed me to immerse myself in an organisation dedicated to helping women. I started volunteering earlier this January and although the role was meant to last up to six months I am hoping to continue until September.

I am currently an Older Tenants' Telephone Befriender. I call and check up on the older tenants to have a conversation and see if everything is well.

The best part of volunteering at Housing for Women is knowing that I am able to make a difference to individual's lives. The women I speak to tell me they really appreciate my phone calls and everything that Housing for Women does to support them.

Being passionate about women's equality, volunteering at Housing for Women has been a great opportunity for me to take interest in something I believe in.

Going into the final year of my law degree I definitely hope to see myself advocating for human rights so that all individuals are treated equally. Being an Older Tenants Befriender has helped me to sharpen my skills, meet some great people, and really made me see a different outlook in life. Just one phone call can really make a positive change in someone's life.

## Complaints and lessons learned

We aim to provide a great service to all our customers, but if sometimes things go wrong, we aim to learn from it.

This year we received 67 complaints across three main business areas, General Needs Housing, Supported Housing and our repairs service.

We received 34 complaints about our repairs services, 27 complaints about general needs housing management, and 6 complaints about our supported housing projects. Across the business, the biggest number of complaints, 67%, were related to customer discontent with case handling.

We paid a total of £4,314.56 in compensation and goodwill payments this year, including a rent refund of £2,563.56 in Quarter 2.

Complaints give us valuable feedback and insight into issues that affect our residents. Continuous analysis and lessons learned are fed back into the key areas of business to drive service improvement and increase customer satisfaction.

- + Lessons on communicating with tenants, particularly regarding repairs progress and case management, has encouraged us to review how, and how often, we communicate with tenants. Complaints are discussed regularly at team meetings, with Neighbourhood Officers being supported to communicate with tenants. The Neighbourhood Manager monitors the team email account to ensure initial enquiries are responded to promptly.
- + To improve issues surrounding rent arrears and recovery, the housing management team has established external relationships with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Universal Credit and credit union. Neighbourhood Officers have been trained to identify and support a range of financial challenges that residents might be facing.

"As a learning organisation we are committed to hearing tenants feedback and continuously improving our services. We have recently carried out our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code to ensure we are meeting sector standards and striving for better service delivery."

**Billie Owen, Director of Housing and Support**



## Our money

**Income and Expenditure account for year ending 30 September 2020**  
(2016 stated post FRS 102 adjustments)

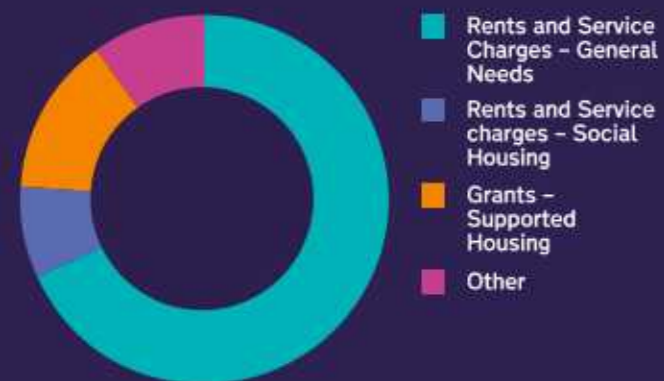
All figures in £000s	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
<b>Turnover</b>	7,978	8,005	8,119	7,961	8,175
<b>Operating Costs</b>	-7,427	-7,384	-7,079	-6,694	-6,814
	<b>551</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>1,040</b>	<b>1,267</b>	<b>1,361</b>
<b>Interest receivable</b>	5	5	2	1	1
<b>Interest Payable</b>	-459	-398	-467	-497	-523
<b>Surplus on ordinary activities</b>	120	228	575	771	839

### Balance sheet at 30 September 2020

All figures in £000s	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
<b>Fixed assets</b>	82,875	81,350	81,649	82,065	80,061
<b>Grants</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Depreciation</b>	-13,621	-12,701	-12,396	-11,907	-10,997
<b>Investments</b>	14	14	14	2	0
	<b>69,268</b>	<b>68,663</b>	<b>69,267</b>	<b>70,172</b>	<b>69,066</b>
<b>Current assets</b>	3,614	3,614	4,318	3,903	3,897
<b>Current liabilities</b>	-3,167	-2,665	-3,104	-3,103	-3,079
	<b>4,784</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>1,214</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>818</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	74,052	69,612	70,481	70,972	69,801
<b>Long-term loads/Deferred grants</b>	58,983	54,442	55,540	56,605	56,289
<b>Reserves</b>	15,069	15,170	14,941	14,367	13,595
<b>Reserves and long-term financing</b>	74,052	69,612	70,481	70,972	69,801

# Our money

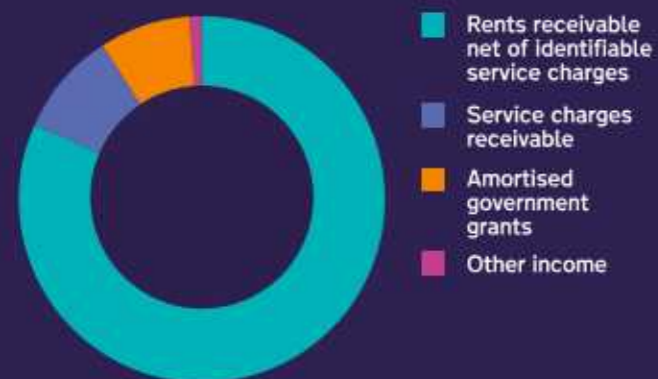
## Total Income



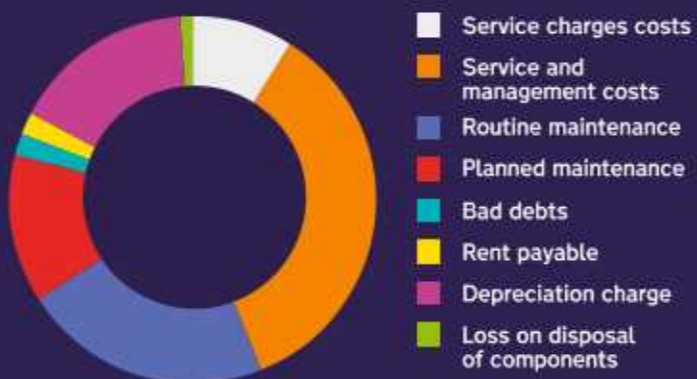
## Total Expenditure



## General needs Income



## General needs Expenditure



## Supported housing Income



# Our people (as at November 2020)

## Trustees

- Susan Kane  
Chair
- Dr Sally East  
Chair of Audit Committee (as of March 2020)
- Joanne Norris  
Chair of Audit Committee (up to March 2020)
- Helen Webb CIPD  
Chair of Remuneration Committee
- Christine Pointer
- Mark Cooper
- Christopher Worrall
- Yewande Showumni
- Caroline Davies

## Chief Executive

Zaiba Qureshi

## Senior Management

- Sue Croft FCA DipCh  
Director of Finance and Resources
- Mandy Dunstan  
Director of Asset Management
- Billie Owen  
Director of Housing and Support

## Trustees who served during the year to 31 September 2020

- Bernadette O'Shea  
(Chair until March 2020)
- Diane Hart  
(until March 2020)
- Annette Langton  
(until March 2020)

# Our thanks

In 2019/20 we continued to diversify our income, despite a challenging year. We are extremely grateful to everyone who supports us, including our corporate sponsors, trusts and foundations, and our individual donors. Without your generosity, none of the work we do to provide women with secure homes and safer lives, would be possible.

## Our funders this year include:

- 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- Ahmadiyya Muslim Association
- Butterfield Mortgages Limited
- BBC Children in Need
- Comic Relief
- Comic Relief Emergency Fund
- Coutts Foundation

- Digital Detox
- Domestic Violence
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Habitat for Humanity
- Haygarth Group
- Intuit Women's Network
- Johnson & Johnson
- Kingfisher plc
- Loft
- The London Community Foundation
- Love Grace Handbag Appeal
- Rosemont Care
- St Paul's Church Ealing
- Stock Project
- Swan Foundation

## Statutory bodies

- London Borough of Ealing
- Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government - Domestic Abuse Team
- Royal Borough of Greenwich

Thank you to everyone who supported us in 2019/20

To find out more about how you can support us visit [hfw.org.uk](http://hfw.org.uk)



## Head Office and Registered Office

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Fax. 020 7924 0224  
Email. [info@h4w.co.uk](mailto:info@h4w.co.uk)

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[www.hfw.org.uk](http://www.hfw.org.uk)

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Housing4Women



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[housing-for-women](https://www.linkedin.com/company/housing-for-women)



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Company Registration No. 420651

Homes and Communities Agency  
Registration No. L0970

Registered Charity No.211351